

**FINAL NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT**

PROGRAMME TITLE: **Mitigating the immediate impact of COVID-19 on the formal and informal private sector in Guinea**

REPORTING PERIOD: **01 JUNE TO 31 MAY 2021**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: 31 MAY 2021**

## 1. Executive Summary

In March 2020, the Republic of Guinea notified its first case of the COVID 19 on its territory followed by a rapid and community spread of the disease. The epidemiological situation on May 27, 2021 shows 23149 confirmed cases, 20934 healed and 161 deaths. Since March 05, 2021, 238,735 people have received their first dose of COVID19 vaccine and only 84,903 the second dose.

The Government has taken strong and exceptional measures to break the chain of contamination. These measures, which are reflected in the declaration of a state of health emergency encompass establishment of a curfew, closure of land and air borders, limitation of movement and respect for barrier gestures and social distancing quickly. The implementation of these measure caused socioeconomic impacts on vulnerable households and on the private sector.

In order to deal with this worrying situation, the Guinean government adopted in July 2020 a national strategy to fight against COVID19. This national strategy aligns with the United Nations System Multisectoral Response Framework Plan against COVID19.

This is the context in which the 2 agencies (UNIDO and UNDP) received funding of USD 400,000 from the MPTF COVID19 Fund for the joint implementation of the project.

It mainly aims to improve the collective effort and promote local responses to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic through the production and distribution of protective equipment and support the resilience of MSMEs for job creation and resilience.

This final report covers the period from June 1, 2020, to May 31, 2021, of project implementation. During the period under review, remarkable and high impact progress was made in the implementation of the projet as summarized below:

- Due to operational challenges faced with the *Activity 1.1* the UNDP entered in partnership with the National Agency for Innovation and Digital Economy to re-scale the scope of the said activity. The partnership ended with a digital innovation for women entrepreneurs with low literacy. The aims was to empower sales and cash management capacity so their resilience can be reinforced in uncertain period such as COVID 19. 150 women benefited from the innovation with an actual using rate of 97%. The data collected on the using trend will help to scale the innovation to about 1000 women across the country, as soon funding possibilities are opened.
- 4 local SMEs have benefited from materials, equipments and inputs (sewing machines, embroidery machines, industrial tables, etc.) in order to increase their productivity in the production of masks and compliance;
- Upgrade of the Lambayi pharmacy in the production of quality hydro-alcoholic gels certified by the National Quality Control Laboratory with the improvement of its packaging and its commercial strategy. Thanks to the direct support of the project, the Lambayi Pharmacy was able to produce and make available to UNIDO more than 5,000 vials of 250 ml at the industrial standard for the needs of humanitarian assistance in the fight against the COVID19 pandemic;
- As part of the strengthening of national production capacity, 18 local SMEs have benefited from an upgrade which has enabled the improvement of their production chains and marketing of personal protective equipment and hygiene kits with AFNOR and ECOSTAND international standards
- 780,000 masks of three models (ninja, pleated and duckbill) were produced locally thanks to the direct support of the project for the needs of responding to the COVID19 epidemic.

