Currently, the Kosovo Health System is able to adequately respond to the situation at hand. Currently stores in cities are well provisioned. But increasing need for food and non-food items and hygiene articles for vulnerable groups (e.g., Roma communities). Short-medium term implications on vulnerable group’s resilience and ability to cope is already evident particularly from minorities, Roma communities.

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As of 20 March of 2020, 20:00 hours, there are 22 total cases of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19. Out of all the cases, 14 of them are hospitalized at the Kosovo University Clinical Center, and 8 are self-isolated.

The government declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency on 15 March 2020. The consequent measures adopted by the government influence public life, e.g., closure of education institutions at all levels, suspension of public gatherings including cultural, sport, and other events; closure of bars, restaurants, pubs, clubs, shopping malls except for pharmacies, bakeries and grocery shops. Banks are working with minimal teller capacity, while online banking, ATM-s and the banking system continues services. Public system pensions and social assistance subsidies are being paid earlier than usually scheduled and central bank suspends.

Currently all emergency and other core government functions are fully functional. Municipalities continue provide civil documentation, albeit with reduced capacities.

The Ministry of Health has created a special website https://www.kosova.health/en/ with relevant information, including preventive measures on COVID-19 and current official statistics. It has also introduced an emergency phone line: 038 200 80 800 (0.02 cents per minute).

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Most international air travel to Kosovo is suspended as of 16 March 2020. Military flights and airplanes carrying cabin crew allowed to land in Pristina Airport for outgoing passengers. There is an exception for incoming medical flights, also from 18 March there is an exemption from incoming flights allowed to carry Kosovo Passport holders, by individual permission of the Ministry of Infrastructure. Travel by land is restricted to all travelers except Kosovo passport holders, staff of diplomatic/consular missions, international organizations, foreigners with residence in Kosovo, and freight. Every person, irrespective of nationality entering Kosovo are to be placed under mandatory 14-day self-quarantine/self-isolation. Intercity transport is suspended as well as organized international transport of passengers. Local transport within Pristina is ongoing as scheduled, except for Pristina — Airport line.

1) References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)
Response of the UN system in Kosovo

In coordination with Health authorities, UN agencies step up speedy procurement of essential health items (PPEs, ventilators) at central/local level. UNKt also continues to reach out to partners at local level to assess needs in vulnerable communities. The UNKt COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) will soon be available the WHO Partnership Platform https://covid-19-response.org/ to match needs and gaps with resources. Donors will have access to the platform.

WHO

WHO is continuously providing technical support and guidance to the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Institute of Public Health of Kosovo (IPh) in all aspects of COVID-19 prevention and control activities and is member of National Coordination Committee in response to COVID 19. All available infographics and communication materials have been distributed to national authorities, in all languages including Romani. WHO provided kits for testing and large number of PPE kits. Also, WHO assisted to prepare national contingency plan and assess Hospital Readiness.

UNICEF

UNICEF has donated PPE kits to Ministry of Health. UNICEF has requested additional amount of PPE supplies and is expecting its delivery to Kosovo shortly. UNICEF is also member of National Coordination Committee in response to COVID 19, providing support to ensure continuity of immunization and outreach programmes for mother and child. UNICEF continues to support MoH and IPh in developing and disseminating communication materials, for most vulnerable groups.

UNFPA

UNFPA has issued a document (Eng/Alb/Srb) on COVID-19 preventive measures/supportive therapies recommended for pregnant women and lactating mothers at risk: http://unkt.org/2020/03/16/unkt-statement-covid-19-regard-pregnant-women-lactating-mothers/ . UNFPA is also in close contact with counterpart at MoH and ready to provide any support needed in sexual and reproductive health, including maternal health, also in defining support to most vulnerable communities, through implementing partner: Kosovo Red Cross.

UNDP

UNDP will support Kosovo to cope with COVID-19 crisis, and is particularly looking into providing digital solutions e.g. for assessing the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, sharing reliable information with the public, supporting with the procurement of medical equipment and planning of socio-economic recovery efforts, incl. jobs and livelihoods.

GIS representation of confirmed COVID19 cases in Kosovo & areas under quarantine

Developed by UNMIK JARU
Main restriction from authorities in the region

Restrictions in Albania:

Since 13 March, Albania has implemented a lockdown in major cities, including Tirana. Foreign nationals to go to the airport must receive written permission from the police to use the roads. All borders closed as of 15 March, except for transport of goods. Major intercity roads are closed.

Restrictions in Montenegro:

All international public air, railroad and road transport is suspended; ban on cruisers/yachts docking. Borders closed for foreigners, except for freight. Travel ban to high-risk countries with mandatory self-isolation for all suspected. Schools are closed.

Restrictions in Republic of North Macedonia:

Closure of airports and land borders for foreign citizens; except for freight. Only members of diplomatic community and those persons with authorization from Ministry of Interior can enter. Travel ban to high risk and mid risk countries, with mandatory 14-day self-isolation for people returning from all countries. Advise- stay at home and avoid crowding in public spaces.

Restrictions in Serbia:

State of Emergency declared. Prohibition against convening and holding rallies and all other gatherings of citizens outdoors; prohibition of all indoor gatherings except those of interest for operation and functioning of state bodies and services. Borders closed to all foreign nationals, except freight and for Chinese nationals assisting with outbreak response. Curfew for people 65 and over at any time, and for all population from 20:00 pm to 06:00 am from 18 March.