SITUATION UPDATE

The number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise, with more than 3 million cases and more than 212,000 deaths worldwide. While the situation remains very serious, there are signs that the social-distancing measures taken by most nations are showing positive results. The past three weeks have seen a leveling off in the growth of new cases, with roughly 565,000 confirmed cases each week worldwide. This stands in stark contrast to the middle of March, when the number of confirmed new cases was growing by an average of 286% per week. This trend signifies a shift from exponential to linear growth in confirmed new cases.

Even with these positive signals, large concerns remain as to the consequences that will arise as the virus spreads in communities and nations with less access to resources and medical health professionals. The World Food Program estimates that due to COVID-19, by the end of 2020 the number of people facing acute hunger in the world will double, leading to 265 million people living on the edge of starvation. Also of great concern is the vulnerability of those living in refugee camps. The first COVID-19 case was recently confirmed in a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon.

In Africa, there are more than 26,000 cases of COVID-19 and more than 1,200 deaths, with the largest number coming from North Africa. Many countries throughout the continent have continued to keep lockdowns in place to stop the spread of the virus.

FAST FACTS

- According to the Johns Hopkins University tracker, which consolidates data from a range of sources, as of April 27, there have been 3,061,521 cases reported in 185 countries and regions.
- In the United States, we are supporting health facilities in Los Angeles, New York City, Puerto Rico, Detroit and Chicago with emergency medical field units, equipment, supplies and staff, with more deployments planned in other cities nationwide.
- International Medical Corps has screened 144,875 individuals for COVID-19 at our global missions and has distributed more than 1.8 million personal protective equipment items.
- International Medical Corps has trained 7,027 frontline healthcare professionals on COVID-19 prevention and control measures, and has reached 279,373 people with communications on how to reduce risk.
With more than 1 million cases, the United States has by far the most in the world. The total cases in the United States are greater than the combined amount of the next five hardest-hit countries. There have been more than 56,000 deaths, with more than 40% of those occurring in New York state. Also of great concern is the safety of health workers, more than 9,000 of whom have contracted COVID-19 in the USA.\(^4\) Though the overall growth rate of the virus has leveled off, daily new cases and deaths remain high. Last week, the number of new cases averaged greater than 28,000 per day. The highest daily death toll yet recorded was on April 21, with 2,804 deaths.

Several states plan to begin reopening non-essential businesses on or before May 1. It is unclear how the reopening of states and cities will affect the total number of cases moving forward.

In Europe, the number of cases and deaths continue to decline in most countries. Coinciding with the decline in new cases, some European nations have begun to slowly reopen their societies. Denmark, Norway, Spain, Austria, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and France have all announced a respective easing of measures. Some countries have announced the reopening of primary schools in the coming weeks and others have allowed the reopening of small businesses.

**INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS RESPONSE**

In response to the pandemic, International Medical Corps is focused on ensuring continuity of operations throughout its global programs, to ensure that patients and other beneficiaries continue to receive lifesaving healthcare services without disruption.

**COVID-19 RESPONSE: UNITED STATES**

In the United States, International Medical Corps has partnered with hospitals in Los Angeles, New York, Puerto Rico, Detroit and Chicago to provide medical surge support, including emergency medical field units, personal protective equipment (PPE) and other medical equipment and supplies, and clinical volunteers.

- **In Los Angeles**, International Medical Corps has partnered with Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Hospital (MLKCH), LAC + USC Medical Center and Olive View-UCLA Medical Center to supply emergency medical field units to alleviate pressure and decongest their emergency departments. At MLKCH, the units will also provide additional space for screening and triage of patients. At LAC + USC Medical Center and Olive View-UCLA Medical Center, the units will be used to provide long-term care for patients with acute needs. This week, International Medical Corps will be providing emergency medical field units to Coast Plaza Hospital, Memorial Hospital of Gardena, East Los Angeles Doctors Hospital and Community Hospital of Huntington Park. International Medical Corps will also continue to work with each hospital to source critical equipment and supplies to strengthen the facilities’ capacity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, International Medical Corps has delivered pulse oximeters, telemetry monitors, ventilators and other medical equipment critical to the care of acute respiratory illness.

- **In New York City**, International Medical Corps has partnered with hospitals in high-risk areas, including Brooklyn and Queens. In partnership with MediSys Health System, International Medical Corps has provided emergency medical field units at Flushing Hospital Medical Center and Jamaica Hospital Medical Center. At the height of the pandemic in New York City, both hospitals experienced a surge in COVID-19 cases. The shelters provided extra capacity to support their overwhelmed emergency departments. As the number of cases have decreased, International Medical Corps has continued to support the hospitals by providing critical surge staffing support and sourcing of personal protective equipment. In addition to providing support to the MediSys Health System, International Medical Corps has partnered with Maimonides Medical Center and has provided surge staffing.

\(^4\) [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6915e6.htm?__cid=mm6915e6_x#F1_down]
International Medical Corps has deployed more than 40 volunteers to support hospitals in New York City. Volunteers include nurse practitioners, registered nurses, critical care physicians and paramedics.

- **In Puerto Rico**, International Medical Corps has partnered with Hospital de Damas in Ponce and Hospital Universitario de Dr. Ramón Ruiz Arnau (HURRA) in Bayamón, near San Juan, to deploy emergency medical field units that are supporting emergency departments’ response to COVID-19. Moving forward, International Medical Corps will continue to help both hospitals with source and provide PPE and essential medical supplies. International Medical Corps has also identified two additional healthcare providers that need resources and a team will be deployed to the region in the coming weeks.

