



UNFPA Sierra Leone COVID-19 SITUATION REPORT

MAY - JUNE 2020



COVID-19 UPDATES

AS OF 30 JUNE 2020

Total cases: 1,462

Female: 727

Male: 735

Total deaths: 60

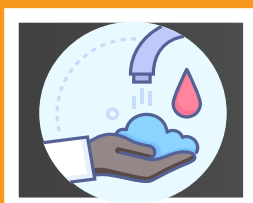
Case Fatality Rate: 4.1%

Recovered: 974

Total in quarantine: 1,773

UNFPA Sierra Leone continues to deliver a comprehensive programme on Sexual and Reproductive Health, while responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our programme focuses on:

- 01 Ensuring the availability of gender-based violence prevention and response services
- 02 Sustaining quality Sexual and Reproductive Health services
- 03 Sustaining the supply of modern contraceptives and other lifesaving reproductive health commodities up to the last mile
- 04 Increasing the demand for sexual and reproductive health and genderbased violence services



01

» Ensuring the availability of gender-based violence prevention and response services

Dignity kits

In May, UNFPA distributed **5,448** dignity kits and a further **106** kits in June. These kits were distributed in Kailahun, Kenema, Kono, Port Loko, Western Area, Bo and Bombali districts. To date in 2020, a total of **7,636** dignity kits have been distributed. These kits contain sanitisers and masks, in addition to the routine content of a UNFPA dignity kit. The kits were provided to those most in need including vulnerable adolescent girls. A further **727** sanitary kits containing sanitizers, food and other items have been distributed to boys and men to date.



Port Loko girl proudly displays contents of dignity kit

Training of Youth Councillors

UNFPA supported the Ministry of Youth Affairs to train **20 youth councillors** (9 in Western Area 19 May and 11 in Kambia, 22 May) on awareness raising about preventing gender based violence and the importance of promoting sexual reproductive health during the COVID-19 pandemic. The youth councillors are well positioned to serve as advocates on these important topics within their communities.

UNFPA worked closely with the Ministry of Youth Affairs team to limit the number of participants to ensure physical distancing was observed and that everyone wore masks. Furthermore, participants were taught how to utilise innovative approaches to convening meetings, such as zoom.

Gender based violence services

UNFPA continued to ensure the availability of free counselling and clinical services to gender based violence survivors through our implementing partner Rainbo Initiative at the centres in Bo and Freetown. In May, a total of **132** survivors were provided with free services including two people living with disabilities. In June, a further **236** individuals received services, including four people living with disabilities.

➤ Sustaining quality sexual and reproductive health services



Continuity of services

Throughout May and June, UNFPA supported Aberdeen's Women's Centre to provide essential maternal health and family planning services. Over the two months, 1466 women received maternal healthcare. A total of 631 women received family planning services in May and June. The breakdown of these figures can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Maternal health and family planning support

	May	June
Antenatal Care	461	402
Safe Delivery Services	238	182
Postnatal Care	53	130
Continuing Family Planning Clients	154	160
New Family Planning Clients	117	200

Through support from the DFID funded Saving Lives programme to CUAMM, in May UNFPA supported maternal health services in three of the five main referral hospitals. The safe deliveries supported were as follows;

- 505 at Princess Christian Maternal Hospital;
- 389 at Bo Hospital;
- 198 at Makeni hospital.

Through this DFID funded Saving Lives programme, four 4x4 wheel vehicles were procured. One each was given to the Schools of Midwifery in Bo and Makeni on the 17th of June.



Handover of vehicle to School of Midwifery, Bo

Rapid assessment of maternal health and family planning services

To better understand the effects of the pandemic on the current status of sexual reproductive health services, UNFPA conducted a rapid assessment with a focus on Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care and Family Planning Services, with the following objectives:

- Assess the management systems in place to support dealing with COVID-19, including protocols, staffing, and educating patients and staff.
- Observe the environment of care for equipment and practices to effectively implement Infection and Prevention Control standard precautions.
- Assess the availability of maternal health and family planning supplies, including personal protective equipment, maternal health and family planning trends and perceptions.

Data collection took place from 30 April to 26 May 2020, at seven hospitals (five government and two private) and seven community healthcare centres throughout May. The assessment found that the lack of PPE in the Community Healthcare Centres is alarming and although the hospitals were much better equipped with PPE, significant gaps remain. Infection and Prevention Control (IPC) needs to be strengthened in all the facilities, including the monitoring of IPC. While most staff interviewed perceived that women were afraid to come to the facilities for care, the trends family planning and maternal health data obtained indicated no consistent drop in attendance.

The overview report of the assessment can be found [here](#).

COVID-19 isolation centre

UNFPA is supporting the establishment of isolation centres in the five CEmONC facilities in Sierra Leone. In May the facilities in Bo Government Hospital and Makeni Regional Hospital were completed. In June, an isolation centre was established at PCMH. These facilities are equipped with delivery beds, hospital beds, delivery equipment and supplies. The isolation centres will be operated by midwives trained in infection prevention and control.

COVID-19 Treatment centre

In collaboration with the UN Country Team, UNFPA Sierra Leone constructed and handed over a specialised COVID-19 treatment centre at the 34 Military Hospital to support the national response. The treatment centre was commissioned on the 28 of May, as part of a One UN approach;

- UNFPA provided overall coordination, technical leadership and funding.
- UNDP led the way in developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the 34 Military Hospital;
- WFP provided technical leadership in the design and the on-the-ground execution of the project, and also provided the huge 'Rub Hall' tent under which the facility was constructed;
- WHO provided technical guidance to ensure adherence to quality standards;
- The Health Manager of the UN Joint Medical Services provided on-site technical support throughout the process.



