



1. Government Response

As of June 4th, there are 20,197 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 608 deceased. The national government defined a plan for responding to COVID-19 and took quick measures to contain and soften the contagion curve, including a social, preventive and mandatory isolation and the closure of borders.

The government has focused on compensating the negative effects on family income and on businesses revenues generated by the direct impact of the social isolation. The main goals are that companies can sustain employment and sales and that the families who lost their jobs compensate their income. In Argentina 35% of employees are informal and 25% are self-employed (INDEC, 2019), with high levels of poverty (35,4% -16 million- below the poverty line), and overcrowding (20% of housing has deficit) and a scenario of debt renegotiation and a significant decrease in tax revenues that restricts fiscal slack and the expansionary policies like other countries in the region. In terms of social policy, the following mechanism have been set in place:

1. A bonus for universal child allowance beneficiaries
2. Price ceilings for essential products.
3. An Emergency Family Income (AR\$10.000), with a second payment approved on June 1st.
4. Emergency Assistance Program for Work and Production: credits at zero rate for single-income earners and self-employed, a supplementary salary for workers who depend on the private sector (50% paid by the State), and a comprehensive system of unemployment benefits.
5. Provincial Financial Emergency Program: allocation of resources from the National Treasury Contribution Fund as well as from the Provincial Development Trust Fund.

The health system in Argentina is universal. The federal government coordinated the health system, although state

administrations have important attributions in terms of local budgets and policies. But given the magnitude of the health crisis, it will have to reallocate resources. Due to the strict measures of isolation, the peak of the crisis is now expected in late June. The government has set in motion several measures to ensure an adequate response of the health system in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

1. Extraordinary payment to health personnel who provide services in health care centres in the public, private and social security sectors related to COVID 19 cases.
2. Construction of 12 Emergency Modular Hospitals to expand hospital beds and offer care to affected patients.
3. Creation of a special fund of 1.7 billion pesos to acquire equipment and supplies from laboratories and hospitals.
4. Decentralization of diagnostic detection of COVID-19 to the different jurisdictions.
5. Creation of the Coronavirus Unit COVID-19 Integrated by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of the Nation, CONICET and the R & D & I Agency, to coordinate the capacities of the scientific and technological system for diagnostic and research tasks.
6. "Tele-Covid" service for medical consultations (May 26th). Budget increase of \$ 127 million in favor of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation to promote large-scale production of rapid tests and to strengthen community health teams.
7. New Strategic Test Device for Coronavirus in the Fieldwork (DETeCTAr) to intensify the search for people with symptoms of COVID-19 for their diagnosis, isolation and care in the area with the highest incidence of the virus: the City of Buenos Aires and its surrounding areas (AMBA)

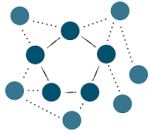
2. UNDP Support to Prepare, Respond and Recover

Strengthening Health Systems



- Strengthening the response capacity of the health system in the Province of Buenos Aires:
 - Acquisition of 50,000 COVID-19 test sets and 225 respirators and medical PPE.
 - Incorporation of 292 health professionals (nurses, intensive care physicians, clinical doctors' adults and pediatrics), as well as volunteers to strengthen the health system during the peak of the crisis.
- Support for the development and testing of prototypes for a ventilator adapted to the specific needs of COVID-19 and produced with materials of immediate national availability, in alliance with the private sector and the University of Rosario.
- Medical attention: Training of provincial laboratory personnel to strengthen testing capabilities of COVID-19. Training of health personnel in protection measures to avoid contagion.
- Purchase of equipment and essential supplies (respirators, test sets, PPE for health personnel).
- Quick purchase of Misoprostol (medication for early pregnancy interruption) to guarantee compliance with the Law on Legal Termination of Pregnancy in the framework of the pandemic COVID-19.

Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Crisis Management and Response



- Support to women and non-binary gender identities in situations of gender violence in the framework of the Spotlight Initiative. A call for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) of the provinces of Buenos Aires, Salta and Jujuy to present projects aimed at improving the quality and accessibility of services.
- Support to the Ministry of Health for the implementation of a unified and multi-sectoral model of attention to situations of sexual abuse and forced pregnancy of girls and adolescents under 15 years of age.
- Reinforcement of the community approach to the National Plan for Food Security to scale up food services in areas most affected by the crisis.

Socio-Economic Impact and Recovery



- Diagnosis of the socio-economic impact, based on the methodology developed by UNDP and in alliance with the Center for Distributive, Labor and Social Studies (CEDLAS).
- Strengthening the response capacity of the business sector to the COVID-19 pandemic: Survey of Argentine Global Compact companies on the impact of COVID-19 and the mandatory isolation measures in their operations and development of an action guide for the business sector.
- Campaign "Pay on account" on social networks, to encourage people who can afford, to continue paying in advance for the products and services they regularly buy to use them in the future.
- Financial Inclusion campaign on social networks, to promote the use of financial digital mechanisms during the pandemic and promote financial education in community kitchens in popular neighborhoods.
- Study on the economic recovery of women and their relationship with care activities.
- As part of a Participatory Air Monitoring Experiment, air quality will be analyzed during the period of social isolation using low-cost sensors installed on bicycles. It is a joint initiative of the National Government, the Government of the City of Buenos Aires, UNDP and the University of Cambridge.

3. UNDP Support to UN Country Team

- UNDP contributes as technical secretariat for the preparation of a United Nations Framework for Socio-economic Response and Recovery from Immediate Impacts of COVID-19 in support of the Argentinean government.
- UNDP articulates with UN Agencies through the "UNETE" Group and the UNCT. There is a UN country response plan reflected in a comprehensive matrix which shows all the activities that the UN agencies are carrying out; this document is constantly updated.

4. Resources – COVID19 Response

<i>Areas of Response</i>	<i>Reprogramming (Existing Projects) USD</i>	<i>New Resources USD</i>
Strengthening Health Systems	9,600,000 15,000	69,000,000 250,000
Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Crisis Management and Response	142,000	11,000,000 0
Socio-Economic Impact and Recovery	35,000 12,000	
Sub Total	9,804,000	80,250,000
Total	90,054,000	

The resources to support the government of Argentina to contain and recover from the impacts of COVID-19 are:

- USD 9,600,000 reprogrammed and USD 69,000,000 new funds from government cost-sharing to strengthen the health system.
- USD 11,000,000 new funds from government cost-sharing to reinforce food services.
- USD 250,000 from the UNDP Rapid Response Facility
- USD 142,000 resources from the Spotlight Initiative
- USD 35,000 reprogrammed from the UN SDG Fund.
- USD 15,000 UNDP CO resources.
- USD 12,000 from other sources (SDG Acceleration Lab, Global Compact).