

MID-TERM NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

PROGRAMME TITLE:

**PROTECTING LIVES OF THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION
UNDP & UNODC
PROJECT ID 121710**

REPORTING PERIOD: **FROM START DATE TO 31 AUGUST 2020**

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: 30 SEPT 2020

1. Executive Summary

Please capture the key activities and emerging results and any important developments that the COVID-19 MPTF-funded Programme in your country achieved during the reporting period. Pls describe and, if possible, provide the number of beneficiaries your programme is reaching. The Executive Summary should serve as a standalone summary of the Programme's results for this reporting period. It should show how implementation is proceeding in the context of COVID-19. (up to approximately 1000 words)

This proposal aims to address two important issues during the COVID 19 Pandemic in El Salvador:

A. Maintaining access to treatment through the home delivery of medications

The project has been strengthening both the Ministry of Health (MINSAL) and the Office of Postal Services in El Salvador. MINSAL is implementing a project for the prevention of complications in patients with pre-existing comorbidities through home delivery of medicines because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is dangerous for this population to be exposed to COVID-19, and even more, that they do not receive their medication. The project aims to protect the most vulnerable and reduce the number of patients in health centers during the pandemic, while maintaining access to treatment through home delivery of medicines and supplements.

The delivery of the medicines is being done through the El Salvador's Postal Office making it a first-line government institution and is the terrestrial logistics alternative to face the national emergency and supports MINSAL to distribute the medicine kit. The mail men and women are the personnel who go to each vulnerable person's home and delivery their medicine.

The delivery of medicines requires special equipment and care. Some of the medications need to be at certain temperature in order to guarantee their integrity. The project has strengthened the alliance between MINSAL and the Postal Office by providing the right elements for the delivery of medicines.

Additionally, the project is strengthening the response of the Postal Service Office in their role of identifying women that have or are suffering violence at home, considering that they visit homes and are aware of the different difficulties that women have.

Recent studies have shown that in an emergency context the risks of violence against women and girls, especially domestic violence, increase due to tensions at home and may also increase because of the isolation of women. Survivors of violence may face additional obstacles in fleeing violent situations or accessing protection orders and / or essential life-saving services, due to factors such as movement restrictions in quarantine.

Therefore, since the mail man and women have access to people in their homes for the delivery of medicines, they even have knowledge of the zones and areas where women that suffer violence can go and search for assistance. A campaign has been created with the Postal Service and with the Attorney General's Office (PGR). This campaign consists on adding a postmark on all the mail received and delivered with a telephone number of the PGR. The PGR is one of the only two government institutions that delivers psychological, crisis and legal attention to women victims of violence. Also, 20 cell phones were given to the PGR in order to guarantee the delivery of assistance 24/7. Considering the amount of people and demand of the services required by the PGR, changes are being done in their institution in order to comply with biosafety measures to prevent COVID-19. Special cabins are under construction that will provide a confidential but also a safe space to give assistance to the population seeking their services.

B. Prevention and management of COVID-19 in Prisons

In April 2020, El Salvador registered a total of 37,325 people deprived of liberty, located in 20,090 spaces with a percentage of overcrowding of 198%, without determining the level of overcrowding broken down by sex, which makes this group of people most vulnerable to the advance of COVID-19. In this context, people deprived of liberty and who also live with chronic and infectious diseases such as HIV, tuberculosis or who are part of the LGBTI population run an additional risk of the COVID-19 pandemic and are exposed to high rates of violence, discrimination, exclusion and lack of access to their rights in detention centres.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated and increased the reality that people deprived of liberty were already living in prisons. Emphasis is placed on the women's prisons where the Child Development Centre (CDI) is located, which works to care for the sons and daughters of inmates, who live with their mothers until they are five years old. All the government's human and economic efforts have been redirected to the COVID-19 crisis, which has put prisoners at risk.

Therefore, the current project will support the design and implementation of the COVID-19 contingency plan in prisons, to strengthen the early diagnosis of COVID-19 and tuberculosis follow-up tests, as well as biosecurity

measures for staff prisons, for people with HIV. On March 13 of this year, the General Directorate for Prisons (DGCP) ordered through a resolution a series of prevention and control measures for COVID-19 in the Penitentiary System.

