Regional Highlights

- All countries in the region, except Turkmenistan, have officially reported COVID-19 cases. Armenia, Moldova and Belarus have been the most affected relative to their population size, with more than 14,700 confirmed cases per million population in Armenia. Turkey has been the most affected country in absolute numbers, making up more than 30% of reported cases in the region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- UNFPA continues to mobilise partners for the COVID-19 response by looking at the situation from an immediate and long-term perspective, creating partnerships that help UNFPA adapt health and social programmes.

- UNFPA trained SRH service providers, in eight countries, in areas such as the implementation of COVID-19-related guidelines, maternal health, family planning, cervical cancer prevention, and services for adolescents and young people.

- During the Samarkand Human Rights Web-Forum in Uzbekistan, UNFPA Regional Director for EECA stressed the need to prioritize young people having access to the education, tools, services and choices necessary for them to reach their full potential as we seek to build back better in the post COVID-19 era.

- UNFPA supports the development of national strategies to ensure the prevention of GBV and the continuity and accessibility of a multi-sectoral GBV services for women and adolescent girls.

- The regional hotline supported by UNFPA and operated by the Eurasian Women’s Network on AIDS has helped 88 people living with HIV/AIDS to receive counselling support and life-saving antiretroviral treatment medications while stuck in 14 countries, other than their home country, due to COVID-19 travel-related restrictions.
Regional Response Summary

Coordination and partnerships

UNFPA continues to mobilise partners for the COVID-19 response by looking at the situation from both an immediate and a long-term perspective, creating partnerships that help UNFPA adapt health and social programmes, and reaching more beneficiaries in a post-COVID era. UN Country Teams (UNCT) are critical coordination mechanisms that are streamlining and prioritising the UN’s support to governments. Furthermore, UNFPA ensures that the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of vulnerable groups are addressed by UN actors and their partners across the COVID-19 response and recovery.

Country examples:

● Albania: UNFPA partnered with UNCT to design a COVID-19 response project covering three main objectives:
  1. Strengthening COVID-19 response and safe delivery of services;
  2. Community engagement;
  3. Gender lenses to protect SRHR and promote gender equality. It is hoped that the project will be funded by the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF).

● Kosovo*: The UNFPA country office will partner with UN WOMEN and UNDP to apply for gender-responsive UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery MPTF. The concept note is under development, and is based on the United Nations Kosovo Team (UNKT) Socio-Economic Response Plan (SERP).

● Kyrgyzstan: UNFPA and the Inter-agency Working Group under the leadership of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and Association and Crisis Centres coordinated and developed the unified multi-sectoral approach to GBV cases.

● Turkey: UNFPA Turkey will be partnering with WHO and UNHCR to design a joint health-protection response to COVID-19 under the MPTF. UNFPA is an active member of the UN Turkey COVID-19 Emergency Response and Preparedness (ERP) Working Group and the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 Task Force.

Continuity of SRH Services and interventions, including protection of health workforce

Impressive results were achieved in EECA countries and territories with UNFPA support:

● Trainings of SRH service providers were conducted to implement COVID-19 guidelines and protocols in maternal health, family planning, cervical cancer prevention and adolescent and youth SRH services in 8 countries (Albania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kosovo*, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Moldova, Tajikistan)

● SRH services continue to be provided by Mobile Teams in Turkey and Ukraine;

● The provision of PPE supplies continues in multiple countries to prevent the spread of the virus in health facilities and other institutions.

Preparatory activities for the regional assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on SRH services (I-SHARE) in EECA countries were initiated in cooperation with the Academic Network for SRH and Rights Policy (ANSER). Regional web conferences and bilateral consultations have been conducted in order to address the priority issues in EECA countries.

Country examples:

● Albania: In partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and health care operators, UNFPA has conducted the training of 20 primary health care providers from Tirana region on the Safe Delivery of SRHR Services in the context of COVID-19. In partnership with Latter-Day Saints Charities (LDSC), UNFPA CO facilitated the process of the donation of examination gloves for health care institutions and regional maternity hospitals.