- More than 301,000 people (156520 women) have benefited from PPE and hygiene kits followed by awareness raising on COVID19 in public (schools, health structures, markets, etc.) and private establishments (companies) with a high human concentration in Conakry and in the Kindia, Kankan and Boke regions to reduce the spread of COVID19 and ensure the continuity of economic activities in collaboration with the local civil society organization.
- 78 businesses received support for development, resilience and business continuity.
- 5 innovative projects (digital health solution, digital Education solution, smart public handwashing stations) with strong added value, impact mitigation and the continuity of socio-economic activities were given technical and financial support to accelerate their growth and access to markets in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and SMEs (National Directorate of Industry, Nationale Directorate of SMEs and Industrial Development Fund and SMEs) and Jatropha HUB Incubator. The projects benefited from personalized support and services (training, formalization, marketing plan, equipments, networking, etc.) from Jatropha Hub Incubator and free access to FABLAB to improve their products and prototypes.
- 568 decent jobs have been created and / or maintained including 389 for women (68%) thanks to the interventions of the program in the promotion of local value chains especially in the manufacture of local masks, public hand washing stations, hydro alcoholic gels, soaps, etc.
- En Partenariat avec l'ONG Enfant du futur, des actions de sensibilisation et de distribution de kits d'hygiène et de protection individuelle (masques, les stations publiques de lavage des mains, les savons, les gels hydroalcoolique, etc.) ont été réalisées dans le grand Conakry (Conakry, Coyah et Dubreka) auprès des entreprises, marchés, administrations publiques, gares routières et de motos taxis, universités, écoles, structures de santé (hopital préfectoral de Coyah), les lieux de cultes (Grande Mosqué Sénégalaise, la proise saint Croix de Coleah), des marchands ambulants, etc. Les mesures de protection individuelle et collective contre le COVID19 (port adéquat des masques, lavage des mains à l'eau et au savon et/ou solutions hydro-alcooliques, distanciation physique, etc.) étaient au coeur des messages de sensibilisation.
- In partnership with the NGO Enfant du futur, actions to raise awareness and distribute hygiene and individual protection kits (masks, public hand washing stations, soaps, hydroalcoholic gels, etc.) were carried out. carried out in greater Conakry (Conakry, Coyah and Dubreka) with formal and informal companies, markets, public administrations, bus stations and motorcycle taxis, universities, schools, health structures (prefectural hospital of Coyah), places of worship (Great Senegalese Mosque, Coleah parish saint Croix), street vendors, etc. Individual and collective protection measures against COVID19 (adequate wearing of masks, hand washing with soap and water and / or hydro-alcoholic solutions, physical distancing, etc.) were at the heart of the awareness messages.
- Support to the NGOs COPAJEAF, AGIR Dev and IPFEE respectively in the regions of Kindia (Focariah, Télémilé and Kindia), Mamou (Dalaba and Mamou), Kankan (Mandiana, Siguiri and Kankan) also made it possible to reach the same target categories through awareness-raising and distribution of hygiene and personal protection kits
- More than 500,000 people (men and women, girls and boys) have been directly affected by these interventions in the project areas under the coordination of local actors in the response against COVID19 and the involvement of beneficiaries including women's associations and young people.

This good progress, which sustainably strengthens the resilience of SMEs and communities vulnerable to COVID19, is the result of a transformative partnership and good collaboration between stakeholders (state structures, private sector, civil society organizations, etc.). Also, the strengthening of national production capacities has made it possible to sustainably improve the

availability and universal access of hygiene and protection kits, especially for vulnerable layers to leave no one behind.

## 2. Interim Results

OUTCOME/OUTPUT INDICATORS					
<b>Outcome:</b>	<b>Enhanced collective effort and promotion of local responses to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 pandemic through the dissemination of sensitization contents, production and distribution of protective equipment and support the resilience of MSMEs for job creation and retention</b>				
<b>Outcome indicator</b>	Baseline	Target	Progress against target	Means of verification	Responsible Org
<b>Indicator 1.1a</b> Number of innovative/collective efforts initiatives to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Guinea.	0	40	28	Activity Report	UNDP/UNIDO
<b>Indicator 1.1b</b> Monthly percentage increase of new confirmed case	148% (May2020)	0	127% (December 2020)	SitRep ANSS	UNDP/UNIDO
<b>Indicator 1.1c</b> Number of jobs created/retained in the targeted sectors during and beyond the COVID-19 outbreak.	0	500	568 (389 women)	Activity Report	UNDP/UNIDO
<b>Outputs</b>					
<b>1.1.1</b>	Empower young Guinean women entrepreneurs for post-crisis economic early recovery through the development of targeted digitalized solutions				
<b>1.1.2</b>	Innovative supports and coaching allow MSMEs to produce and increase distribution of quality and accessible PPE / hygiene kits (facemasks, shields/visors, hydro alcoholic solutions, etc.)				
<b>1.1.3</b>	Capacity building, coaching and support enable increased resilience to the COVID-19 shocks to maintain safe and effective business continuity for MSMEs in both formal and informal sectors				
<b>Indicator 1.1.1a</b> # of women entrepreneurs benefitting from the digital solution	0	150	142/150	Implementation diagnosis	UNDP
<b>Indicator 1.1.1b</b> # of women entrepreneurs effectively using the solution in their day-to-day operations	0	150	142/150	M & E report	UNDP
<b>Indicator 1.1.1c</b> % of women beneficiaries witnessing a positive change in their activities resulting from the introduction of the solution		95%	138/142 (97,18%)	Com campaign/ women testimony- Activity Report	UNDP
<b>Indicator 1.1.2a</b> # of SMEs with improved capacity of PPEs and hygiene kits production	0	10	18	Activity Report	
<b>Indicator 1.1.2b</b> # of masks produced as a direct result of the project	0	500,000	780 000	Activity Report	UNIDO
<b>Indicator 1.1.2c</b> # of protective equipment distributed			100 000		
<b>Indicator 1.1.3a</b> # of local textile enterprises trained and coached (sex-disaggregated)	0	50	48	Activity Report	UNIDO
<b>Indicator 1.1.3b</b>	0	300 000	301 000 (156 520)	Activity Report	