Newly constructed COVID-19 Treatment Centre

03

» Sustaining the supply of modern contraceptives and other lifesaving reproductive health commodities up to the last mile

UNFPA Sierra Leone delivered oral contraceptives worth USD **98,155.20** to the central medical store in May. The delivered quantity of oral contraceptives is expected to protect at least **25,000** couples for a period of a year.

In addition, UNFPA, in collaboration with other stakeholders, conducted the 2020 Quarter 1 commodity planning review which resulted in the approval of additional contraceptive supplies worth over **USD 0.9 million**.



Increasing demand for sexual and reproductive health and gender based violence services among women and girls

Mama and Baby Packs

In June, with support from the Government of Iceland, Mama and Baby packs were distributed to encourage expectant mothers to deliver in facilities with skilled support. The content of these kits can be seen in Figure 1. A total of 877 packs have been distributed, as below in table 2.

Figure 1: what is in a mama baby kit



Table 2. Facilities for Mama and Baby Pack Distribution

Hospitals	Community Healthcare Centres
King Harman: 110	Regent : 35
Rokupa : 160	Ross Road: 55
Makeni :102	
Bo: 80	
PCMH: 130	
St John of God: 55	
Aberdeen’s Women’s Centre: 150	

Key messaging on priority areas

On the 17th of May UNFPA Sierra Leone completed a four week Gender-based-violence, Family Planning, Maternal Health, and Coronavirus awareness campaign. The campaign was targeted at Freetown via radio, pre-recorded calls, SMS, and Social Media. All Telephone calls and SMS targeted all 645,000 active Africell subscribers in Freetown with messages in each thematic area.



Handover of mama baby packs at King Harman on June 2

Radio jingles with key messages on maternal health, family planning and GBV were aired daily for the first two weeks of May on four radio stations that have a national reach, ending on the 17th of May to allow for a review implementation. The radio jingles resumed again at the start of June and continued for the month. The radio jingles were aired a total of 384 times over the course of May and June.

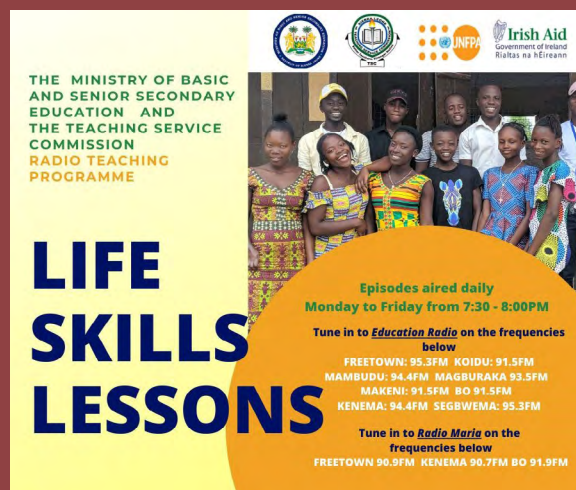
UNFPA supported the Fambul Initiative Network for Equality (FINE) to hold seven orientation events for Kekeh drivers (a form of local transport) in May, offering training on COVID-19 prevention. Posters with key messages on COVID-19 and on addressing GBV were distributed at these events to be attached to the vehicles.

Through FINE, UNFPA Sierra Leone is supporting existing Male Advocacy Peer Educators to spread the message of COVID-19 prevention and GBV in three districts; Pujehun, Kambia and Koinadugu. Men who are deemed as responsible community members visited door-to-door, while keeping social distancing, to ensure the messages were spread effectively and safely.

National life skills radio programme

With funding from Irish Aid, UNFPA Sierra Leone is supporting the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education to air life skills sessions on the Radio Teaching Programme, based on the national life skills manual "I am somebody". The programme is aired three - five days per week and aims to reach both in and out of school adolescents.

To increase access to the radio programme, UNFPA is also distributing radios to vulnerable adolescent girls. An orientation was held on the 27th of May with Women in Crisis Movement to ensure they could safely conduct distribution of radios and dignity kits. The orientation focused on the radio learning programme and the life skills lessons, along with instructions on hand hygiene and mask use. A session was also held on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. In May, a total of 305 radios were distributed by Women in Crisis Movement along with dignity kits to girls in Port Loko district. In June, a further 695 radios were distributed in Kambia, bringing the total distributed to 1000 radios given to vulnerable girls.



Ensuring staff welfare

With the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the health and wellbeing of all personnel working at the UNFPA country office is of utmost concern. The following actions have been taken;

- Regular trainings have been conducted for all staff on hand hygiene and the wearing of masks. Each member of staff has received facemasks and hand sanitizers.
- While in the office, strict social distancing rules and mask use is observed, with no more than two people working in any office at once.
- All staff, cleaners and security guards at the country office were orientated by the Quality Improvement team on wearing masks and how to maximize hand hygiene in May and June.
- A memo was shared with all staff on standard precautions.
- A three-times a day surface/door handles cleaning routine with detergent was instituted, and more durable cleaning gloves procured for the cleaners, in line with the WHO best practice guidelines.
- Posters on COVID-19 have been put up throughout the Country Office,
- Regular welfare checks are being conducted by the Human Resources Associate on all staff, and a staff counsellor is available for all staff.