● Azerbaijan: In partnership with the Ministry of Health, UNFPA conducted training sessions on COVID-19 in maternity hospitals, women consultations and perinatal centers in 8 regions. UNFPA delivered trainings for 10 antenatal clinics in Baku on the topic of the consultation of COVID-infected pregnant women. UNFPA also participates in the survey on the impact of COVID-19 on SRH and family planning conducted by the ANSER and GENT University, Belgium.

* All references to Kosovo should be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).
Regional Response Summary continued

Country examples (continued):

- **Belarus**: UNFPA has purchased Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for 6 perinatal centers within the framework of the Humanitarian Trust Fund (HTF) project to improve preparedness for the second wave.
- **Georgia**: An online training course for healthcare providers on clinical management of pregnant women affected by COVID-19 has been developed and approved by the Tbilisi State Medical University professional board as part of the learning strategy.
- **Moldova**: UNFPA supported the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MoHLSP) in increasing capacities of Primary Health Care (PHC) providers in ensuring continuity of cervical screening in the context of COVID-19. Capacity strengthening trainings were conducted based on the approved “Standard on organizing and functioning of the cervical screening services in the Republic of Moldova,” developed with UNFPA support.
- **North Macedonia**: UNFPA, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, coordinated the stocktaking of COVID-19-related needs of SRH facilities in the country, both in terms of PPE supplies and capacity strengthening of its personnel. The identified urgent needs will be addressed in the coming weeks.
- **Tajikistan**: In partnership with the International Federation of Obstetrics and Gynecologists and Jhpiego (international non-profit health organization affiliated with Johns Hopkins University), UNFPA has received approval from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP) for introducing the new international program “Helping Mothers Survive.” Second, a series of 3-day trainings on counseling women in family planning and planned pregnancy according to the guidelines of MoHSP were conducted in 2 regions of the country, covering 40 RH service providers.
- **Turkey**: UNFPA provided support to the MoH in COVID-19 prevention and response as well as continuation of essential SRH services — via provision of mobile health teams, hygiene kits, PPE, and information, education and communication (IEC) materials, reaching out to most vulnerable groups (including seasonal migrant workers, pregnant/lactating women, people at risk of/living with HIV, elderly and people with disabilities).
- **Ukraine**: UNFPA mobile SRH teams conducted 5,480 medical counseling sessions and examinations to the population living along the contact line in Popasna and Avdiivka, which has difficulties in receiving medical help during COVID-19. 240 Female Health Worker Sanitary Kits were also distributed to female medical staff working in 27 “first line” COVID-19 response health facilities in 6 regions with the highest COVID-19 incidence rate.
- **Uzbekistan**: The newly approved additional ceiling of $200,000 will be used to support 14 maternity hospitals of Tashkent city as well as census staff. Meanwhile, teleconferencing equipment supported jointly by UNFPA and UNICEF was installed in maternity hospitals of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, Nukus medical institute and the Mother and Child Healthcare department to facilitate distance learning.

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Addressing GBV

UNFPA is addressing GBV in the EECA region by:

- **Supporting** national strategies to ensure GBV prevention and the raising of awareness through development of social media products and activities targeted to the needs of refugee/migrant populations.
- **Ensuring** the continuity and accessibility of multi-sectoral GBV services for women and adolescent girls. This includes medical support, psychosocial counseling, supporting hotlines, availability of safe spaces for survivors of violence, case management and referrals.
- **Improving** the capacity and skills of frontline service providers, particularly health, psychosocial and police, aimed at strengthening a coordinated multi-sectoral response to GBV in the COVID context.
- **Adapting** a guideline for the development of remote GBV essential services considering social distancing measures and limited mobility. The guideline incorporates the specific needs of women and girls with disabilities and survivors of GBV, specifically focusing on psychosocial support services and their referral in the context of COVID-19 crisis response.

