

COVID-19 RESPONSE

On January 21, 2020, the World Health Organization indicated that the novel coronavirus was being spread by human- to-human transmission and declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020. In response, Integrate Health has taken aggressive and proactive action in an effort to minimize the spread of the virus, ensure continuity of primary healthcare and in turn, lessen the impact of the virus in our communities.

All of the activities Integrate Health has taken and will undertake as part of our COVID-19 response are directly in line with our mission to ensure access to quality primary healthcare for all. COVID-19 poses a direct threat to this mission and only by rapidly responding to the pandemic, while ensuring continuity of primary healthcare delivery, can we continue to uphold our mission and save the greatest possible number of lives.

As a leading healthcare organization in Togo, Integrate Health must protect its employees while also working to continue to provide high-quality healthcare to our patients. COVID-19 presents serious risks to the program as well as opportunities to demonstrate its strengths, such as how Community Health Workers are an essential part of the health system, especially when it is stressed. Through a strong response to this pandemic, Integrate Health has the opportunity to deepen our relationship with the government by operating as a responsible partner in support of Ministry of Health efforts, coordinating closely with other technical partners, demonstrating how Community Health Workers can contribute to fighting a pandemic, and modeling how we can strengthen the resiliency of clinics to take on COVID-19 while continuing to fight the major killers in Togo.

An effective implementation of our pandemic response is a strategic imperative, as well as an opportunity to accelerate and amplify our goal to strengthen the national primary health system across Togo.

INTEGRATE HEALTH'S COVID-19 RESPONSE HAS THREE OBJECTIVES:

- 1 Maintain the health and safety of our healthcare workers and staff
- 2 Continue to provide essential quality healthcare to our communities
- 3 Demonstrate our commitment as partners to the Ministry of Health in Togo

MAINTAIN THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR HEALTHCARE WORKERS AND STAFF

To maintain the health and safety of Integrate Health staff, we have implemented strict procedures following [World Health Organization guidelines](#).

ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

Integrate Health is regularly convening about COVID-19 situation in United States and in Togo to adequately address the current context. Examples include:

- Integrate Health has formed a COVID-19 task force of senior leaders and clinicians in US and Togo who are coordinating preparation, mitigation, and communication activities in both contexts. Updates are being shared regularly.
- Led by the Integrate Health Medical Director, the Integrate Health staff have developed a preparedness plan including equipping CHWs with PPE and with key education messaging to disseminate in their communities.
- Integrate Health is maintaining a detailed risk registry of multiple scenarios possibly resulting from this pandemic and are developing a contingency plan for each.

Integrate Health is providing sufficient and appropriate equipment to all staff, based on their work risks. Examples include:

- Additional equipment and 3G cellphone credit procured to facilitate remote work.
- Staff were advanced one month of salary to help with preparations in advance of limited movement.
- Integrate Health has offered all Community Health Workers an opt-out policy with full paid leave if any feel worried or unsafe about continuing their work in the field.
- All Community Health Workers and staff at Integrate Health's supported health centers have been equipped with masks and face shields and are continuing to use hand sanitizing gel as per existing protocols.
- Integrate Health is holding ongoing stress management trainings led by mental health professionals for Community Health Workers.
- In May 2020, Integrate Health turned to a local Togolese start-up, EcoTecLab, to facilitate PPE procurement. In June 2020, all Integrate Health Community Health Workers were trained on the use of Thermoflash (infrared thermometers).
- All U.S.-based staff have been briefed on [current travel policy](#).

CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL QUALITY HEALTHCARE TO OUR COMMUNITIES

Integrate Health is deeply committed to providing quality healthcare to our communities. As history has shown, when health system resources are redirected to fight an epidemic, essential primary health services may become harder to access. Without access to these vital services, unnecessary morbidity and mortality may result.

ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

Integrate Health is equipping Community Health Workers, health center staff, and communities with the resources necessary to maintain quality healthcare delivery. Examples include:

- Community Health Worker activity continues as normal. Community Health Workers continue to adhere to their pre-existing protocols with mandated use of hand sanitizer, hand washing, and personal protective equipment. Large group education gatherings have been cancelled.
- All CHWs have been equipped with laminated education materials and are providing COVID-19 prevention messaging at every home visit.
- Detailed protocols have been developed to guide all Community Health Worker and clinic activities including on proper use of PPE, infection prevention and control measures, and distance maintenance strategies during care provision.



DEMONSTRATE OUR COMMITMENT AS PARTNERS TO THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH IN TOGO

As Ministry of Health partners for over 15 years, we believe all of our work must support the work of the Ministry of Health. This is even more crucial during a pandemic response. By working closely with the Ministry of Health in the coordination of activities and by providing critical technical expertise and financial support, we will support the national pandemic response to benefit not only Integrate Health-supported communities, but the entire country.

ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE:

Integrate Health is supporting the government with equipment procurement, technical and financial assistance, and more. Examples include:

- Integrate Health began supporting the Ministry of Health to develop a national preparedness plan as early as mid-January 2020 and continues to respond to request for technical support.
- Integrate Health is closely supporting the response coordination at the regional level, including sitting on the regional response task force.
- In response to our own estimation of needs and detailed requests received from the national and regional Ministry of Health, Integrate Health has procured and is actively working to continue to procure critical equipment and supplies including personal protective equipment.
- Integrate Health is proud to partner with the [COVID-19 Action Fund for Africa](#), a collaboration of 30+ organizations providing PPE to over 20 countries to ensure Community Health Workers are appropriately equipped. IH helped to facilitate a donation from the COVID-19 Action Fund for Africa to the Togo Ministry of Health, which included over 900,000 masks, 300,000 gloves, and 18,000 face shields for 11,768 Community Health Workers across Togo.

IH continues to manage close collaboration with global partners and co-authored a position paper with the Community Health Impact Coalition that is available [here](#).

We will continue to push forward on all of these goals while ensuring the safety and security of our staff, patients and broader communities. Thank you for standing by us.

To stay up to date with our work, follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).