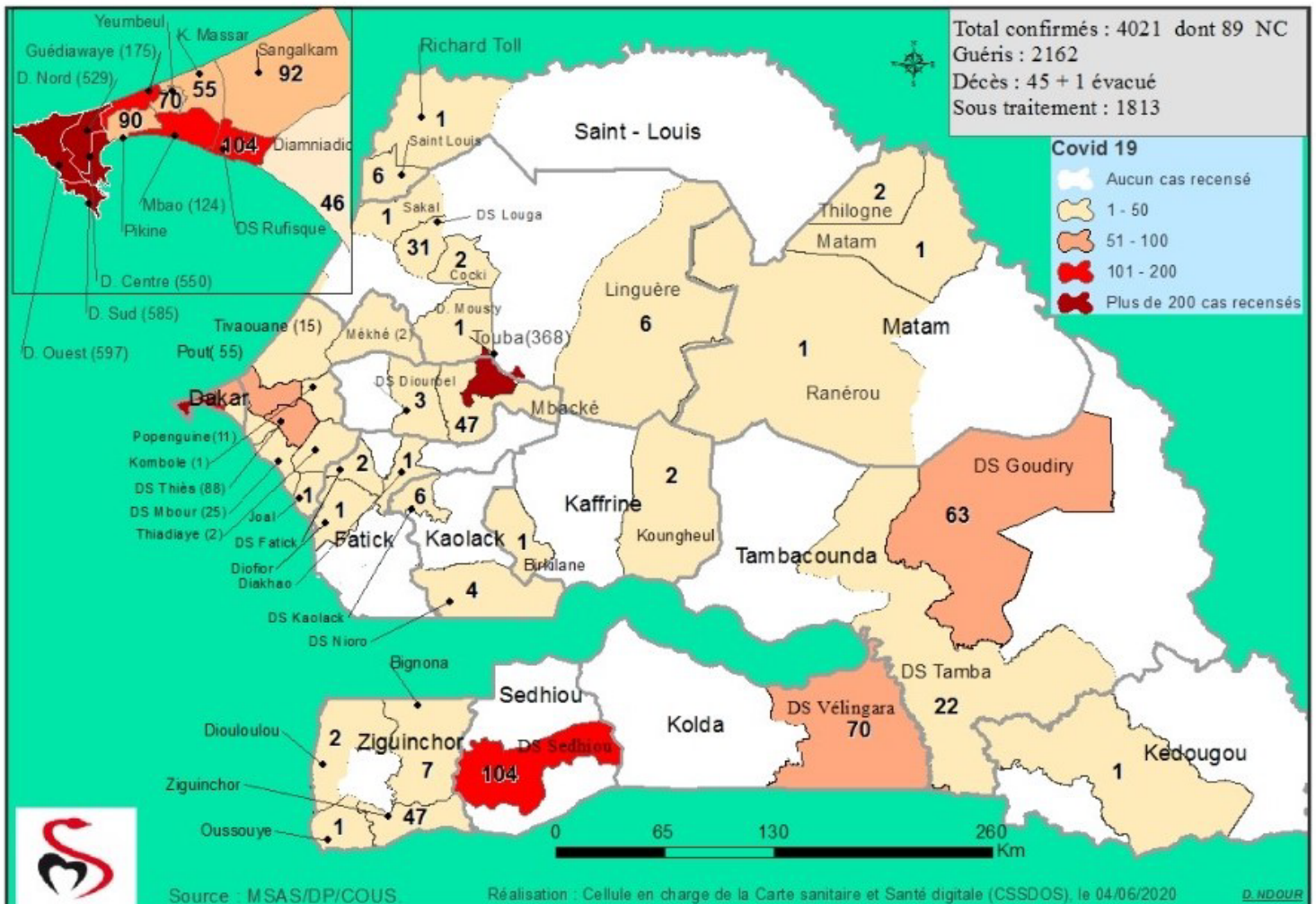


# ActionAid Senegal Quarterly Newsletter on COVID-19 Response



First response from ActionAid and partners on COVID 19

## Introduction

The COVID 19 pandemic is an unprecedented health crisis. Since the discovery of the first Coronavirus case in Senegal in March 02nd 2020 the government of Senegal took some measures in order to stop the spread of the virus such as: a curfew from 08pm to 6 am, state of emergency with limitation of people movement and business closure, closure of territorial and weekly markets and the closure of schools. As a result of those restrictions the government decided to provide food for 1million households It was agreed that the food support will target the most vulnerable of households. Each household will receive 50kg of rice, 10kg of sugar and 10 liters of oil. In that regard Civil Society organizations issued an appeal to call for transparency and hold the government accountable. The head of state accepted the CSO suggestions and put in place a food distribution committee comprised of various segments of the society including a Civil society organization representative



@Bakel

This was made possible after CSO's pushed for additional support to hospitals in the regions. In the current context, the most vulnerable segments of the population, who are generally in rural areas will experience significant difficulty if the crisis persists beyond August 2020. The restriction measures imposed by the government to curb the spread of the virus have reduced the space of all sectors of socioeconomic activity in the country. The lockdown and the curfew measures have been extended to July. This will not be without consequence for the economic activities of smallholder farmers and informal sectors and will lead to loss of income for smallholder farmers and their ability to meet their basic household needs will be threatened.

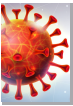
In response to the social and economic impact of COVID 19, the government of Senegal has drawn up an economic and social resilience recovery program constituting of 11 key areas: support for the health sector, distribution of foodstuffs for 1 million households, funds dedicated to the diaspora, payment of water bills and electricity, partial remission of the tax debt, for national private sector, extension of the suspended VAT, tax exemption, support for the most affected sectors, payment due to state suppliers, financing mechanism / Cash facility, partial coverage of revenue losses. These actions can only be efficient if the real beneficiaries are well targeted in a transparent way.

