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AFRICA RESOURCE CENTRE

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## SPECIAL REPORT: COVID-19 IN WEST AFRICA

### When humanity has all its eggs in one basket

Prepared by ARC West Africa

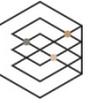
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BILL & MELINDA  
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## INTRODUCTION

Looking back over more than four months of COVID-19 epidemic, several trends are emerging regarding the epidemiological profile and the responses to it. While some countries are considering lifting restrictive measures aimed at curbing the spread of the pandemic, such as lockdowns, which have proven effective in containing pressure on the health system, the African continent seems to only now be entering the epidemic curve with an increase of more than 40% in number of people infected.

When the supply chain breaks down globally, health products begin to experience inflation and we are inexorably headed towards stock-outs.

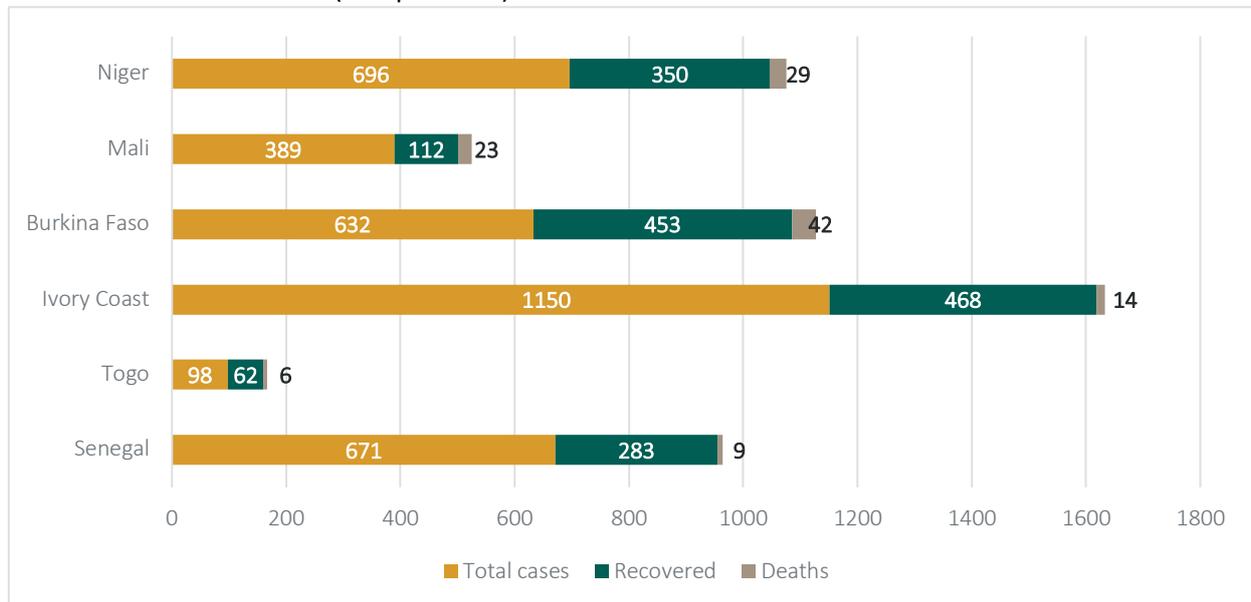
The West African Health Organization had already expressed its concerns about cancellations of drug orders and the situation does not seem to be improving due to continued uncertainty regarding the resumption of international commerce.

Furthermore, the challenge that the continent will very quickly face will be the ability to screen infected people to break the chain of contamination.

*As of Thursday, 23 April, Heads of State and Governments of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are calling for a regional response plan to be put in place. The point was made by the organisation's president in his opening speech during a videoconference on Covid-19.*

## REGIONAL STATISTICS

Coronavirus in West Africa (22 April 2020)





## SENEGAL

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In Senegal, as of 22 April, contributions to the "Force Covid-19" fund amount to 298,618,285,771 XOF. The Minister of Economy, Plan and Cooperation announced during a videoconference with the EU Ambassador that as of April 21, the amount was about 321 billion. The Minister has pointed out that other partners, such as the International Development Bank are finalising their support.

As part of the protection of front-line health workers, the World Health Organization, in close collaboration with the World Food Programme, the African Union and national governments, has donated to the MSAS equipment including protective suits, gloves, surgical masks, glasses, Ffp2 masks, face mask shields.