According to the General Directorate of Prisons, there are 25 prisons in El Salvador, classified as follows: two maximum-security prisons, five security prisons, 3 centres for those held in pretrial detention, two centres for executing criminal sanctions, six preventive and for executing criminal sanctions centres, three juvenile detention centres, a two prison farms and two specials centre. About 37,325 prisoners in El Salvador, as well as 900 officers who are charged with ensuring their safe, secure and humane custody, they will be benefited by this initiative.

Concerted and urgent action involving prison administrations and all other relevant sectors of government and society is of the essence.

To strengthen the prevention and control measures taken by the DGCP and in line with WHO, during the first quarterly of implementation, a strategic plan for the control of COVID-19 for vulnerable populations/prisoners has been drafted, outlining two strategic approaches:

1. **First Aid and Medical Equipment donated:** A procurement process has started to purchase equipment and strengthen early diagnosis of COVID-19 and follow-up tests for tuberculosis, as well as biosafety measures for prisons staff, for persons with HIV, Tuberculosis and LGBTI population deprived of liberty and thus mitigate the impact of COVID 19 to reduce risks of contagion and spread of the virus. Prison staff and health care professionals working in prisons should be acknowledged as a workforce whose functions are essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and who must receive the necessary education, equipment and support.
2. **Specialized Workshops:** A methodological proposal has been drafted and validated with the Penitentiary School from the DGCP, this will provide a wider outreach of the workshops and representation of officers from the 25 prison centres in El Salvador. The training have been prepared by UNODC / UNAIDS / OHCHR and the DGCP providing with a syllabus that meet the current training needs in human rights and biosecurity. Workshops will commence on September 7th, 2020. Tailored awareness-raising for prisoners and transparent communication channels will be equally important to prepare a population already subject to restrictive settings for additional procedures which may be required to protect their health as well as the health of their families and communities.

In its implementation, this proposal has complied with the regulations and guidelines established by the Government of El Salvador and the World Health Organization to combat COVID-19, as well as the application of the Mandela Rules and the Bangkok Rules.

2. Interim Results

Using the table below, please interim update all Outcome/Output Indicators approved under the Programme. Please also document outcomes generated by the programme that were not anticipated in the ProDoc. Please provide links to all relevant documents (e.g. reports, publications, studies, etc.) if available.

| OUTCOME/OUTPUT INDICATORS | | | | | |
|---|----------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Outcome 1.1 Improved care provided to vulnerable people suffering from other diseases during the COVID-19 emergency | | | | | |
| | Baseline | Target | Progress against target | Means of verification | Responsible Org |
| Indicator 1.1.a No. of vulnerable people who receive their medication on time, included STD/HIV-AIDS, disaggregated by sex, age, sexual diversity. | 0 | 77,000 people (34,000 women y 43,000 men) | 40,221 | MINSAL Reports | UNDP |
| Indicator 1.1 b | | | | | UNODC |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|----------------------------------|---|--|-------|
| Output 1.1.1 Home delivery (MED Express) system implemented | | | | | |
| 1.1.1a No. delivery medication carried out. | 0 | 61,029 Women 29,117 Men | 21,254 | No. of requested deliveries | UNDP |
| 1.1.1b. No. of people receiving first-aid equipment, disaggregated by sex, sexual diversity and age. | 0 | 300 | 420 people (120 women, 300 men) | No. of requested deliveries | UNDP |
| 1.1.1.c. Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) with access to contraceptive methods | 0 | 3,000 | 0 (see section 3) | No. of requested deliveries | UNDP |
| 1.1.1.d. No. of pregnant women receiving attention to their specific health needs | 0 | 8,600 | 0 (see section 3) | No. of requested deliveries | UNDP |
| Outcome 1.2.1 Strengthened prison system for COVID-19 pandemic prevention and containing | | | | | |
| 1.2.1.a. 25 prisons strengthened with medications y first-aid equipment to prevent COVID-19, included women prison. | 0 | - | - | No. of first aid equipment to prevent COVID-19 delivered | UNODC |
| 1.2.1.b. Nº of people in prisons and officers receiving first-aid equipment, disaggregated by sex, sexual orientation or gender identity and age. | 0 | - | - | No. of first aid equipment to prevent COVID-19 delivered | UNODC |
| 1.2.1.c. Nº of people in prisons and officers trained on Mandela Rules, gender mainstreaming Bangkok Rules and Human Rights. | 0 | - | 8 Specialized Courses developed | Nº the courses developed | UNODC |
| 1.2.1.d. No. of women officers trained on international standards and rules on the Treatment of Prisoners | 0 | - | 42 female officers confirmed for training | Women attending courses developed | UNODC |
| Description of results | | | | | |