# people having benefited of PPE and Hygiene kits (sex-disaggregated)					
<b>Indicator 1.1.3c</b> # of businesses (formal and informal) supported for business continuity	0	70	78	Activity Report	

### 3. Challenges/Difficulties Encountered and Measures Taken

Constraints and difficulties encountered in this period are:

- Lack of expertise of local organizations in responding to the international call for tenders for acquisition of public handwashing stations. This resulted to an unsuccessful selection process, which led to a waste of time.
- Shortage and difficulty of supply for some categories of essential inputs in the manufacture of local masks cause delays in delivery of orders and subsequently the implementation of interventions.
- Difficulty in monitoring and evaluation of the project interventions, in particularly the distribution of protective equipment and hygiene kits for the benefit of the final beneficiaries (end user monitoring) because of the geographic disparity of localities. To ensure the distribution of these protective equipment and hygiene kits, in addition to supervision missions, local and health authorities and other partners in the field were called upon to verify and verify triangulation.
- Low literacy of women entrepreneurs in rural has been a challenge to address. As mitigation measure, an adaptive innovation has been developed by UNDP in partnership with The National Agency of Innovation and Digital Economy. The sales management app dedicated to women in rural informal sector has been based according to their digital sense level. An Innovative concept emerged from that experience: *Imagetrism: the digital sense drives by image caption.*

### Partnerships

#### Government entities

The project's intervention strategy made it possible to strengthen the collaboration, leadership and ownership of the project by the sectoral ministries (Ministry of Industry and SMEs, Ministries of Health and the Ministry of Telecommunication and digital economy) in order to promote the achievements and ensure the sustainability of interventions and connection to current initiatives;

Project interventions at community level and in institutions were placed under the coordination and supervision of administrative, local and health authorities to strengthen complementarity and avoid duplication with the interventions of other partners.

The National Agency for Innovation and Digital Economy is a key partner in the implementation of the renewed output 1.1. In addition to their co-financing for key activities namely surveys, development, and M&E, they provide substantial support and expertise in the design and development of the solution.

- **Private partners, associations and NGOs**

The partnership with the private sector has made it possible to build and revitalize a network of local producers capable of producing quality recyclable masks to international standards. This strategic partnership made it possible to create and maintain 568 jobs, including 389 for women.

The partnership with the incubator Jatropa Hub is strategic and has enabled the organization of the “Challenge of entrepreneurial and social innovation in the fight against COVID19”. This catalytic action has undoubtedly helped promote and support innovative and local businesses with high added value and will help to mitigate the socio-economic impact of COVID19 on households and the private sector.

The success of the partnership with local civil society organizations made it possible to scale up the distribution of protective equipment and awareness-raising against COVID19 in the active locations of the pandemic in the special zone of Conakry and the regions of Kindia, Mamou de Boké, and Kankan.

With synergy, the above reported activities and results are strengthened and complemented by various interventions of the implementing:

- **The UNIDO REFILA project funded by the European Union has invested over 150 000 \$US in many activities:** capacity building of local PPE and hygienic kits production entities. Distributions of 50 000 facemasks, hydro-alcoholic solutions, public hand washing station, sensitization and community engagement, etc. Facilitation of business continuity for small businesses and farmers in the fruits and vegetables values chains; etc.
- **The UNIDO PBF/Environment project directed around 40 000 \$US in the effort against the impact of COVID-19 on the informal business sector:** job creation and retention in the PPE production and hygiene kits while supporting their massive local production for the project beneficiaries and their communities.
- **Strong involvement of women groups for the design of the solution to strengthen their socio-economic recovery:** the project is undertaking consultative exchanges with women groups in the lower region of Guinea towards the design of the digital solution. This participatory approach aims at encompassing all sectors of activities relevant to these women and ensuring they are properly accounted for once the solution is deployed.

