LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN KAZAKHSTAN ON COVID-19

- On 11 May 2020 the state of emergency was lifted, but the quarantine regime remains in place.
- On 12 May Chief State Sanitary Doctor of Kazakhstan Aizhan Yesmagambetova outlined three stages of the quarantine regime exit strategy: first stage with weekly increase not more than 7%; second stage – not more than 5%; and third stage – not more than 2%. Quarantine regime restrictions will be lifted depending on COVID-19 outbreak dynamics in each region. Meanwhile, in Atyrau region at Tengiz oil field a COVID-19 outbreak involving 384 workers was reported.
- From 18 May 2020, catering facilities (cafe, restaurants), hotels, places of religious worship will resume service in compliance with sanitary standards using no more than 30% of capacity. From 1 June 2020 railway services will start operating;
- Air flights to and between Nur-Sultan, Almaty, Shymkent, Aktau, Zhezkazgan, Uralsk, Balkhash, Urdzhun, Zaisan are operational from 13 May 2020, observing the sanitary regime on social distancing, wearing masks, thermometry. The compulsory PCR test certificate requirement for passengers was cancelled.
- As reported, Kazakhstani scientists have developed PCR tests, which are currently being tested and prepared for release. It is expected that more than 6,000 tests will be produced by June 2020.
EMERGENCY HEALTH RESPONSE

- Technical meeting conducted with the Ministry of Health and experts from WHO Regional Office to discuss the national transition plan.
- WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO supporting ‘Health Promoting Schools’ preparatory works for schools monitoring and evaluation. First round was conducted in 3 regions, and second round planned for 11 regions. All 2500 schools have been invited to participate in weekly webinars.
- UNFPA, UNICEF, the Republican Center for Healthcare System Development and the National Center of Public Health have developed the Interim National Guideline on maternal and neonatal care in the context of COVID-19 for mother and child health service providers.
- Continued focused studies with national counterparts, on behavioural and sero-epi studies are ongoing to collect data and monitor the scale of COVID-19 within the population, with emphasis on asymptomatic population.
- WHO launched an inter-agency portal for procurement and distribution of critical items/supplies is in its initial phase. Ministry of Health will be able to access the order details and track the orders.
- 3 webinars were provided through the WHO Kazakhstan Online Platform on Infection Prevention Control (IPC) and Laboratory for COVID-19.

USEFUL INFORMATION

COVID-19 MOBILE APP FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Available in six languages and delivers mobile access to a wealth of COVID-19 knowledge resources developed by WHO.

COVID-19 RESPONSE SUPPLIES

- WHO provided around 12,000 hygiene kits to Kazakhstani medical personnel involved in COVID-19 treatment.
- 1,000 SuperScript III Platinum one-step PCR test kits to be distributed to the National Reference Lab in Almaty.
- UNICEF and CitiBank Kazakhstan donated 60 new laptops to schoolchildren from vulnerable families of Nur-Sultan and Almaty.

UN staff in Kazakhstan has made voluntary donations to more than 80 families from vulnerable groups in Nur-Sultan, Kokshetau, Pavlodar, Karaganda, Shymkent and Atyrau. The families received basic necessities, such as food and hygiene products.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT AND RESPONSE

- Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Kazakhstan has been commissioned. A mass survey of 12,000 respondents has commenced to inform the socio-economic impact assessment of COVID-19, which aims to design a set of coherent and specific policy recommendations.
- UNDP is redesigning the Youth Apprenticeship Scheme/Programme and is developing a toolkit for initial testing and a roadmap for scaling up nationwide.
- Rapid Training Needs Assessment of Civil Servants in Crisis setting and under telecommuting working modalities has been initiated in partnership with the Academy of Public Administration.
- Initiative on psychological support for the staff of the Civil Service Agency has commenced.
- The Astana Civil Service Hub has supported the city of Turkestan in launching an easy-to-use system of online registration of entry, exit and movement of citizens during the COVID-19 lockdown. Jointly with UNDP has conducted several COVID-19 related on-line activities: Global Web Forum on Governments agile response to COVID-19; International conference “Distance functioning of civil servants”; several webinars on human resources management in crisis setting.
- UN Women conducted the COVID-19 Rapid Gender Assessment on main challenges faced by women and men, including their economic empowerment and vulnerability. The survey can serve as one of the main data sources to inform a broader national socio-economic impact analysis of the crisis on individual/household level.
- UNEP issued recommendations for an emergency approach to COVID-19 waste management.
- Webinars on key resources to COVID-19 education response for over 3,300 education stakeholders from local education departments and multi-graded schools in 9 regions of Kazakhstan have been organised.
- Online webinar on positive parenting during quarantine and on arranging distance learning of children for staff of Kazpost was supported by UNICEF and attended by 100 participants.
- UNICEF engaged NGOs in provision of the services for children affected by migration in several regions of Kazakhstan and in monitoring of the situation among migrant children and families. As of 5 May, two migrant children were placed in state-run institution (in Shymkent city), borders are closed, terms for stay-in were prolonged for all migrants.
- 21 webinars for school psychologists supported with 3,920 online participants.
- Use of https://covid-19.medicalcenter.kz increased by 40%. 36 individual online counselling sessions were provided by mental health specialists.
- IOM delivered online training to NGO partners across Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan on COVID-19 prevention measures. In total, humanitarian and legal assistance is provided to more than 850 migrants and their families.
- UNAIDS advocated ensuring access to opioid substitution therapy (OST) and other harm reduction services that have become difficult due to lockdown for people who use drugs in Kazakhstan.
UN RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Office of the UN Resident-Coordinator (RCO) in cooperation with UNICEF and 6 local influencers prepared a video tales series based on the “You are my hero” storybook for children, and also broadcasted on Astana FM radio. Total reach comprised 7 mln people, out of which via social media 105K reach and 15K engagement rate;
- RCO and UNFPA issued a joint press-release on COVID-19 impact on gender-based violence and the needs of people with disabilities, which was widely covered in the media;
- WHO jointly with the Ministry of Health developed a video with practical recommendations for elderly people and people with NCDs;
- UNICEF published an article about 6 ways to support children for parents;
- UNESCO developed Instagram interactive tools (basketball free throw game and information cards on sports and SDGs) to encourage people to stay active and healthy during the lockdown. Campaign outreach comprised 145K people;
- UNAIDS organized a live broadcast on Facebook with Kazakhstani celebrities who talked about the role of volunteers and providing help to most in need in these difficult times;
- Conducted social media campaigns on International Nurses Day 2020, positive parenting, impact of COVID-19 on gender-based violence, COVID-19 preventive measures, public service delivery during the COVID lockdown, environmental aspects of COVID and “green” recovery. COVID-19 infodemic;
- Provided wide coverage of the activities in local TV, printed, online media outlets - more than 50 articles published, 3 interviews.

USEFUL INFO MATERIALS

- Policy Brief: COVID-19 and the Need for Action on Mental Health
- UNFPA video for people with disabilities explaining what steps to take if faced with violence: Kazakh and Russian language versions
- Web story about an increase in gender-based violence reports in Kazakhstan
- UNESCO Storytelling campaign #CoronaStories to share stories and provide scientific information on COVID-19
- Interviews about COVID-19 impact on gender based violence, education, virus outbreak forecast
- National hotline 116 16, operated by IOM partner NGO on advising to the victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants

SAVE THE DATE: EVERY FRIDAY AT 3 PM
UNAIDS weekly live stream on COVID-19 and HIV

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