

**Liberia**

Nairobi, 28 July 2021

SITUATION

In Liberia, from 3rd January 2020 to 16th July 2021, there have been 5,306 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 148 deaths, reported to WHO. As of 12th July 2021, a total of 95,423 vaccine doses have been administered. Liberia has administered at least 95,423 doses of COVID vaccines so far. Assuming every person needs 2 doses, that is enough to have vaccinated about 1% of the country's population.

Liberia is reporting 43 new infections on average each day, 23% of the peak — the highest daily average reported on July 8th.

On June 18, 2021, the Ministry of Health revised its COVID-19 National Guidelines due to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases being reported in Liberia. The new guidelines include but are not limited to; restricting passengers who have been present in India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh within the last 14 days to arrive in Liberia.

In addition, wearing a mask and handwashing are mandatory in public, as well as social distancing of at least three feet. Gatherings of more than 20 persons (including parties, weddings, and funerals) are not allowed; gatherings of under 20 persons must follow the mitigation protocols.

In addition, persons who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their contacts are required to comply with the guidelines of health authorities and related health rules, such as keeping telephone lines open, self-quarantine, submission to quarantine or observation measures, and adherence to medical advice. Liberia health facilities have limited production of medicines and medical supplies and largely depends on overseas production, and the supply from India has been disrupted as India deals with its own COVID-19 crisis.

The Ministry of health in Liberia is advising all their public offices to reduce their staff by 50 percent and learning institutions will be shut down if people are non-compliant to the health guidelines in place on various campuses. There are more than 630 active confirmed cases in Liberia, according to Chief Medical Officer Doctor Francis Ketteh, which includes 226 healthcare workers (<https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20210619-liberia-bans-travel-from-india-as-covid-cases-rise>).

The gaps that need to be addressed by this project include providing medication for referral hospitals and supporting affected persons with food security and seed funds for women access to finance for those whose livelihoods were affected by the lock down protective measures.

Households in the targeted communities have relied on coping mechanisms that are in many instances negative. Regarding health, the risk is that most of the rural dwellers live on herbs. As a result, they will keep treating family members with herbs until curable diseases kill those family members because of lateness in seeking needed medical attention in hospital. This situation is exacerbated by medical facilities turning patients away because of lack of medication. The need is medication to improve health services complemented by nutritious food such as high value vegetables to expedite the recovery of patients.

Rural households rely on creek and rivers for drinking water where they do not have improved WATSAN facilities and therefore contract waterborne diseases that sometime results into death and increase opportunities for contracting deadly diseases like COVID-19. There is need to assist communities with hand pumps and latrines with washrooms to bring sanity and increase hygiene activities in rural communities.

Another critical need is finance for stimulating small businesses for women and girls who are vulnerable to abuses because of poverty. Village saving and loan activities have had tremendous success in financing small women businesses, and therefore this project will provide needed funds to train and engage women and girls in the agriculture component households in saving and loan activities. In disaster situations, survivors who lost personal effects such as food, utensils, and clothing and in some instances damages to the shelter.

NEEDS

As a result of COVID-19 pandemic, the population living below the national poverty line is expected to increase from 55.5 percent in 2019 to 68.9 percent, which means that an additional 526,000 Liberians are at risk of falling into poverty (World Bank).

Hospitals in Liberia need medicine and medical supplies particularly PPE for medical staff, oxygen cylinder, oxygen concentrator and ventilators.

There is a need to improve education on the disease, because, while awareness of COVID-19 is high, knowledge of symptoms is limited. COVID-19 is not seen as a respiratory illness that affects lungs or breathing or causes pneumonia. Nevertheless, one in four (25%) would like further information on 'how to protect themselves from COVID-19.