#### 4. Learning

In terms of lessons learned, it is important to point out:

- The innovation and adaptability of the local entrepreneurs and business communities for the continuity of their own business and to contribute to the fight against the spread of the COVID-19, responded beyond expectation. The flood of innovative initiatives and their proven impacts appeared to be very concrete gears to further emphasize the efforts against the pandemic and its effects on.
- A strong diagnosis of the situation is crucial for innovation implementation in the context of economic recovery, especially concerning women with low literacy rate.
- The continued support and upgrading of SMEs are key factors for resilience and competitiveness in responding to the current COVID19 and future crises. The Socio-economic impacts of the pandemic were further worsened by the poor resilience and capacities of these SMEs and entrepreneurs.
- Les organisations de société civile locales ont une place centrale dans la mobilisation sociale et l’engagement communautaire dans la lutte contre le COVID19 ainsi que la durabilité des interventions à la base.

- Local civil society organizations have a central place in social mobilization and community engagement in the fight against COVID19 as well as the sustainability of grassroots interventions.
- The adaptation and diversification capacities of local businesses to meet local demand must be strengthened and diversified into other pharmaceutical and health products, particularly dignity kits (sanitary napkins) for women and girls of menstruating age. This rapidly growing potential need, especially in times of crisis, remains totally dependent on the outside, as with the masks at the start of the epidemic in Guinea and in the majority of developing countries.

## 5. Budget Revisions (only if applicable)

*Please provide, if relevant, a brief description of any budget revisions made during the implementation due to the changing context or other constraints. Please note that financial reporting will be submitted separately via UNEX. Financial commitment and expenditure data will be submitted by your respective agency's headquarters, separate from this narrative reporting exercise.*<sup>1</sup>

The Private Sector Entity which was initially supposed to provide the technology for the Open Wifi solution, did not fully have the capacity and has been incapable of doing so for the past months. Several other internet service providers and telecom operators were approached but the sought technology was not at their disposal.

Therefore, to remain relevant with (i) the priorities of the funding window, (ii) the objective of the project and (iii) the innovative characteristic of our proposal, a change the scope of Output 1 (*especially Activity 1.1*) was requested and granted with an output on socioeconomic recovery entailing the development of a digital solution for women entrepreneurs to strengthen their resilience.

The projects has been extended with no additional costs and the new end date is February 28<sup>th</sup> 2021.

## 6. Stories from the Field

Four Ministries endorsed the digital solution designed for women in rural area: The Ministry of Posts, Telecoms and digital economy, The Ministry in charge of Women empowerment, The Ministry in charge of Information and the Ministry in charge of Tourism. They all appeal to scale the innovation nationwide

The positioning of the project in the promotion and upgrading of the production chain of protective equipment and hygiene kits (masks, public hand washing stations, soap and hydro-alcoholic gels) was very strategic and contributed catalytically to meet local demand while reducing the burden of dependency and inequalities in access to health kits, especially for vulnerable groups.

The success in the reconversion and adaptation of producers (KPPAF, SIMPLEX, BETTYCA Crea and JATROPHA HUB) in the mask production chain in compliance with international standards supported by the project has made it possible to build a nucleus of SMEs and a large network with small sizes and qualified independents.

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<sup>1</sup> • The annual financial report (expenditure as of 31 December) is to be submitted by RUNOs HQs via the Administrative Agent web-interface reporting tool system UNEX by 30 April; and

• In addition, financial progress reporting will occur twice a year (expenditure as of 30 June and 30 September) via UNEX for the financial update.

According to Ms. Aminata DIALLO, Director of the KPAAF Center, the partnership with UNIDO within the framework of the MPTF COVID19 project was very beneficial because it made it possible to strengthen the operational capacities of its structure, to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on activities, to maintain and create jobs, especially for women and young people, to substantially increase its turnover, to expand its network of partnerships with other major institutions, etc.