The Minister of Employment, Vocational Training and Crafts has also launched "Operation 1 Million Masks". This will help achieve the twin objectives of providing jobs to craftspeople, and democratizing access to masks for all Senegalese people. Products will be delivered soon.

In the same vein, the Ministry of Trade and Small and Medium Enterprises and the Ministry of Industrial development and small and medium-sized industries have signed the NS 15-014 quality standard into effect. With the national brand NS-Quality Senegal, barrier masks under the NS 15-014 standard marketed or donated on the national territory are subject to the certification procedure.

In addition, ESP students have created Dr. Car to assist in the fight against the spread of Covid-19. This is a robot that can move, take the temperature of patients in case of quarantine contact, and deliver drugs and food, among other services. The product was delivered to the Health Emergency Operations Centre.

## TOGO

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In Togo, up until 22 April, administrative decisions focused largely on social measures.

The NOVISI programme announced its performance on 22 April. This universal solidarity income programme is an initiative set up by the government to support the poorest affected by the economic impacts of containment measures. Thus far, the programme has:

- 1,274,014 registered persons
- 465,900 beneficiaries (303,328 women and 162,572 men)
- paid out a total of 2,711,819,125 XOF

ARC continues to assist the Directorate of Pharmacies, Medicines and Laboratories (DPML) continues, in addition to the activities already underway in relation improving the HPSC.

ARC is assisting the Health Private Sector Consultation with the coordination of responses and the sharing of experience continues as well. Weekly meetings take place every Tuesday from 3:30pm to 7:00pm.

## BURKINA FASO

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In Burkina Faso, the treatment of cases continues. Chloroquine and azithromycin were introduced into the treatment regime on 3 April 2020.



During the week of 22 April, CORUS actively searched for cases in order to catch other confirmed cases which are not in the system.

The launch of the Coronathon all over the country on 18 April raised funds to support the Covid-19 committee. It continues until 18 May 2020, while the Response Coordination continues to receive donations.

Members of the Chinese team who arrived in Burkina Faso on 16 April have joined the thematic groups of the Covid-19 committee and are also working in the Tengandgo hospital, where confirmed cases are being treated.

In addition, two major changes in measure to prevent the spread of the virus are being considered:

- Mandatory wearing of the mask from 27 April.
- Curfew time, currently 9pm to 4am.

Additional extraordinary measures have been taken:

- On 20 April, the large market in Ouagadougou was opened, followed by the market in Bobo Dioulasso on 23 April. Both have been allowed to operate with the rigorous application of preventive measures. Other markets remain closed.
- On Thursday, 23 April, distance learning was launched.

## CÔTE D'IVOIRE

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In Côte d'Ivoire, the mandatory wearing of protective masks remains in force, as well as the containment of the elderly and those suffering from chronic diseases. Administrative decisions have been renewed, including the implementation of a screening strategy, with the installation in Abidjan of thirteen (13) local collection centres. Nine of these will be deployed in Abidjan before the end of April, out of a total of forty-five (45), which will be opened throughout the country. The Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene received a donation of 600,000 masks from the Bouygues/SCDM group.

## NIGER

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In Niger, this week is marked by protests against isolation and curfew measures that prevent collective prayers in mosques, given that it is the month of Ramadan.

In other news, the Agreement on the Grant of Official Development Assistance has been ratified. The Government of the Kingdom of Belgium has provided official development assistance of up to eight million euros in the form of interest-free loans to the Government of Niger.

On 23 April, the President of the Republic of Niger, Issoufou Mahamadou, President-in-Office of the Conference of Heads of State and Governments of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in his opening address of the Extraordinary Summit of the ECOWAS for the impact of Coronavirus announced that "the various response plans to the pandemic must be extended by post-pandemic plans. Our region needs to set up a technical working group to reflect on the socio-economic impact and post-crisis recovery conditions. This group must come up with a community investment plan that must address structural constraints."



# MALI

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In Mali, on 22 April, the government, in a statement, warned against malicious individuals "behaving as health workers, offering rapid false tests of Covid-19 for a large sum of money". The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs stated that to date, there are no rapid diagnostic tests for Covid-19 authorized in Mali.

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