ActionAid Senegal is also actively engaging with partners and communities to stop the spread of COVID19 in our 9LRP including Dakar and Kolda through our humanitarian response plan. ActionAid Senegal is targeting the most vulnerable populations with active participation of women champions. Some of our actions are directly linked to the government response programme called Social - Economic and Resilience programme, to ensure transparency and accountability.

## Situation in Senegal

The health crisis the world is currently experiencing because of the coronavirus disease is shaking all sectors of activity in addition to the lives of human beings. The spread of the epidemic has led to unprecedented health, economic and financial repercussions at the world level. These repercussions will be felt much more at the level of underdeveloped countries where shortcomings are noted in basic social services. According to the Ministry of Public health, daily update, Senegal has registered 5 783 cases, with 3 859 recovered cases from this illness and 82 deaths as at 20th June2020.

From the analysis we did, the number of cases increases by an average of 10 per day, despite the efforts to contain the propagation of the virus. Indeed, according to the Ministry of Public Health, the number of tests has been increased per day from 50 to 150 and even more. In addition, new testing centres have been certified by the Ministry of Health which will increase the number of tests to more than 1500 per day. Additional Hospital equipment has been provided by the government, bilateral partners, and International NGOs to enable hospitals across seven regions to handle the additional burden of COVID 19



## Contribution of ActionAid Senegal in the management of the COVID-19 health Crisis

### Establishment of ActionAid Senegal COVID-19 committee

Senegal registered the first case of COVID 19 on 02 March 2020. Since that date, ActionAid Senegal management team took adequate measures in line with the Senegalese government decisions to declare a state of Emergency that included restriction measures. The ActionAid Secretary General also issued directives on staff safety and security. ActionAid Senegal took the following decisions for staff safety and security but also to ensure that management was effectively handling the crisis:

**1.** The establishment of an emergency COVID19 committee composed of: Soukeyna Samb (HROD Officer), Nathaly Soumahoro (Programme and Policy Manager), Mbagnick Diouf (Logistician), Djiby Sow (Child Sponsorship Officer), under the supervision of the Country Director.

**2.** To comply with the hygiene rules, staff were availed with antiseptic gels, masks, and a thermometer.

**3.** Avoid sharing all kinds of information that could create confusion and panic people

**4.** All information received must be shared with the COVID19 committee who will review its credibility before dissemination

**5.** The Country Director will act as the Official spokesperson for ActionAid Senegal. He also has the authority to designate other colleagues as required.