3. Challenges/Difficulties Encountered and Measures Taken

*Please briefly describe, if applicable, any difficulties encountered during the reporting period, measures taken to overcome them and changes introduced (any course corrections that were undertaken or need to be undertaken to achieve the expected results). Further, please draw on the Risk Management Matrix that was included as part of the approved ProDoc (regardless of whether challenges encountered were originally envisioned as risks or not) and include an updated Risk Management Matrix as an annex, highlighting any changes from the previous version (Annex A attached). Please reflect on use of the “Do no harm” approach to avoid exacerbating inequalities and vulnerability as a result of the intervention
(up to 500 words)*

There have been a couple of challenges identified in these initial months of implementation. Due to the mandatory quarantine, it has been difficult to supply all the equipment that the MINSAL requires for the home delivery of medicines. This has also happened with the biosafety supplies for the Attorney General’s Office. Suppliers and producers are requiring more days to give all the equipment. In order to catch up, process have been accelerated.

Another challenge encountered has been the articulation among the MINSAL and the Postal Service Office. Usually these two institutions do not work together, and each one has different needs. However, a letter of agreement has been signed between to institutions for a better coordination.

One of the challenges that the project has encountered regarding its beneficiaries are those related to pregnant women. Initially the project considered for pregnant women to be included in the delivery of medicines, however, this has changed for mainly two reasons. The first one is that pregnant women need to do monthly check ups. If the medication was to be delivered to their residency, they would not be going to their checkups. Secondly, when they do their checkups, they give them on site the medication and they do not have to wait for it to be delivered. This has causes changes in one of the targets of the project.

- a) **Response and validation:** There have been some difficulties and delays in the response and validation of the DGCP's activities due to staff rotation. However, these have been quickly overcome with maintaining the communication with the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety and by providing updates to the new staff involved. (Please refer to annex A)
- b) **Delayed in the procurement process due to inexistence of medication or security equipment in the local market:** This challenge has been overcome with the close support of the Procurement Office who has facilitated the registration of new vendors specialized in Protection Personal Equipment and Laboratory supplies.

4. Partnerships

Please explain how the programme has worked with partners and developed new partnerships and if any catalytic financial or programmatic outcomes have been achieved in this regard. How does the intervention complement activities funded by other global instruments such as the GHRP, WHO SPRP, and any national level response plans

The project has facilitated new alliances among government institutions. A nontraditional alliance has been between the PGR and the Postal Services. For the first time and through the postal seal, and with UNDP intervention, these institutions have collaborated together in a campaign to prevent women violence and to promote the access of the different services of assistance.

With the PGR, new funds applications are being submitted to continue supporting this institution, specially the unit of family, through this project policies and biosafety devices will be installed in their offices.

However, they require more assistance due to the demand that the institutions have received by the population. UNODC -OACNUDH- UNAIDS and the DGCP developed a valuable partnership in order to achieve the main objectives of this project. With this partnership, this initiative will comply with the regulations and guidelines established by the Government of El Salvador and the World Health Organization to combat COVID-19, as well as the application of the Mandela Rules and the Bangkok Rules.

