

COVID-19: Caribbean situation

(UNICEF Country Offices data)

Situation GUYANA

- As of 19 March, 5 confirmed cases, 1 death (1st case was confirmed on March-11, imported from US/New York, all confirmed related to the fatality);
- President Granger has addressed the country on 11 March to inform on public gatherings been discouraged: (i) non-essential travel be discouraged; (ii) competent agencies continue to patrol irregular border crossings; and (iii) enhanced sensitization of key personnel at all air and seaports is to continue; (As of 17 March), the Government has upscaled efforts to monitor travelers using interior flights / land routes meanwhile has not stopped movements.
- On March 16, a Public Health Ordinance has been issued summarizing national decisions. The National Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) [led by the Civil Defense Commission] has been activated the same day to provide sector wide support; UNICEF is participating.
- On 18 March at midnight, screening at entry points (for 15 high risk countries) is replaced by closure of airports from midnight of 18 March for 14 days.
- [**Elections**] High Court Judge Franklin Holder has granted an interim injunction blocking the recount today (17 March). Following the court ruling, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) high-level team due to oversee the recount decided to leave the country.
- All schools are closed since 16 March for 2 weeks (27 March) and distance learning has been put in place, including using radio.

Situation SURINAME

- As of 19 March, 4 confirmed cases (1st case was confirmed on March-12, imported from the Netherlands) receiving treatment in isolation at Wanica Hospital; 18 suspected cases and 178 contacts were monitored and tested negative.
- Airspace/borders has been closed since March-14 at 00.00; travelers will not be allowed to the Surinamese territory; all borders are closed. Only cargo ships will be authorized to enter and will be subjected to 100% of screening upon arrival. All outbound foreign passengers will be transported between March 15-22 and countries who want to repatriate their citizens, need to contact the MOFA.
- All social gatherings are limited to a maximum of 100 persons; all licenses for social events, gatherings etc. are revoked with immediate effect; 2-meter security distance between two people applies in supermarkets and closure all public markets
- All schools are closed since 16 March for one month (until 14 April); the latter being declared as the Easter vacation commencing 2 weeks earlier than usual to prevent loss of effective schooltime.

Situation Eastern Caribbean Area¹:

- The first case of confirmed COVID-19 in the sub-region was reported in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on 11 March 2020. As of 25 March 2020, the status is:
Anguilla (0)
Antigua and Barbuda (3)
Barbados (18)
British Virgin Islands (2)
Dominica (11)
Grenada (1)
Montserrat (2)
Saint Kitts and Nevis (2)
Saint Lucia (3)
St. Vincent and the Grenadines (1)
Trinidad and Tobago (60)
Turks and Caicos Islands (1)
- On 25 March, one (1) COVID-19 associated death was reported in Trinidad.
- As the risk of further importation of cases to the Caribbean remains very high, all Governments have put in place movement restrictions and some have closed their borders.
- All Governments have announced temporary closure of public and private schools (more than 3,000 education facilities have been closed, affecting about 500,000 children attending early childhood education, primary and secondary schools.),
- Restaurants and other establishments have also been closed. These measures have all started to impact local markets and left many households in immediate economic set-backs, and social dislocation.
- All countries have introduced social distancing measures which have contributed to panic buying and shortage of essential supplies.
- In Trinidad and Tobago, an estimated 24,300 in migrants from Venezuela where approximately 10 per cent being children, are at heightened risk to the immediate and secondary impacts of COVID-19, which further limit their already low access to social services.

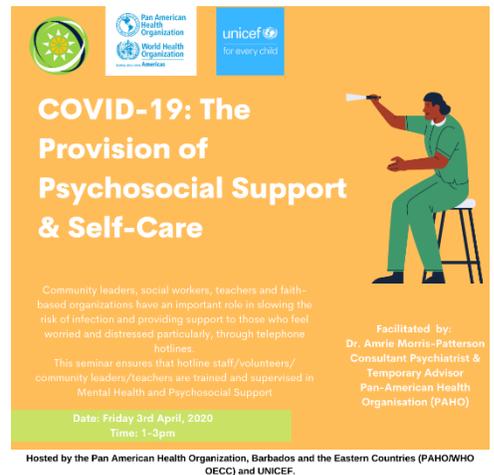
Impacts:

- Some of the impacts will hit the already most vulnerable households much harder, e.g. in terms of: (1) their **physical well-being** (higher morbidity and mortality among those without means to self-isolate, protect themselves and afford care); (2) **lower income** (due to rising unemployment/underemployment, fewer remittances); (3) **limited essential goods** or higher costs (food, pharmaceuticals); and (4) **reduced access to essential services** (such as school closures, limited healthcare facilities).
- Misinformation on the spread of COVID-19 can exacerbate xenophobia, stigma and discrimination that migrant/displaced children and their families already face.

¹ Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands

UNICEF Response:

- Coordination with Governments to provide support on Health (WASH & Hygiene promotion, referral system), C4D (messaging, RCCE) and Education (messaging to be translated in Dutch, distance learning/alternative learning process to be explored, etc.).
- Phone companies (Telesur & Digicell) share messages in 4 international languages (French, English, Dutch, Portuguese) and the UN communication group work on the translation of messages in local language (Surinamese, Sranatongo etc.). Some billboards with key messages are in place.
- in conjunction with PAHO facilitating mental health tools and psychosocial support, parenting, among others. through different ways and materials: Facebook Live sessions are being hosted by UNICEF every Friday in March through April to cover issues relating to children, adolescents, caregivers, policymakers.
- UNICEF is coordinated with the Ministries of Education to provide options for distance learning, as well as guidance for educators and parents to ensure the continuity of learning during this period of school closure.



COVID-19: The Provision of Psychosocial Support & Self-Care

Community leaders, social workers, teachers and faith-based organizations have an important role in slowing the risk of infection and providing support to those who feel worried and distressed particularly, through telephone hotlines.

This seminar ensures that hotline staff/volunteers/community leaders/teachers are trained and supervised in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

Date: Friday 3rd April, 2020
Time: 1-3pm

Facilitated by:
Dr. Amrie Morris-Patterson
Consultant Psychiatrist &
Temporary Advisor
Pan-American Health
Organisation (PAHO)

Hosted by the Pan American Health Organization, Barbados and the Eastern Countries (PAHO/WHO OEEC) and UNICEF.