

Our Response to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a public health emergency and economic crisis around the world with governments responding to critical demands on public services.

The provision of safe **water, sanitation and hygiene** is crucial as a first line of defence against the spread of COVID-19 and there is an urgent need for mobilisation of significant resources for the **strengthening of health systems**.

Responding to these demands will require careful management **public finances**, whilst ensuring that **macroeconomic and fiscal policies** are coherent to withstand the economic shock of a global recession.

Preventing millions from slipping back into poverty will require robust **social protection systems** and **expanded social safety nets**. The private sector, in particular **small and medium enterprises (SMEs)**, is threatened as credit dries up, supply chains are disrupted and demand for goods and services slows. There is likely to be a substantial impact on gender **equality and women's empowerment** with significant economic impact on sectors with high female employment, and a greater burden of unpaid care work burden resting on women as well as an increase in gender based violence during lockdowns.

To underpin each response to COVID-19, there is an urgent need for rapid **monitoring, evaluation and research** to support governments and donors to make evidence-based decisions, to measure the impact of COVID-19 programming, and adapt to changing circumstances.

Ecorys' services respond to each of these challenges. We are adapting our programme delivery in light of the shock caused by COVID-19 and we are supporting our clients around the world to help them understand the socio-economic impact and provide services that help mitigate this impact, as demonstrated by the examples provided here.

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Who we are

Ecorys is a leading research, consultancy and management services company with over 90 years' experience and over 500 staff.

Our mission is to help alleviate global poverty and end inequality. We strive to achieve this goal by implementing economic and social development projects across the globe.

Where we work

Our network extends to 12 country offices, focused in South Asia and East, Southern and West Africa. Our teams draw upon learnings from projects implemented in over 120 countries globally, in all regions.

Our thematic expertise

Our International Development Unit works across four main practice areas, covering:

- ▶ Public Finance & Administration
- ▶ Economic Development (including Social Protection)
- ▶ Environment & Natural Resource Management (including WASH)
- ▶ Monitoring & Evaluation

These international development units collaborate with other units across the business including:

- ▶ Policy & Research Unit
- ▶ Communications & Digital Unit
- ▶ Sector-specific practices in areas as diverse as health, transport, trade, and many others.

We have a vast network of internal expertise, augmented by a global network of carefully selected associate specialists.

Contact Us

Covid19response@ecorys.com

Monitoring, Evaluation and Research

Ecorys has received Nuffield Foundation funding for a comparative study of young people's experiences growing-up under Covid-19. Over 18 months, we will train and support young people as co-researchers in **Singapore, Lebanon, Italy** and the **UK**, to assess the implications of the crisis for their education, wellbeing, civic participation, and access to services. Our methods include cutting-edge digital and participatory methods to assess the social impacts of Covid-19. The research will inform the development of tools for public authorities, professionals, and NGOs to safeguard children's rights during the crisis.

In the **Western Balkans**, Ecorys is assisting the FCO Conflict, Security & Stability Fund (CSSF) to map and monitor the crisis as well as design and evaluate the response to it, including: scenario mapping, evidence monitoring, response design, and response evaluation. Ecorys is also providing M&E support to British Embassies in the Western Balkans region to revise their CSSF Theories of Change and Results Frameworks to account for Covid-19, including likely differential effects according to gender, ethnicity, and disability.

Economic Development



In **Laos** Ecorys is pivoting our ongoing SME support programme to tackle the negative impacts experienced by SMEs as a result of limited economic activity. Growth-oriented support will need to be adjusted towards supporting SMEs to survive the initial economic shock and continue operations. Ecorys are undertaking a survey of SMEs in Laos to understand how we can adapt to provide targeted support to ensure business survival and continuity.

In **Sri Lanka**, Ecorys' programme supporting agricultural modernization through value chain development, business enabling environment reform, and promotion of agricultural exports is considering how to pivot in response to Covid-19 by supporting supply chain management to ensure fresh produce reaches super-markets in urban centres throughout the crisis.

Health Systems Strengthening

Ecorys in **India** has provided comprehensive support to the Government of Uttar Pradesh to establish Quality Assurance Systems in public hospitals, build capacity of health care providers on Infection Prevention & Control and Critical Care Management, monitor outbreaks through State Outbreak Reporting Systems, develop facility-based Health Report Cards and Hospital Performance Dashboards, procure equipment and essential drugs, and to develop clinical protocols and guidelines/manuals for infection control, oxygen supply, nursing procedures, and referral systems.

Public Financial and Economic Management

In **Pakistan**, under an EU-funded PFM strengthening project, we are supporting the Ministry of Finance assess the economic impact and policy implications of COVID-19, as well as to identify policy responses to mitigate the consequences of the pandemic.

In **Ethiopia**, we are conducting an economic and social impact assessment of potential COVID-19 impacts on the country's most vulnerable groups, including women and children.

Water, Sanitation & Hygiene

In the **Solomon Islands** we are working with government counterparts in the Ministry of Health and Medical Services to support coordination of the national response, scale up the availability of handwashing stations in public spaces, and are working towards ensuring that all shops and churches have handwashing stations outside.

In **Tanzania**, we are considering how to provide remote monitoring of water point functionality so that government remains supported to increase the stock of functional water points.





Social Protection

In **Bangladesh**, Ecorys' ongoing project to support social security reforms is responding to the economic impact of Covid-19 by channelling channel support to laid-off workers from the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) and export-oriented sectors. In cooperation with the EU Delegation, we are supporting Government of Bangladesh to design a programmatic response, develop a comprehensive database and ensure robust linkages to national MIS and G2P systems to enable monthly payments for laid-off workers from the RMG and export-oriented sectors, who would otherwise be vulnerable of falling into poverty or extreme poverty.

Gender

In **Zimbabwe**, Ecorys has adapted its ongoing GBV prevention programme to ensure the COVID-19 response is GBV-sensitive and can support continuity of essential GBV services during the lockdown. Ecorys is advocating for key stakeholders to address GBV issues in the COVID-19 response by embedding a long term adviser in a key national coordination forum, and has established a 'GBV Help Desk' facility to channel technical assistance to key partners responding to COVID-19. This helpdesk ensures global evidence and practical, contextualised support are available to support GBV-specific needs in Zimbabwe during COVID-19.

Contact Us

5th Floor, Queen Elizabeth House

4 St Dunstons Hill

London

EC3R 8AD

United Kingdom

E: Covid19response@ecorys.com

ecorys.com