Also, it is important to outline the achievements reached through the partnership:

1. It was possible to harmonize a curriculum for prison staff, which has allowed the development of a series of training that will strengthen the knowledge of the staff
2. The launch of two requests of quotation (RFQ) that will allow the equipment of the Directorate-General of Prisons, specifically the acquisition of medical supplies, medical equipment, laboratory equipment and medicines. Will be delivered on October 2020.

5. Learning

*Please include any specific policy, programmatic and/or operational lessons or findings from the programme that could inform similar responses at country or global levels. Please include reflections on the implementation of gender markers and any impacts they have had on programming quality and results.
(up to 500 words)*

One important lesson being learned in the implementation of this project is working with new and nontraditional actors. For the first time the Postal Office is being considered in a UN project. During the implementation their needs have been perceived, but also their willingness to cooperate and delivery better services to the population.

The mail women and men are assigned to one area for years, which means that they are key actors, who know the community and its important to be include them in projects and initiatives for the insight that they can bring. Due to their exposure, the project will also provide for them psychosocial assistance to deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic. This Office has not stopped working and providing services.

We have design workshops for the staff of the General Directorate of Prisons of the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety. The main objective of this workshops is to expand the knowledge of all the staff in the field of human rights and the application of the Mandela and Bangkok rules, to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, reduce the spread of the virus, reduce the number of infections and knowing how to recognize warning signs and symptoms among prison staff, people deprived of liberty. In this way, visualize and protect the rights of people deprived of liberty with special needs and / or with chronic and infectious diseases (HIV and tuberculosis) without excluding the LGBTI population, so that they receive education and care with quality and warmth according to their health needs.

At the end of the training, participants will present the following domains:

- Increased knowledge of international standards for the treatment of Prisoners (Tokyo Rules and Mandela Rules)
- Reintegration and socialization measures for Persons Deprived of Liberty
- Increased knowledge in the establishment of Penitentiary Marks
- Knowledge of the treatment guidelines for aspects related to the containment of the pandemic
- Knowledge of the guidelines for prison conditions
- Update in biosafety measures

6. 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.¹

7. Stories from the Field

Please submit one impactful story showing how your work is meeting critical needs in the context of the pandemic and supporting progress towards the SDGs, especially for vulnerable people. Ideally, this story will feature testimonials from the targeted groups. Please also take a moment to highlight any specific results on gender equality and LNOB, as relevant.

We welcome video submissions; as a reference, please see videos submitted previously by Mongolia and Jamaica (see <http://un.org/recoverbetter>).

Remember: Everything we do is ultimately in service of real people. Stories should be developed using the Issue, Action, Impact model. This means that each story should provide the context and background of the individual and the lead up to the interaction with the Programme, followed by the resulting success.

8. Communications and Visibility (OPTIONAL)

¹ • 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.

Please include highlights of communications and visibility efforts supported by the Programme during the reporting period, if relevant. (up to 500 words)

Publications:

https://www.sv.undp.org/content/el_salvador/es/home/presscenter/articles/2020/08/un-sello-que-llama-a-romper-el-silencio.html

https://www.sv.undp.org/content/el_salvador/es/home/presscenter/articles/2020/04/pnud-dona-al-gobierno-insumos-de-proteccion-frente-a-la-pandemia.html

https://www.sv.undp.org/content/el_salvador/es/home/presscenter/articles/2020/09/pnud-apoya-al-ministerio-de-salud-y-correos-de-el-salvador-con-e.html

<https://twitter.com/PNUDSV/status/1298362886948040727?s=20>

<https://twitter.com/pnudsv/status/1308883210823249923?s=21>

Official Launch:

- o https://twitter.com/UNODC_POSAL/status/1303007749907853312?s=20

Workshops:

- o https://twitter.com/UNODC_POSAL/status/1305540296424542209?s=20
- o https://twitter.com/UNODC_POSAL/status/1303750824900931585?s=20
- o https://twitter.com/UNODC_POSAL/status/1306267838227845122?s=20

Attorney General's Office provides services to women who are victims of violence.