**Country examples:**

- **Azerbaijan:** UNFPA produced an animation video on what should be included in response measures to end GBV in COVID-19 realities. Another public service announcement developed in 2018 was produced on gender-biased sex selection highlighting the findings of the Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES). UNFPA, in partnership with the State Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs, also initiated a project on launching a hotline for GBV survivors in the country.
- **Kazakhstan:** Central Asian countries held a meeting to share Kazakhstan’s experience on the Multi-Sectoral Response to Gender-Based Violence and to exchange challenges and progress made in each of the five countries in implementing this response. The two half-days were centered around the different services to GBV survivors and how they interact (health, police, psychosocial), as well as on teaching different tools and using guidelines to strengthen capacity of service providers on how to act when confronted with survivors and perpetrators. The meeting was part of a sub-regional project on GBV in Central Asia funded by the United Kingdom. This was highly relevant given the increase in cases of GBV during the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of hardships and lockdowns.
- **Kyrgyzstan:** Religious leaders and civic activists produced a video on preventing violence against women. The video was discussed among local actors and community members.
- **North Macedonia:** UNFPA initiated a series of activities to address GBV in the light of COVID-19. With support from the British Embassy in Skopje, UNFPA is working on improving the multi-sectoral response to GBV and ensuring safe spaces for GBV survivors even during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Serbia:** In partnership with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), UNFPA continues to carry out awareness-raising activities about functioning GBV services in time of COVID-19, coupled with individual counselling in response to individual women's needs in 5 governmental accommodation centres for refugee/migrant populations.
- **Turkey:** GBV case management services continued to be provided to women, men and key groups through women and girls' safe spaces, key refugee group units and social service centres.
- **Ukraine:** 550,000 Ukrainians were sensitized on the personal safety plan and related actions in case of domestic violence when forced to stay at home with a perpetrator because of the COVID-19 pandemic. 64 representatives of police, courts, prosecutors and social services of Donetsk region discussed strengthening of GBV response during COVID-19.
- **Uzbekistan:** UNFPA, supported by Japanese funding, started the piloting of “Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) multi-sectoral response to gender-based violence” in Nukus city and three districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. During this initiative, more than 130 representatives of healthcare, law enforcement, social and psychological services received online training. This effort is timely and strengthens a coordinated multi-sectoral response to GBV in the midst of COVID-19.
Regional Response Summary continued

Assessment on the health and socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19

UNFPA works with the global network on National Transfer Accounts (NTAs) to enable the use of NTAs for an assessment of socio-economic implications of COVID-19. To this end, UNFPA also works with UN agencies at the country level.

Country examples:

- **Kosovo**: UNFPA jointly with UNDP and other UN Agencies is preparing for the second socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA).
- **Moldova**: UNFPA is in the process of updating its NTA analysis and extends such updates with scenarios that represent current and anticipated impacts of COVID-19. The analysis is expected to reveal priority areas for mitigating policy interventions.
- **Serbia**: SEIA in Serbia is a joint UNCT endeavor. It is being finalized under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) and UNDP. UNFPA supported assessments of the impact of COVID-19 on older people, youth and rapid gender assessment (jointly with UN Women), which are all reflected in the SEIA final report.
- **Turkey**: UNFPA is part of the health, protection and refugee sections of the COVID-19 SEIA and COVID-19 Response Plans. A new assessment is initiated with Sabancı University (the Business Against Domestic Violence Platform) to identify the impact of COVID-19 on domestic violence and worklife of women.
- **Uzbekistan**: Based on the recent survey on the 'No to violence' Telegram channel, ‘Psychologist’s section’ was introduced to share important and useful information on the psychology of GBV, family psychology as well as acquainting the subscribers with the work of psychologists of various centers and organizations who provide assistance to the GBV survivors.

Risk communication and community engagement (including with young people)

Throughout the region, UNFPA supports Ministries of Education in preparation for a safe return to school, and builds capacities of authorities, civil society and young people to reach young people with messages on safe behaviour in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several UNFPA country offices targeted their support on those furthest behind and increased the engagement of young people.

