

1. Epidemiological Update

Cases and deaths continued to rise during November for the 63 countries of the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) but at a slower rate than cases and deaths globally. Globally, the month-to-month increase in cases and deaths was similar to the increase for last month (cases in October rose 36 per cent and in November 37 per cent, while deaths rose 18 per cent and 23 percent respectively); at the same time, the rate of increase in cases and deaths for countries in the GHRP slowed from 23 per cent in October to 22 per cent in November and for deaths from 19 per cent to 16 per cent, respectively. The flattening curve for people in the countries of the GHRP, however, does not imply that the impacts of the pandemic have waned in these locations.

In GHRP countries, cases increased by over 3.2 million, a larger increase than the previous month, and almost 79,000 people died. By the end of the month, there had been a total of 17.9 million cases and more than 570,000 deaths since the start of the pandemic. The most cases per day per 100,00 people was in Iran (102), followed by Dominican Republic (59) and Pakistan (45), a change from last month when the highest rate of increase in cases was in Dominican Republic (48), Iran (43) and Peru (41).

Available data along the clinical pathway (from a test and its outcome to hospitalization or ICU admission to death) shows that more women get tested, cases are roughly divided between women and men, and men account for a greater proportion of hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths. These differences should guide program response.

2. Humanitarian Access

Humanitarian operations were impeded during the month in many locations: significant visa issues were reported in 11 countries, almost all of which included additional administrative delays linked to mandatory testing, security clearance and work permits. Overall, more than 1,000 visas are currently pending, nearly 75 per cent of which are for INGOs.

In almost two-thirds of the country operations that responded, in-country restrictions on humanitarian actors translated into the denial of travel authorizations and movement clearances. This affected INGOs less than UN agencies, which accounted for 55 per cent of in-country issues. Humanitarian movements were further constrained due to active military operations, checkpoints, roadblocks, and national fuel shortages.

The number of violent incidents against humanitarian workers rose slightly during November (28, compared to 25 in October). Local staff continue to bear the brunt of this violence, accounting for 100 per cent of the victims. South Sudan, Syria, and Somalia reported the highest number of incidents for the month.

3. Corollary Impacts

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered the deepest global recession since the 1930s. The International Monetary Fund projects a global contraction of 4.4 per cent for the year: advanced economies are forecast to contract by 5.8 per cent, emerging market and developing economies by 3.3 per cent, and low-income countries by 1.2 per cent. The year has seen the broadest collapse in per capita income since 1870 and extreme poverty is expected to increase for the first time in over twenty years, augmenting barriers to health care and other services. By the end of 2021, up to 150 million people could fall back into extreme poverty, for a total of 736 million worldwide (or 9.4 per cent of the global population, almost 2 per cent more than anticipated pre-COVID-19). The new poor are more urban, more educated, and less likely to work in agriculture than those in extreme poverty before.

Of particular note during the month of November: Food insecurity indicators in Yemen continued to deteriorate as 16,500 people were recently estimated to be in the most severe phase of hunger, IPC Phase 5, or famine-like conditions.

4. Funding Update

International Financial Institution (IFI) funding for countries in the GHRP at present totals more than \$93 billion for COVID-19 related needs. Roughly 87 per cent of these funds are from the International Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank, and the World Bank (38, 32, and 17 per cent, respectively). Sudan is the single largest recipient of IFI funds in absolute terms (\$28.3 billion), per capita (\$661), and as a percentage of its GDP (68 per cent); Ecuador follows at \$9.3 billion, \$534, and 8.4 per cent, respectively. Among countries in the GHRP, 10 have not received IFI funds: Aruba, Chile, Curaçao, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iraq, Libya, Panama, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela.