

### BACKGROUND

The Health Authorities in China confirmed an outbreak of a novel coronavirus infection on January 7, 2020 in Wuhan City, Hubei Province following a series of reported cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in December 2019. Since the outbreak, the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has increased rapidly across China and worldwide. On January 30, 2020 the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern under the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005). As of March 27, 2020 there were 666,196 cases confirmed cases of COVID-19 and -30,249 deaths across 106 countries, according to a situation report by Johns Hopkins University.

The Covid-19 situation in Ghana as of March 27, 2020 show that 141 cases were confirmed positive with 5 deaths out of 2,519 suspected cases identified and tested. Ghana is currently identified as a risk for COVID-19 by WHO based on the flights and passenger volumes, and the WHO advised on robust epidemic preparedness and response strategies to mitigate fast spread of the disease. Ghana has a busy international airport, seaports, and several land entry borders with people coming arriving from Europe, Asia and the Americas. There are an estimated 57 approved entry points and many other unauthorized crossing points are used daily mainly with visitors arriving from bordering countries (i.e. Cote D' Ivoire, Togo, Burkina Faso and a high trade exchange with Nigeria, which have all reported cases.

The Government of Ghana has instituted measures in place to prevent, detect and control COVID-19 infection, including the designation of two hospitals in the Greater Accra Region for isolating and treating COVID-19 cases. Four other hospitals (i.e. Ga East, Police, LEKMA and Korle-Bu Teaching Hospitals) all in the Greater Accra Region have been identified as additional facilities to support case management. There is very limited country capacity to diagnose COVID-19 through laboratory testing of appropriate samples which is done presently at three centers, namely the Noguchi Memorial Institute of Medical Research (NMIMR), Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research in Tropical Medicine (KCCR) and the Public Health Reference Laboratory (PHRL). The health system in Ghana is presently not resilient enough to detect and respond to imported cases and community transmission of COVID-19. The deficit in capacity to response to Covid-19 span across the health systems blocks including sub-optimal surveillance, information management, limited competencies of providers on infection prevention protocols, limited Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs) and community engagement on Covid-19 outbreak. The limited community engagement has resulted in rumors, misconceptions, and misinformation disseminated online via social media which can potentially have a negative impact on response measures and health-seeking behaviors.

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It is increasingly apparent that efforts are needed to increase Ghana's readiness in this critical window, mainly in ensuring that vital early detection and control measures are in place and are as robust as possible.

PATH is a global leader in health innovation and has several years of experience partnering with the Ministry of Health (MOH), specifically the Public Health Division of the Ghana Health Service (GHS). Currently, we are collaborating with the WHO on the roll out of the malaria vaccine in selected regions of the country with a strong emphasis on surveillance. Due to our ongoing support and collaboration with the MOH and GHS, we continue to receive requests to assist in the COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts beyond the scope of any of our existing grants. This request for flexible funds, if approved, will allow PATH to expand our scope of work and support Ghana's response to COVID-19.

## **PATH'S PROPOSED SUPPORT TO MOH-GHS**

### **Coverage**

- PATH will collaborate with the MoH-GHS at both national and two regions where the burden is high (i.e Ashanti and Greater Accra Regions). In addition, PATH efforts will span to the Eleven border regions (i.e. 1. Volta; 2. Oti; 3. Northern; 4. North East; 5. Savannah; 6. Upper East; 7. Upper West; 8. Bono; 9. Western North; 10. Western South; 11. Greater Accra), with emphasis on border towns.
- Frontline health workers (doctors, nurses, paramedics and administrative staff)
- General Public in high risk regions and districts and ports of entry/border towns

### **Package of interventions:**

PATH will focus on three out of the five areas identified for support by MoH-GHS:

- Risk communication and community engagement
- Capacity building and training
- Medical supplies and equipment

### **Objectives:**

1. Improve national public education, risk communication, behavior change and community engagement on COVID-19 including improve mobile app to enhance community education and functional contact tracing of confirmed cases.
2. Strengthen pandemic Improve preparedness and response with focus on training and capacity for frontline health workers dealing directly with Covid-19 in Accra and Kumasi and the border towns.
3. Support the national emergency response committee to enhance coordination and leadership for COVID-19 prevention and control in Ghana

## Use of funds to support specific activities

### 1. Improve national public education and risk communication, behavior change and community engagement on COVID-19

- a. Support the MoH to develop risk communication plan and provide orientation to Regional Health Administration and critical health workers and stakeholders
- b. Provide guidance on risk communication and community engagement on response to COVID-19
- c. Develop short information videos to be shared widely across different platforms, targeting the general public on:
  - How to prevent the spread of infection
  - What to do if you suspect you have the virus
  - What to do if you have been in contact with someone who is infected
  - How to manage 'infodemic' and maintain trust in the health authorities
- d. Develop a risk assessment and communication scheme based on the WHO guidelines and train key stakeholders on its use including:
  - i. Regional and District Health Administration leadership of Greater Accra and Ashanti regions and selected border regions and districts/facilities.
  - ii. Port Health staff of Kotoka International Airport and other domestic airports in Kumasi, Takoradi, Tamale and Wa.
  - iii. Key personnel of domestic airlines such as Passion Air, Africa World Airline and intercity bus services including STC, VIP and Yutong services
  - iv. Health workers and Staff of other organizations/institutions at entry points/borders in the eleven regions, including Tema and Takoradi Harbors.
- e. Collaborate with Ghana Community Radio Network and conduct preventive health education in local languages for the public
- f. Educate the public on how to perform contact tracing and report on all contacts to the nearest health facility.
  - i. PATH will link up with Vodafone Ghana to improve the existing mobile health app on Covid-19 to increase communication, education and community engagement and develop additional functions for effective contact tracing.

### 2. Improve preparedness and response capacity of frontline health workers in high risk areas:

Preparedness training and capacity building for health workers, including community frontline workers on existing WHO guidelines emphasizing the following:

- a. Supply of appropriate PPEs and job-aids to frontline health workers in regional hospitals in the 11 selected regions.
- b. Training of health workers in the following areas:
  - i. Infection prevention during routine healthcare and when COVID-19 infection is suspected
  - ii. Laboratory guidance, including testing, storage, and transportation of specimen

- iii. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs)
- iv. Clinical management of severe acute respiratory infection when COVID-19 infection is suspected
- v. Home care for patients with suspected COVID-19 infection presenting with mild symptoms and management of contacts
- vi. Early investigation of suspected cases and active contact tracing
- vii. Provide supportive supervision to health facilities, clinics, and hospitals to sustain adherence to guidelines.

### 3. Support the national emergency response committee to enhance coordination and leadership for COVID-19 prevention and control in Ghana

- I. Provide technical support for online meetings
- II. Support management of COVID-19 data on the GHS and MOH website
- III. Support Take part in Response Committee meetings and bring on board the experience and perspectives of PATH.

### Timelines

The project duration is 18 months to ensure sufficient time for approval processes and evaluation of fully implemented interventions.

### Draft budget estimation

1.5 million USD Budget Dimension	Total US\$
Personnel	556,326
Travel	106,504
Consultants	26,115
Workshops & training	100,000
Printing and publication	100,000
Documentation and lessons sharing	20,000
Capital Equipment	106,150
Other Direct Costs	181,493
Subawards	0
<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>1,196,588</b>
Indirect Costs (15%)	306,860
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>1,503,448</b>

## **Deliverables**

1. Training packages adapted for Case detection, Patient management, Risk communication and community engagement; Infection prevention and control.
2. Seventy-five percent (75%) of frontline staff in selected regions trained and equipped with adequate PPEs.
3. At least 75% of frontline staff in selected regional hospitals trained and able to perform investigation of suspected COVID-19 cases
4. Public information and communication package in local languages developed and used to educate communities especially where the burden is high.
5. National Emergency Response Committee supported and active to managing the Covid-19 outbreak, responsibly.
6. Report on implementation of supportive supervision provided to facilities in selected regions