**6.** Inform partners of the need to comply with the hygiene rules laid down by the authorities and ActionAid Senegal



@Koussanar

The normal activities implementation from the 2020 annual plan have been stopped and most of the work will be carried out virtually. Partners will only be allowed to carry out monitoring activities which will not necessarily need community's mobilisation or AAS staff to be in the ground. Therefore, partners are advised to strictly respect health and hygiene measures. At national level, since most staff are working from home, virtual meetings will be organised with line managers to ensure that work is going on as agreed and that employees are provided with adequate support. During this health crisis ActionAid Senegal will focus on developing communication tools to be used by local partners and authorities to sensitize more vulnerable people to take care of themselves and their families. The communication material will also raise awareness on the importance of fighting violence against women. In addition, AAS plays an active role in the NGOs platform on COVID19 that is working to contribute to the national response plan.

Our monitoring actions

## How has ActionAid Senegal been supporting women during the pandemic?

Due to restrictions placed on movements in the LRP areas, A WhatsApp group of our Female Champions has been set up to monitor the living conditions in the communities during this pandemic. Some stories collected from the female champions are discussed with the group and solutions jointly proffered to support in their economic activities and Violence against Women awareness raising activities. In that regard ActionAid Senegal is finalising its response plan where the women's needs will be included.

The women groups have come up with interesting coping mechanisms as outlined below: Cereal banks that enable some communities specially women in our LRP to access food, the women are also able to support families within the group that have depleted their food resources. The only fear is that if the government does not provide certified seed on time, then many communities are likely to experience food insecurity because they are currently consuming their seeds instead of planting during this rainy season.

A few years ago, ActionAid Senegal, supported women to set up microfinance groups- the women are now distributing the money amongst themselves. The WhatsApp group has been a great platform for sharing and learning amongst women but at the same time helped to identify some actions related to violence that have been taken up for advocacy actions. AAS has also distributed posters in line with the awareness raising campaign and are looking into creating video messages for social media publication.



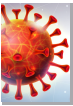
@Koussanar

### Community Voices

**Seynabou Ndao (Right)**, President of Cercle Reflexion Action (Escale), Councillor at the Town Hall of Koussanar. She received the hygiene kits for her Circle. With these words, she expresses her satisfaction for the support given by ActionAid "We were very worried about the situation in the face of the advent of the Pandemic COVID 19. Although our zone had not registered any cases, the State of Senegal had decreed the cessation of almost all our economic activities. This support came at the right time, it allowed us to respect the measures decreed by the health authorities. On behalf of the members of my circle, I would like to thank ActionAid and its local partner the (Yakaar Niani Wuli Federation)."



@Koussanar



## Our response to the LRP through hygiene kits distribution

### ActionAid Senegal and partners integrate some National and local COVID 19 committee to ensure transparency and accountability

Following the evolution of the COVID19 crisis the government put in place the COVID19 emergency crisis stands at present with 144 cases reported this day (20th June 2020), the State ensures the supervision of all initiatives based on an overall coordination plan. Each zone has set up a local epidemic management committee. These local committees are led by the local government authorities. From the beginning of the crisis, clear communication was sent to partners to set up a communication tree for the leaders. The communication focal points in the crisis management team were asked to liaise with the local governments, all ActionAid Senegal partners are members of the local crisis management committees. The partners participate in planning and operations as much as possible and provide regular feedback to the ActionAid team. The partners therefore liaise between the local committees and ActionAid and share official information. ActionAid at the central level also shares available information from WHO COVID19 and the daily forecast shared by the ministry of public health. This is done by email or via the partners' WhatsApp platform. ActionAid Senegal also organises teleconferences to regularly provide updates on the evolution of the situation. ActionAid has contributed to the health facilities based on a rapid assessment conducted in collaboration with the authorities and communities. This has ensured that the material provided corresponds to the real needs of the communities. Due to limited means, ActionAid has not been able to cover all the needs of the communities however fundraising activities are underway to help the country programme support the communities.



