

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE COVID-19 AT KIMBONDO ORPHANAGE (KINSHASA, DRC CONGO)

DESCRIPTION:

1. MEASURES TAKEN BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT FELIX TSHISEKEDI IN THE COUNTRY
2. SITUATION OF COVID-19 INFECTIONS IN KIMBONDO
3. MEASURES TAKEN IN KIMBONDO
4. MALEMBE PREVENTION PROJECT

1. MEASURES TAKEN BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT FELIX TSHISEKEDI IN THE COUNTRY

With regards to access to the national territory:

1. Suspend, until further notice, as of this Friday, March 20th 2020, all flights from countries at risk and from transit countries. Only airplanes, cargo ships and other means of cargo transport and their personnel will be authorized to enter the national territory, subject to controls;
2. Postpone travel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for all passengers residing in countries at risk until further notice;
3. Require all passengers, on arrival at national borders, to complete an information sheet and submit, without exception, to the obligation to wash their hands and take their temperature;
4. To impose a quarantine of not more than 14 days on any person suspected of infection at the end of the temperature test for a thorough examination. If necessary, admission of people testing positive into hospitals provided for this purpose will ensue;
5. Provide all maritime, river, lake and land entry points in the national territory with the same monitoring devices to strengthen the control of passengers from abroad;

6. Systematically subjecting people leaving Kinshasa to various provinces of the country to these measures in order to control and prevent the spread of this pandemic to the rest of our country.

With regard to the meetings:

1. Prohibit all meetings, gatherings, or celebrations of more than 20 people in public places outside the family home;
2. The closure of schools, universities, official and private institutions of higher learning throughout the country as of this Thursday, March 19th, 2020 for a period of 4 weeks;
3. Suspend all services for a period of 4 weeks starting this Thursday, March 19th, 2020;
4. Suspend sports activities in stadiums and other places where sports are practiced until further notice;
5. Prohibit, until further notice, the opening of discotheques, bars, cafes, terraces and restaurants;
6. Prohibit the organization of mourning in halls and homes. The remains will be taken directly from the morgue to the place of burial and with a limited number of companions;
7. Take care, at the expense of the Government, of all cases that tested positive throughout the territory.

2. CONTEXT OF THE RISK OF COVID-19 CONTAGION IN KIMBONDO

In order to assess the risk of infection in the context of the orphanage, the following data must be taken into account:

- a) **Very poor health system:** According to our data, in the whole city of Kinshasa, with more than 12 million inhabitants, there are 14 respiratory devices. In the Kimbondo Paediatric Hospital, through which approximately 20,000 people pass every year, there are only 3 respirators. Healthcare facilities, as well as personnel, are insufficient and unprepared to cover a healthcare emergency. Thus, right now, a healthcare saturation seems inevitable and, if the situation does not change, it will not be possible to cover medical needs for the next few weeks.
- b) **Lack of supply of basic necessities:** In the face of the real threat of the coronavirus, prices of basic necessities have skyrocketed, and soon supplies will be scarce. The Kimbondo Paediatric Orphanage, which currently feeds more than 500 children and young people every day, has started to prepare by buying and freezing perishable commodities. However,

if this continues to be the case, Pediatrics will not be able to guarantee the supply of these essential goods.

- c) **Difficult application of health recommendations:** The Kimbondo Paediatric Orphanage in Kinshasa (DRC) houses about 800 people daily, including children, patients and workers. Between 30 and 60 children are housed in each house of the orphanage, without access to adequate food, with health habits not fully established and unable to keep an adequate social distance between them.
- d) **Insufficient disinfectant measures:** In Kinshasa, a city of more than 12 million inhabitants, they do not even have a sewage system to combat unhealthiness. In the Kimbondo Paediatric Orphanage, despite the fact that all the children help with the cleaning and disinfection tasks, they have very limited access to the disinfectant and sanitary material that is necessary to combat the crisis.
- e) **Insufficient hygienic conditions:** In the Kimbondo Paediatric Orphanage, access to soap and a constant supply of alcohol, masks, medicines... is very limited. Despite the attempt to establish basic hygienic habits among the local people, the sanitary conditions of the Paediatric Orphanage are not sufficient to face a pandemic like the one we are experiencing worldwide.

3. MEASURES TAKEN IN KIMBONDO

Implementation of control and prevention measures in concert with Congolese leaders of the Pediatric Orphanage, in particular:

- a) Movement restrictions in the areas of the orphanage where the most vulnerable children (babies and people with different capabilities) live.
- b) Stocks of basic necessities, such as milk, beans, rice, personal hygiene products, disinfectants or fuel.
- c) Currently, 2 cases of covid-19 have been reported in the orphanage. In the next few days, massive tests will be carried out on all children, workers and patients in the orphanage, in order to proceed with the corresponding isolation of those affected. The orphanage is now officially in quarantine, although the measure is really complicated to implement in the context. The houses of children with whom the infected have been in contact have been isolated.

4. MALEMBE PREVENTION PROJECT

- a) Restricting the outlets of children in their care, but with more than 500 children and young people, with only limited workers and educators and living in houses that are not equipped with the correct health measures, this measure is almost impossible.
- b) Freeze all ongoing projects to devote funds to addressing the most basic needs of this crisis.
- c) Direct the funds to two items:
 - ✓ Cooperation with other NGOs in the orphanage to supply food and health products during the crisis, and to build up stocks of necessary goods before prices rise.
 - ✓ Direct supply of material and food to Maison Foyer, the house where 55 children between the ages of 6 and 13 live, and with whom MALEMBE works with its educational and health projects.