

UNDP Equatorial Guinea

Support to the National Response to Contain the Impact of COVID-19



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Equatorial Guinea's preparedness and response capacity to COVID-19 is extremely limited. According to the WHO preliminary country categorization list as of 16 March, Equatorial Guinea is classified as Level 2 among the least prepared countries. The country has one laboratory for testing with capacity of carrying out 20 tests per day and two medical institutes, one in Malabo and one in Bata, assigned to observe and follow up infected patients.

Instructions from authorities are not widely respected by the population, due to lack of awareness. In addition, access of key and vulnerable populations to basic services, including food, is limited partly because of the impact of COVID-19 on the informal sector. Access to running water for handwashing is a challenge in some communities, posing a high risk for contamination. The latter is also compounded by the fact that citizens need to physically go to government agencies to pay for essential services, given the lack of digitalization in this area. This has also thwarted any attempt from Government to do cash transfers to the needy. As such, investing in digital payments is a necessity for the country

The government, in collaboration with WHO and other partners, has developed an Emergency Plan for Prevention and Contingency for possible cases of coronavirus and a broader response plan with a whole of government approach. UNDP and the UNCT are regularly engaging with the government on the response, particularly through the Response Committee which is the main platform for all sectors. The UN team is currently finalizing its joint COVID-19 proposal to support the Government in implementing the Emergency Plan as well as their fundraising efforts. Meanwhile, UN Agencies have been providing support on a joint UN-Government sensitization campaign throughout the country, WASH, Social Protection and Food security. UNDP chairs the Programme Management Team to formulate the joint plan, in which UNDP

was requested to support social protection of the vulnerable groups, lead a study on the socioeconomic impact assessment and on digital payments and to support the Government-UN raising awareness campaign.

Based on the above, UNDP has formulated a comprehensive response plan, costed at approximately \$650,000,00 which contains its entire inputs on the broad UN response plan and their support to the Government. Under this broader plan, UNDP will: 1) provide support to the vulnerable and marginalized groups (access to food, basic goods and water for handwashing) through multi-sectoral engagement: CSOs, Private sector, United States; 2) collaborate in the joint UNCT-Government awareness raising campaign; 3) work with UNCDF on a feasibility study of digital payments to facilitate transfer to and from the population to government, and 4) carry out a socio-economic impact assessment, including an LNOB (Leaving no One Behind) study and vulnerability assessment of those who are most at risk of being left behind. This feasibility study on digitalization will improve the social protection plan by facilitating payments to vulnerable households, while allowing citizens to make payment for fees and services from the security of their home. The CO has already reprogrammed \$100K from TRAC2 funds and has received \$150K from RBA. This funding and the expectations of funds to be received through the RRF have allowed UNDP to position itself and engage the US government through its Embassy in Malabo and the private sector for additional funding of \$100k to support the vulnerable and marginalized groups. Also, UNICEF has agreed to co-fund the socio-economic impact assessment, which will include a component on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). With the \$250K requested from the RRF, the expected gap will be \$50K, which the CO is trying to mobilize.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION

Inclusive and Integrated Crisis Management and Multi-Sectoral Response



Vulnerable populations through micro-grants to CSOs supported:

- a) Micro-grants to CSOs to facilitate food distribution to marginalized population
- b) Micro-grants to CSOs to install Tippy-Tap in remote areas, facilitating handwashing

Awareness of the population increased:

- a) Development of the campaign
- b) Delivery of the campaign

Innovative crisis financing using digital payments is assessed

Diagnosis of Payments Flow

Feasibility study for the launch of a mobile platform

Socio-Economic Impact and Recovery



Socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 on the country properly assessed

Carrying out a **socio-economic impact assessment**

Dissemination and follow up of the assessment report

BUDGET

The budget needed for the COVID-19 response is estimated at \$650K. In the context of a middle-income country, the CO does not receive much TRAC and was able to reprogram only \$100k of TRAC2 from a youth project. The CO received \$150k from RBA for COVID-19 response and requested \$250k through the RRF. The CO is in discussions with the US Embassy, the private sector and UNICEF to fill in some of the gap.

OUTPUT	BUDGET	AVAILABLE	GAP
Promote inclusive and integrated crisis management and multi-sectoral responses	\$500k	\$140k	\$360k
Support to address socio-economic impact and recovery	\$150k	\$110k	\$60,000
Total	\$650k	\$250k	\$400k