@Niodior

### Building communities resilience in the context of Covid 19

#### Communities Hygiene's Kits distributions lead by women champions and partners

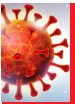
The distribution was based on the results of the rapid assessment conducted in the 9 LRPs. Following that rapid assessment, ActionAid Senegal together with partners has distributed 5000 hygiene Kits (sanitizers, soap, recipients, etc.) to the communities' as a prevention mechanism. This has benefitted 183 communities and impacted around 70,000 people including the youth and more than 90% of the female population.

#### Awareness raising

11000 flyers translated in four local languages (Wolof, Fulani, Serere, mandingo) in gender sensitive friendly formats. These have been distributed to sensitize communities on the hygiene measures to be respected for people protection. This was done in collaboration with local authorities, ActionAid Senegal local partners, community women champions, Red Cross representatives and Activista. ActionAid intends to continue with the sensitization messages and awareness raising using the social media.



@Diossong



# SAMPLES OF FLYERS

FRENCH

WOLOF

FULANI

SERERE

MANDINGO

Número vert 800 00 50 50 act:onaïd

COVID - 19 : ÇA SUFFIT !

Tous responsables, Tous engagés !

Número vert 800 00 50 50 act:onaïd

COVID - 19 : NAFI YEM !

Mbiru ñépp la, na ñépp dogu !

Número vert 800 00 50 50 act:onaïd

COVID - 19 : AKAÑANTA !

Bee xa i tee siti, bee xa i wakili !

Número vert 800 00 50 50 act:onaïd

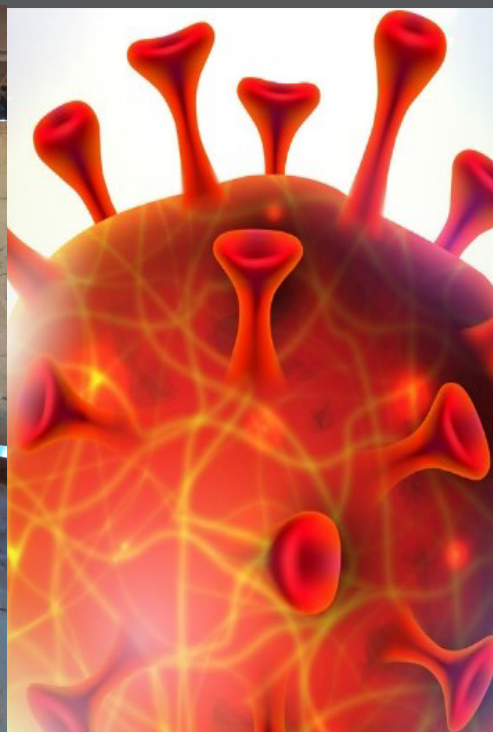
COVID - 19 : YONI !

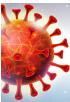
Fof en ko hellifaabe, Fof en ko yaritiibe !

Número vert 800 00 50 50 act:onaïd

COVID - 19 : ADOYA !

Fate fopp a mdam ten, a niokh fopp a reef !





## Equipment's for communities

	Ordinary soap (Cartons)	Bleach (cartons)	Sanitizer (botle)	Liquid soap cartons)	Whashing hand material (unit)
DJILOR LRP	25	25	10	25	50
NIODIOR LRP	25	25	10	25	50
FOUNDIOUGNE LRP	25	25	10	25	50
KOUSSANAR LRP	25	25	10	25	50
MISSIRAH LRP	25	25	10	25	50
BALA LRP	25	25	10	25	50
BAKEL LRP	25	25	10	25	50
KEDOUGOU LRP	25	25	10	25	50
<b>Total Materials</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

The distribution of the Hygiene Kits was preceded by official receptions with the administrative and local authorities through the Regional/ Department Epidemic Management Committee. This activity allowed for the involvement of these actors as a way of respecting the recommendations issued by the State.

The grant intended for the community of Bala was received by the Deputy Prefect of Tambacounda in the presence of the Mayor of Bala. They all appreciated this act of ActionAid through its partner Am Be Koun and appreciated the role played by ActionAid in meeting the needs of the population.