UN COVID-19 Response
and Recovery Fund
#RecoverBetterTogether



The project "Protecting the Life of the Most Vulnerable" launched a campaign to motivate women to put a stop to violence in times of COVID-19. This campaign included the use of a postmark in all correspondence that circulates nationwide. This was done in partnership with the Attorney General's Office (PGR) and the Postal Service Office of El Salvador.

Recent studies have shown that in an emergency context the risks of violence against women and girls, especially domestic violence, increase due to the tensions at home as well as the isolation of women. Survivors of violence may face additional obstacles in fleeing violent situations or accessing protection orders and/or essential life-saving services, due to the movement restrictions in quarantine period. The economic impact of the pandemic can create additional barriers to leaving a violent partner.

In El Salvador, women suffer violence, the public information available shows that there is an epidemic level of femicides when compared to the rest of the region and the world. The emergency situation as a result of COVID-19, and the measures of confinement in the houses, has made women and girls who are victims of violence, in a permanent coexistence (7/24) with their aggressors, for which the institutions have sought mechanisms and tools to make alternatives available to victims search for help. According to official data, only 6 out of 100 women report the violence they suffer, so 94% never reach the justice system (DIGESTYC, 2017).

Additionally, due to national guidelines and regulations on quarantine and home security, the institutional teams that are aware of these events are working with reduced staff and in some cases there has been a delay in the reopening of institutional services. According to information from UN Women at the regional level indicate that, during the quarantine period, a

According to official data, only 6 out of 100 women report the violence they suffer



reduction in complaints generated by the fear of leaving or being discovered by the aggressor is expected, but this cannot be understood as a reduction in violence, but rather a situation that makes it difficult or impossible to report.

The postmark has helped to raise awareness and motivate women to seek help in a different way. This assistance is being provided by the PGR. Through the Project, twenty cell phones were donated to them to assist women victims of violence with legal assistance, psychological assistance and in crisis, through phone calls or whats app.

Unfortunately, many women during this pandemic are under the threat of gender violence

One of the lawyers who has been answering calls and assisting women, is Maria Castro, who works in the PGR. She tells us that "the COVID-19 pandemic has generated mood changes for all women and all men, as a result of confinement, mobility restrictions, not having the public transport service, and others;

Unfortunately, many women during this pandemic are under the threat of gender violence, because they found themselves living under the same roof as the aggressor, this is evidenced by the increase in reports of violence and the request for protection measures, as well as the complaints of non-compliance with food quotas for their children".

The contribution that the Project has given to the PGR has been significant. Maria says that "The contribution has been gratifying, this project has allowed the institution to provide a service of outreach to users. Why outreach? Through the phone calls, it has been possible provide advice with quality and warmth to the place where the user is located without having to travel to our institutional headquarters due to the pandemic times in which we are. Advice on what to do if her life and health are at risk, of their children, and in many cases, actions have been coordinated with the other units of the institution to provide timely services to the user. Depending on the case, coordination is made with other institutions in order to provide the best service to the user and guarantee that her life is not at risk and that she is free from violence"

El Salvador received support from the United Nations COVID-19 Recovery and Response Fund. This funding mechanism has been established by the United Nations Secretary-General to help countries respond to the pandemic and its impacts, including an unprecedented socioeconomic shock. The Fund's assistance targets those most vulnerable to economic hardship and social impacts. The project "Protecting the Lives of the Most Vulnerable People from COVID-19" seeks to support the Government of El Salvador to face the COVID-19 crisis by supporting the implementation of health plans and contributing to the continuity of provision of critical services interrupted by the pandemic.



Photographs

1. Postmark campaign with assistance number



Seal- These photos are of the launching and use of the seal by the Postal Office. The seal contains the phone number of the Attorney General's Office, where women who are victims of violence can call or chat to search for help and assistance. The seal is being set on all the local mail.

2) Strengthening of the Medication Delivery Program by MINSAL and the Postal Office.





Equipment for delivery of medication- To support the delivery of medication, MINSAL and the Postal Service Offices required equipment to safeguard the medicines. Refrigerators, thermometers, scales, envelopes and more have been donated through the project.