The pandemic has put the region in a state of crisis. The epidemic affected persons find themselves in a desperate situation, with many unmet vital humanitarian needs such as access to medications, safe drinking water, sanitary latrines and nutritious food. The health risk is that most of the rural dwellers live on herbs and are of the conviction that herbs can prevent COVID-19. This situation is exacerbated by medical facilities turning patients away because of lack of medication. The need is medication to improve health services complemented by nutritious food such as high value vegetables to expedite the recovery of patients. The specific needs to be addressed are medications for targeted clinics and hospitals, fill information gaps about the COVID pandemic, inputs for vegetable production of high nutritious value for health facilities, packages for survivors of disasters including food and utensils, water and sanitation infrastructure for sanity to communities, seed funds for women access to finance. Another critical need is finance for stimulating small businesses for women and girls who are vulnerable to abuses because of poverty. Village saving and loan activities have had tremendous success in financing small women businesses, and therefore this project will provide needed funds to train and engage women and girls in the agriculture component households in saving and loan activities. In disaster situations, survivors who lost personal effects such as food, utensils, and clothing and in some instances damages to the shelter.

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Medication to improve health service delivery |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Sanitation and hygiene awareness and promotion to prevent COVID-19 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Water and sanitation facilities-Wash latrines and hand pump wells |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Enhance medical facilities resilience of Curran Hospital patient caretaker waiting room |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Enhance medical facilities resilience of Phebe Hospital ER expansion |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Enhance medical facilities resilience of two well-populated community medical facilities |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Food production by Ivorian refugees in Nimba County |

The dire situation is further compounded for the pandemic affected people with vulnerabilities. (optional) more specifically for the elderly in Montserrado County and other Rural areas of Liberia. There is a pressing necessity to provide immediate assistance to minimize loss of life and to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are covered first.

STAKEHOLDERS

The following national and international entities are present and doing their best to respond to the crisis:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | National government | Ministry of Health, County Health Teams, LRRRC |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | UN Agencies | UNHCR, UNDP, WHO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | INGOs | Last Mile Health, MSF, Partners in Health |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Red Cross Red Crescent Movement | LRCS, ICRC |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Military presence | Arm Forces of Liberia, Liberia National Police, Joint Security, DEA. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | National NGOs | Caritas |

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Civil society groups | Consortium of Civil Society of Liberia |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Faith based groups | Interfaith Religious Council, Liberia Council of Churches |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Host communities | Communities in Lofa and Bong and refugee host communities along the Nimba Border, and Monrovia |

The emergency response is currently being coordinated by Ministry of Health and National Task Force set up by the government. To ensure that the humanitarian response is well coordinated and complementary, the ACT forum will take part in meetings with all relevant sector stakeholders (Ministry of Health) and establish an open line of communication with crisis affected persons and communities to ensure a humanitarian response based on participation and feedback.

ACT Alliance

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ACT Liberia Forum has been working in Liberia since 2000, now helping/planning to help people affected by the pandemic and supporting disaster survivors to resettle and response to Ivory Coast refugee crisis along the Liberia-IC border areas |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ACT Liberia Forum is currently monitoring the trend of COVID-19 and reporting to appropriate representatives of MOH in its zone of influence |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | ACT Liberia is currently monitoring the situation and is preparing a rapid needs assessment to have an in-depth context analysis and better understanding of existing vulnerabilities. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The Liberia ACT Forum is monitoring the situation and emergency teams are ready/preparing to respond according to the results of a contextual analysis and rapid needs assessment. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the Liberia ACT forum has identified a gap in communities where it is working and has resolved that if funded, it will have the capacity to properly bridge the identified gap. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The Liberia ACT forum is planning on submitting a funding proposal to provide support to awareness and to the humanitarian needs of the affected people to ensure that the pandemic affected persons' basic needs are met with regards to the assessments of the affected community's needs. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Lutheran Development Services, a member of ACT Liberia Forum is ready to respond, providing assistance to the communities and health facilities or affected households in the coming months with medication, awareness, NFI, WASH, Food for the at-risk segment of the population that includes small children and those who are sick. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Furthermore, ACT Liberia Forum will engage in advocacy on the national and international level to ensure that the voices of those affected by the pandemic are amplified. |

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Nancy Ette (Nancy.Ette@actalliance.org)

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