Through these words, the Deputy Prefect of Tamba Mr Samb recognised this gesture at its true value "I would like to thank Am Be Koun and ActionAid on behalf of the Prefect of the department of Tambacounda for this gesture which serves to support the interventions made by the government in meeting the needs of the community. We all know that to defeat this pandemic, we must work in solidarity to join forces. I encourage others to do the same to help the government to deal with this pandemic".

## Feedback from the authorities



@Missirah

## Our programme and policy engagement

### CD interview in RFM

#### ActionAid Senegal analysis on the Economic and Social Resilience Program (ESRP)



**Country Director interview In RFM Radio, the Country Director called for enhanced transparency in the food distribution to vulnerable communities in Senegal during the COVID19 pandemic;**

**ActionAid Senegal Country Director was interviewed by journalist from RFM Radio to give his perspective and recommendations for better use of public funds during this particular situation.**

**Souleymane Niang (Journalist): Mr Zakaria Sambakhe how do you see the food distribution in this is COVID -19 context**

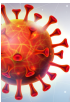
**Z S:** let me say that this health crisis was not expected at all in Senegal and it has significantly affected the financial and economic projections. This health crisis has not only affected the economy, but also education, food security, access to market, etc. It is not clear when this pandemic will end. ActionAid highly appreciates the government decision to provide food to the most vulnerable communities. Going forward, it is very important to concretely target vulnerable communities. Most of the families in rural areas do not have adequate food because of the negative impact of climate change. Those working in the non-formal sector in the cities are not able to transfer money to their families because of the lockdown.

**Souleymane Niang (RFM Journalist): what is your recommendation for the government to ensure transparency and accountability**

**Z S:** Targeting 1 million households with food distribution is not an easy thing, ActionAid Senegal calls upon the government and all local authorities to respect people's dignity because this is not charity, but it is their right to food. We also suggest the integration of CSO at community level before and during the distribution to ensure transparency.

The committee should priorities household led by women because of their increased vulnerability. The government should also anticipate the coming rainy season by providing sufficient quantity of seed and agriculture inputs to farmers who are in the extreme need.





## Policy note

In May 2020, ActionAid and its partners produced a policy note on the COVID-19 pandemic in Senegal. This note was shared through our networks and platforms in order to reach the maximum number of people possible. Through this link you will see the content of this note.

<https://senegal.actionaid.org/publications/2020/health-crisis-covid-19-unprecedented-challenge-opportunity-new-dawn-policy-note>



The policy note was produced to inform our advocacy work at national and local level. It has been shared with different CSO at national level, LRP partners and authorities who have responsibility in this COVID-19 to provide safe and security to people. This policy note was a call to ensure transparency and accountability in the management of public resources to respond to COVID-19. In addition to use the moment as an opportunity for system change.

As a result: a national committee have been putted in place to monitor the food distribution to vulnerable household. Also, different CSO members positively own it and some of them used the content in their analyses and concert actions in the ground.

## Digital or oneline engagement with Activities

As part of our communication campaign, we have produced tools shared across our different platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram...).

ActionAid Senegal country Director develop a video to sensitized communities in Wolof and French. The video is available in our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/1468466920061971/posts/2524412297800756/>,

<https://www.facebook.com/1468466920061971/posts/2524424007799585/>.

We plan to organize online conferences with the involvement of our local partners as well as at the national level. These conferences will have specific themes according to the sectors of activity impacted by COVID-19. At the end of these conferences, clear orientations will be addressed to the communities while challenging the decision-makers.

## CD's message to sponsors

<https://www.yammer.com/actionaid.org/threads/717592378269696>

How to contact ActionAid in Senegal:

Email

[info.senegal@actionaid.org](mailto:info.senegal@actionaid.org)

Address Dakar Office

ActionAid Sénégal, 67 Ouest Foire, CITE SAGEF 1 – Fann Dakar.

B.P. : 45780 Dakar

Phone: (+221) 33 859 07 82

Fax: (+221) 33 867 23 40

Address Tambacounda Office

ActionAid Sénégal, Quartier Saré Guiléle lot n° 35, Tambacounda.

B.P: 45780 Dakar

Phone: (+221) 33 981 07 73

Fax: (+221) 33 981 07 72

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