UNFPA, in partnership with the regional youth-led movement, Teenergizer, continues to address the impact of COVID-19 on youth health and well-being in the region through supporting the #StaySafe campaign aimed at empowering youth in the region to feel safe and protected during the pandemic and beyond and to become agents of change within their own families. As part of the project, a second video (from the planned series of video materials) on psychosocial peer support was produced by Teenergizer and widely shared throughout social media channels to reach adolescents and youth with more than 60,000 views in just over a week.

Country examples:

- **Albania**: UNFPA continued to work actively with youth platforms and Y-peer educators in raising awareness of young people in the context of COVID-19, through social media and other online platforms. As schools will open soon, the campaign included emphasis on measures to be observed in school settings: Y-Peer & Youth Voice Albania #Covid19. Online forums continued with young people on Youth and COVID-19, UN75 and Youth International Day: Drivers of change: Youth Mainstreaming in Formal Policy-Making.
- **Armenia**: UNFPA started a selection process for implementation of a puppet theatre play and an interactive video show on preventing COVID-19 and safe behaviour, targeting children and adolescents.
- **Azerbaijan**: The UNFPA country office continued training sessions (online) for youth on gender and reproductive health at Khazar Youth House and Mingechevir Youth House. The country office also initiated a series of Training of Trainers (ToT) to develop a pool of young peer education trainers on sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, life skills education, and youth empowerment. Online sessions for the first group of trainers were held, a call for the second group was announced.
Country examples (continued):

- **Bosnia and Herzegovina**: As a part of continuous investments in youth activism during COVID-19, UNFPA supported “Guardians of Humanity” Youth Training Camp on SRH, COVID-19, stigma and discrimination and migration. This was organised by the Red Cross National Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- **Kosovo**: Through its implementing partner Kosova Population Foundation (KOPF), UNFPA carried out virtual trainings on SRHR to youth from the remote municipality of Dragash, which also included a module on the COVID-19 pandemic based on WHO materials. 22 young people had the opportunity to attend these training sessions from the safety of their homes, thus enhancing their knowledge on SRHR and protecting themselves and their families from possible infections with COVID-19.

- **Kyrgyzstan**: The Online Forum and its Youth, Friendship and Intercultural dialogue started involving more than 70 young people from border areas of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The Forum embeds several events, including UN Model, Youth Peace Ambassadors, Youth Conference, challenges and competitions calling for peace and friendship with the participation of well-known speakers from both countries.

- **Moldova**: UNFPA, in partnership with WHO and UNICEF, supported the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research in producing guides for pupils at all levels, including Vocational Education Training (VET), ensuring the prevention of COVID-19 infection in all educational settings. UNFPA provided support in building capacities of medical staff, teachers and students from Vocational Education Training on ensuring the security of the educational process, early detection, and implementation of measures during a public health emergency.

- **North Macedonia**: UNFPA has launched series of online workshops, discussions and campaigns on youth and COVID-19 response to support young people, with a focus on people with disabilities, LGBT and Roma girls. It is based on a partnership with several NGOs and youth network Y-PEER, based on UNFPA’s rapid assessment about the needs of young people during the pandemic.

- **Serbia**: UNFPA completed small-scale survey on youth activism during the COVID-19 pandemic, which showcased space for improvement for active youth engagement at all levels. Large numbers of young people have no experience in volunteering: as many as 88% do not participate in civic associations, and the latest data indicate that only a quarter of young people were engaged in the community during the COVID-19 epidemic, while a slightly larger number were active in discussions on social media.

- **Tajikistan**: An MoHSP working group is finalizing the design of 2 leaflets on alternative SRH services during the COVID-19 pandemic within the MPTF-funded project, along with informative materials for people living with disabilities (PWDs) on quality SRH services to be provided within the newly established medical rooms for PWDs within the UNFPA Humanitarian Office-funded project.

