

## **Community-led responses to Covid-19 – early examples of activities and experience from among other Palestine, Myanmar and Kenya**

Part of an on-going L2GP research into community responses to Covid-19  
May 19, 2020

In the **Palestinian West Bank**, colleagues at EJ\_YMCA have shared a number of inspiring examples, which I've summarized here:

In all the communities where we have worked, village level, pre-existing Protection Groups (PG) have formed subgroups called "emergency groups". This group mainly consists of members of the PG who are in good health conditions (members who are not sick, members who do not have chronic illnesses and members who are less vulnerable to the virus). The emergency groups oversee virus prevention mechanisms in their communities as well as implement protection initiatives while coordinating with the EJ-YMCA and relevant governmental institutions. In two of these communities, villagers were able to join the central emergency groups formed by municipalities of that area.

One Emergency Group was supplied with a small community cash grant (aprox. 700USD) cash, which enabled them to purchase some necessary sanitizers and hygienic supplies for the village. In 6 villages groups gather information on the number of individuals who work in Israel and Israeli settlements (where the number of Covid19 cases has been much higher than in Palestine. Gathering this data has enabled the emergency groups to target specific families and individuals and raise their awareness regarding the importance of self-quarantine once these individuals are back in the village. The groups also shared with these families (and on the communities' Facebook groups) relevant prevention material on Covid19 and the Ministry of Health's Covid19 hotlines in case anyone had further questions and for instance information on where to get tested if relevant. In two villages, community members created "friendly checkpoints" to monitor the entrances to their village encouraging individuals who returned from Israel to contacts the relevant authorities and if needed to be put in quarantine.

In three villages, the emergency groups succeeded having all public spaces in the villages sanitized by governmental institutions. In some villages, the emergency groups have conducted a rapid needs assessment. Having established the primary needs for the most vulnerable families, they were able to gather contributions from other village members – and in some cases coordinate with NGOs - to provide assistance to address some of the specific needs of particularly affected families with - including basic food/ hygienic supplies. In one village, teachers and students at the local school conducted an awareness campaign addressed at students and parents to encourage the participation in online education. Some families were assisted with internet connections in their homes. In the same village, the emergency group has a sub-committee with only female member. This committee was formed in coordination with the Ministry of Woman Affairs. The role of this committee is to focus on women and young women's needs and priorities.

Lastly, EJ-YMCA reports have they have worked with the Ministry of Agriculture to provide villages with seeds and seedlings so that families would be able to grow their own vegetables in their gardens now that movement is restricted, vegetable trucks are no longer passing by and the

income and purchasing power of many families have been significantly reduced due to lock down restrictions.

In the **Frontier Myanmar**, Kyaw Lin Htoon reports how "[IDPs being left behind in the response to COVID-19](#)". The article also describes the contradicting demands experienced by IDPs as a result of government restrictions, lock down – and the need to feed your family:

*Salai Tun Tan, one of around 500 people living in a camp in Mee Zar village in Paletwa Township, said food was running low because conflict made travel almost impossible. "We are getting rice from nearby villages and then we hunt for animals in the jungle, and collect vegetables and mushrooms," he said. "Every day we nominate three to five men to go out to look for food. "Hunting and foraging were dangerous because of the conflict, he added, but the IDPs had no choice. "Of course, we are afraid of the fighting, but what can we do?" He said that amid the conflict few people in the camps were giving much thought to COVID-19, and they had not yet received any information about the disease from the government or other actors. "I think the disease can't reach us," he said, "since we are surrounded by jungles, mountains and an active conflict."*

The Rift Valley Institute has just circulated the attached guidance on covid response in **South Sudan**. It includes a strong emphasis on community consultations - and adaptation of guidance to local realities. Please find it attached to this e-mail.

Rounding of this update in **Kenya**, the Guardian recently carried this story: [How a 'coronavirus hairstyle' is helping raise awareness in east Africa](#). It's all about how kids and hairdressers are using an affordable haircut with braided spikes that echo virus's shape to 1) help parents save money, 2) keep hairdressers make a modest but vital vital income and – not least - 3) send a vital message to a more grown up but possibly less aware audience. If nothing else just enjoy the pictures and the hairstyle.

Please keep sharing examples by directly by simply answering to this e-mail – or send them to me at: [nic@local2global.info](mailto:nic@local2global.info)

[www.local2global.info](http://www.local2global.info)

More reading and examples:

[https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/gallery/2020/may/07/the-virus-comes-for-us-capturing-the-covid-19-crisis-facing-egypts-poor?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/gallery/2020/may/07/the-virus-comes-for-us-capturing-the-covid-19-crisis-facing-egypts-poor?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

'We Are Used to a Virus Called Bombs'

The coronavirus will ravage a resilient Somalia—with ripples far beyond its borders.

*By Subban Jama, Ayan Abdullahi*

'We depend on God': gravediggers on frontline of Kano's Covid-19 outbreak

[https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/may/11/we-depend-on-god-gravediggers-on-frontline-of-kanos-covid-19-outbreak?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/may/11/we-depend-on-god-gravediggers-on-frontline-of-kanos-covid-19-outbreak?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

Will coronavirus lead to fairer societies? Thomas Piketty explores the prospect

[https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/12/will-coronavirus-lead-to-fairer-societies-thomas-piketty-explores-the-prospect?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/12/will-coronavirus-lead-to-fairer-societies-thomas-piketty-explores-the-prospect?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

[https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/may/15/africa-facing-a-quarter-of-a-billion-coronavirus-cases-who-predicts?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/may/15/africa-facing-a-quarter-of-a-billion-coronavirus-cases-who-predicts?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

WHO has shared this resource on covid-19 "Tips for Engaging Communities during COVID-19 in Low-Resource Settings Remotely and in-person":

[https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/sites/default/files/strengthening\\_tools/WHO\\_CETipsCovid19\\_0.pdf](https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/sites/default/files/strengthening_tools/WHO_CETipsCovid19_0.pdf)