In the same sense, Dr Toure of the Lambagny Pharmacy acknowledged having taken on another dimension in the professionalization of its hydro-alcoholic solution production chain following the technical assistance of UNIDO within the framework of this project. Also, the marketing and commercial aspects of the product have been dramatically improved, thus promoting access to the market.

Overall, support for the production of personal protective equipment and hygiene kits as well as their awareness-raising, large-scale distribution in schools, markets, businesses, bus stations, households, places of worship, health structures, administrations public, etc. has undoubtedly helped limit the spread of the COVID19 disease and ensure business continuity. In total, more than 156,000 women and girls have benefited from the kits and more women and girls affected by awareness campaigns on COVID19.

At the same time, these interventions have contributed to the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular:

- **Health and Well-being (ODD3):** more than 300,000 including 156,000 women have benefited from protective equipment and hygiene kits to protect themselves against COVID19, including in healthcare facilities
- **Decent work and economic growth (SDG8):** 568 people including 389 women benefited from decent jobs in the production chain of protective equipment and hygiene kits supporting the continuity of economic activities.
- **Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG9):** 5 entrepreneurial and social innovations with high added value in the fight against COVID19 and carried by young people supported to promote their development and sustainable access to the market. This successful and documented experience will serve as a springboard to promote innovation initiatives and ecosystem.
- **Gender equality (SDG5):** An digital innovation with high added value for women entrepreneurs in rural area to strengthen their resilience and secure their revenues. This app is a unique experience that can be scaled to thousands of women across the country.

## **7. Communications and Visibility (OPTIONAL)**

UNIDO supported the visibility of project interventions through the following actions:

- The project was launched under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister in a public event that serve as the starting of the digital sensitization campaign aimed to reach over 1 000 000 people by the end December 2020. The event was broadcasted in all local TV and through social Medias.
- Visual tools such as T-Shirts, Poster, Video Spots, etc. have been prepared for the upcoming project's activities and communication campaign with visibility for the COVID-19/MPTF and the SDGs.



- Visual production / Digital Communication tools as part of the launch of the call for projects "Challenge of entrepreneurial and social innovations in the context of the response to COVID19" with visibility for the COVID-19/MPTF and the project.
- Media coverage of the award ceremony for the winners of the innovation challenge and the preparation of blank checks with the logos of the partners of the event (Government, UNIDO and the donor)
- Instant and regular publication of project activities on social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and official pages of agencies and implementing partners;
- Media coverage (TV report, radio broadcasts, etc.) on DJOMA FM and others community radios and online presses (Faranifa, Kiparo 224, etc.) in order to strengthen the visibility of the actions of the project and the donor.



*Mask production: step of sewing "blue-white ninja" masks from the KPAAF Company*

*Mask production: sorting and packaging step of the "blue-white ninja" masks from the KPAAF Company*



*Fight against COVID19: reception of hygiene and protection kits by the NGO COPAJEAF*



*Fight against COVID19: reception of hygiene and protection kits at the Governorate of Mamou*



*FABLAB: guided tour of the equipment made available by UNIDO to support innovation and local production of masks and hygiene kits*



*Mask production: sorting and packaging step of the "blue-white ninja" masks from the JATROPHA Company*



*FABLAB: presentation of 3D printing and its functionalities project leaders / entrepreneur*

*FABLAB: Guided visit by the Advisor to the Minister of Industry and SMEs*



*Innovative challenge: family pictures of the award winners*

*Fight against COVID19: awareness and distribution of protection kits at the kindia market*



*Fight against COVID19: awareness and distribution of protection kits at the JOMA FM Radio and Television*

*Fight against COVID19: awareness and distribution of protection kits at the primary school*



*Fight against COVID19: awareness and distribution of protection kits at the secondary school at Coyah*

*Fight against COVID19: awareness and distribution of protection kits at the Kindia Interka company*



*Fight against COVID19: distribution of masks at Maferinya market*



*Innovative challenge: presentation of intelligent public handwashing station project*



*Launching of digital M'mawali*



*Launching of digital M'mawali*