- **Turkey**: UNFPA is conducting risk communication through youth centers, women and girls’ safe spaces, mobile health services and social services centers on COVID-19 prevention and available response services.

- **Uzbekistan**: UNFPA along with the UN Youth Advisory Board & UN agencies, representatives of youth organizations and various educational institutions organised an online dialogue to support young people’s efforts in taking the lead in the fight against #COVID19 in different ways. On the eve of the Youth Day, young people shared their talents with peers by singing, reading poems, playing musical instruments, encouraging healthy habits and empowering each other.

Leaving no one behind (with a focus on older people and people living with disabilities or with HIV/AIDS)

A regional hotline continues to provide information and services to people living with HIV/AIDS and key populations affected by COVID-19. The hotline, operated by the Eurasian Women’s Network on AIDS (EWNA), helped a total of 88 people living with HIV/AIDS (54 men and 34 women) throughout 14 countries to receive counselling support and life-saving antiretroviral medications while stuck in Czechia, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Latvia, Poland, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, the United Arab Emirates and the United States because of COVID-19-related travel restrictions. At this stage EWNA is preparing to organise a webinar to share its experience with other NGOs in the region as a good model to be replicated in different countries and regions.
Regional Response Summary

A UNFPA-supported community-led study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine on access of women living with HIV and women from key populations to SRHR, HIV and GBV prevention services is underway. The study is being conducted by the EWNA in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Country examples:

- **Armenia**: UNFPA started a grant project for people living with disabilities aimed at improving their well-being, mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on their health and supporting and expanding employment opportunities.

- **Azerbaijan**: UNFPA implemented a series of activities within the Active Ageing project, such as online consultations with psychologists (which already benefited 700 people so far), patchwork trainings for elderly and 4 open-air sessions (yoga, gymnastics, poetry). Within its project aimed at people with disabilities, UNFPA produced a video master-class on wood-carving by the tutor of the first Inclusive Art School of Azerbaijan (who is a person with a disability).

- **Georgia**: The distribution of food and hygiene kits, including information on COVID-19, designed specifically for older persons, has been launched in 2 out of 4 of the country’s poorest target municipalities; Almost 1,400 vulnerable older people living alone (out of 2,300 targeted) have been covered. In addition, staff of all 11 state-funded long-term care institutions for senior citizens are being provided with PPE and disinfectants for the prevention of COVID-19. The standards of care during COVID-19 for older persons in residential institutions and community care homes have been finalized and submitted to the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs for approval.

- **Kazakhstan**: The Public Foundation for Social Support, “Revansh”, and UNFPA produced a video about the UNFPA-supported project being conducted on providing support and gender-sensitive services for women living with HIV and at risk of HIV, residing in Revansh center during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, in the context of social isolation.

- **Kosovo**: UNFPA expanded collaboration with the Kosovo Red Cross to provide support to elderly living alone and without care. In addition, UNFPA established a new partnership with Roma, Egyptian and Ashkali (RAE) NGOs to engage RAE young people with awareness-raising activities on COVID-19 prevention, linking people with SRH health issues with health facilities and providing hygiene kits to single mothers and those most in need.

- **Kyrgyzstan**: A working group has been established to guide psychosocial support for activists and staff of NGOs working with key populations in emergency/crisis situations, including COVID-19. The guide is intended to address emotional distress of the activists and NGO staff members that stems from emergency situations and to improve their well-being.

- **Moldova**: UNFPA and UNAIDS supported the development of the “Standard on organizing and functioning of HIV Prevention Services among Key Populations, including Young Key Populations.” The SOPs were distributed to all health providers working with key populations. The provisions are also adapted to public health emergencies.

- **North Macedonia**: UNFPA established a new partnership to support the national response to older people with regard to COVID-19, focusing on development of protocols for operation of homes for older people, provision of basic PPE for the personnel at these facilities and development of information materials related to COVID-19 prevention.