- **In Detroit**, International Medical Corps has partnered with Henry Ford Hospital in downtown Detroit and Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital in West Bloomfield, MI. International Medical Corps deployed a team of logisticians and a clinician to Detroit to support the development of configurations for the emergency medical field units and to discuss critical staffing and equipment needs. The configurations were finalized and field units were set up on April 14 and 15, to support overwhelmed emergency departments. Though the Henry Ford hospitals do not need staffing support, International Medical Corps is helping them source PPE and essential medical supplies.

- **In the Chicago area**, International Medical Corps has partnered with Ingalls Memorial Hospital in Harvey, and Vista East Medical Center in Waukegan, IL. In mid-April, International Medical Corps deployed a team of logisticians and a clinician to work with both hospitals to deploy emergency medical field units and to identify critical staffing and equipment needs. At Vista East Medical Center, the field units are being used as a triage area for patients prior to entering the Emergency Department. International Medical Corps also has provided clinical volunteers to Vista East Medical Center, who will provide critical support to the emergency department in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**GLOBAL RESPONSE**

International Medical Corps is also responding in the nearly 30 countries where we work. Each week, we provide highlights from our response in one of our regions. This week, highlights from our platform encompassing West Africa, the Caribbean and the Americas include the following.

- **In the Bahamas**, International Medical Corps is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by promoting water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) measures, educating people about infection prevention and control (IPC), and providing essential supplies. International Medical Corps is supporting five health facilities on Grand Bahama island, providing handwashing stations and PPE, including masks, gloves, gowns, sharps containers, aprons and first-aid kits. International Medical Corps has so far reached more than 15,000 individuals with COVID-19 awareness messaging.

- **In Burundi**, International Medical Corps has conducted cascade trainings on COVID-19 infection prevention and control and case management for more than 600 healthcare providers and more than 35 Ministry of Health (MoH) personnel. The country team has already been working closely with the MoH and other key stakeholders to protect the country from Ebola, which the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has been battling since 2018, and has leveraged these preparedness activities to support the country’s COVID-19 contingency plans. Stakeholders have participated in activities such as mapping of priority health districts in Burundi based on the level of proximity to the Bujumbura International Airport, and taking into account factors such as tourist and mining sites that attract foreigners. Burundi has seen its first confirmed cases in the past week. Though the government has not announced any formal restrictions, communities have already begun taking precautions, such as setting up handwashing stations and maintaining some degree of social distancing.
• In Cameroon, International Medical Corps is implementing a COVID-19 response and prevention project in the Minawao refugee camp in the Far North, where malnutrition is widespread among the more than 60,000 refugees who live there. To date, teams have trained 28 health staff and 74 community health workers (CHWs) in COVID-19 prevention, while CHWs have reached more than 6,000 people with COVID-19 messaging.

• In the Central African Republic (CAR), the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has asked International Medical Corps to lead the Community Engagement Committee—a consortium of Oxfam, the Danish Refugee Council and Concern Worldwide—to support the country’s COVID-19 response. This body is working with the MoH to organize the NGO and donor communities on the COVID-19 response, to ensure that there are no gaps or overlaps in programming. The committee is developing key guidance on key interventions, catchment areas, partners already deployed, treatment gaps and budget to be developed.

• In Chad, International Medical Corps is supporting treatment in one hospital in N’Djamena, providing handwashing stations and mass messaging about COVID-19 prevention, and coordinating with the humanitarian community.

• In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), International Medical Corps has provided COVID-19 training for more than 45 healthcare personnel and 16 MoH staff. Currently, the government’s COVID-19 preparedness and response activities are centered in the capital city of Kinshasa, where a facility is being established to safely manage cases. Though no other cities have COVID-19 ready treatment centers, the network of screening and referral units set up over the past 18 months to fight the Ebola epidemic have the potential to conduct COVID-19 screenings. International Medical Corps has established 95 facilities in 11 health zones along the border of eastern DRC.

• In Mali, International Medical Corps is part of the COVID-19 Task Force of the Health Cluster, and is cooperating with international partners—including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)—to formulate joint responses. Our team is meeting regularly with government counterparts in Bamako to determine support needs, and is currently shifting some of its programming to perform COVID-19 mitigation measures.

• In Nigeria, International Medical Corps is currently responding to the COVID-19 outbreak through its network of 647 trained volunteers, who have been trained as part of our CORE Group Polio Project. Volunteers are conducting surveillance and have reached more than 42,000 people with information about COVID-19. Additionally, these volunteers have provided training to community leaders and members about COVID-19 preventative measures and have distributed information, education and communication materials in seven camps for internally displaced persons. International Medical Corps has also contributed to surveillance and contact tracing efforts in Kano, while working with the Social Mobilization and Risk Communication team in Kano and Borno states.

• Zimbabwe has been on lockdown since March 30 and making increased efforts to trace individuals who have been in contact with infected persons. Our country team continues to participate virtually in key meetings with donors and partners, and is facilitating ongoing district-level distribution of fliers and posters about COVID-19 prevention. The team has also worked collaboratively with the MoH to develop additional educational materials for distribution, and applied for 500 bicycles from World Bicycle Relief to be used by community health volunteers working on COVID-19 prevention issues.
Technical Guidance