- **Serbia**: UNFPA initiated innovative partnerships with wide range of partners to respond to the COVID-19 challenges in the second half of 2020, particularly focusing on intergenerational solidarity, peer support and support to older people in Serbia. Close partnership with the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Serbia is being developed in the context of this new funding opportunity.

- **Tajikistan**: UNFPA will further promote SRHR and GBV prevention services for people with disabilities within the upcoming Fourth Country Funding Call - UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF).

- **Turkey**: Protection services continued to be provided to male and female survivors of violence, people at risk of living with HIV and people living with disabilities. Health services were provided to seasonal migrant workers and rural refugees via mobile health teams.
Across the region, UNFPA has reached out to the public, through traditional and social media, to raise awareness of COVID-19 related information and guidance and showcase achievements in assisting people during the pandemic.

Story highlights:

- **Ensuring the reproductive rights of women with disabilities in Georgia**

  Alanna Armitage, UNFPA Regional Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia stressed the need to prioritise young people having access to the education, tools, services and choices necessary for them to reach their full potential as we seek to *build back better* following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Country examples:

- **Armenia**: UNFPA Armenia provided emergency assistance to three regions of Armenia. An article was published on the super heroes of the Maternity Ward department serving pregnant women with COVID-19.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina**: An op-ed was published on Safe motherhood during a pandemic: COVID-19 and sexual and reproductive health. The country office supported a 4-day training on "Guardians of Humanity" for 50 young persons, covering COVID-19, reproductive health and sexually transmitted diseases. Two more Youth Barometer online talk shows were broadcast, discussing pressing community issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the COVID-19 prism. A press statement was published on International Youth Day.
- **Kazakhstan**: An article highlighting the role of protective face shields in providing vital services to people with hearing impairments during COVID-19 has been published. An article about the meeting on Multi-Sectoral Response to Gender-Based Violence (based on the example of Kazakhstan) was published, as well as a feature story about the future documentary “Qyzbolsyn” (May it be a girl) on Informburo.
- **Kosovo**: UNFPA marked International Youth Day 2020 with a comprehensive campaign around the importance of youth participation in decision-making and policy processes and the youth's role in COVID-19.
- **Kyrgyzstan**: International Youth Day was highlighted with a video and article in partnership with State Agency on youth and sport.
- **North Macedonia**: In cooperation with the UN communications team, UNFPA disseminated social media creatives with messages on youth, COVID-19 and staying safe during summer vacation - reaching around 10K individuals.
- **Serbia**: For International Youth Day, UNFPA's country office supported the Center for the Promotion of Science in organizing public actions, calling on youth to participate in decisions that affect them, especially in the context of unprecedented global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.
- **Tajikistan**: UNFPA officially supplied equipment to the Agency of Statistics of Tajikistan for conducting the population and housing census 2020, under the frame of the new project – “Strengthening Demographic Statistics in Tajikistan”, funded by the Government of the Russian Federation.
- **Turkey**: A Friends of UNFPA Turkey video featuring celebrities was broadcast on Facebook (16K reach), Instagram (144K views), and Twitter (50K views) to highlight the importance of the Istanbul Convention and the increase in GBV amidst COVID-19. A series of caricatures were also shared on the same subject. World Humanitarian Day was celebrated with a video of UNFPA Turkey's humanitarian field workers.
- **Ukraine**: 8,987 people have been reached with COVID-19-related posts on social media in August. A UNFPA statement on millions of unplanned pregnancies due to COVID-19 has been placed in 47 media outlets. Distribution of UNFPA medical kits for medical personnel has been covered in 11 media outlets.
## Confirmed Cases and Deaths (UNFPA programme countries) WHO, 3 September 2020

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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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### Confirmed Cases by Country and Region

- **Region**
  - Arab States
  - Asia and the Pacific
  - East and Southern Africa
  - Eastern Europe and Central Asia
  - Latin America and the Caribbean
  - West and Central Africa

![World Map with Confirmed Cases by Country and Region](image-url)