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COVID-19 is having severe effects on high- and low-income countries alike. But there’s fear about what impact the virus could have in lower income countries that may be less equipped to tackle the pandemic. As of 6 April, there were 1,879 confirmed cases in low-income countries globally, but that number is likely an underestimation.

To help keep people living in lower income countries healthy and safe, major global health organisations are stepping up their efforts to fight the spread of the virus and help countries recover. WHO is a United Nations agency working to build a healthier future for people around the world. Its primary goals are to combat communicable and non-communicable diseases everywhere. As the primary global health organisation tracking COVID-19 around the world, WHO is playing a major role in fighting the pandemic. It is providing full technical guidance to all countries in need, has developed online training courses for UN country teams to scale up their country preparedness and response, and is a critical information hub for the general public. WHO Africa specifically is taking action to empower communities and stop the spread of COVID-19 by-Providing COVID-19 testing kits, Training health workers, Strengthening surveillance in communities, Crafting radio messaging and TV spots to inform the public about the risks of COVID-19, Fighting misinformation by guiding countries on how to set up call centres to ensure the public is informed.  Gavi is an organisation that improves access to vaccines for the world’s most vulnerable children. Founded in 2000, its mission is to “save lives, reduce poverty and protect the world against the threat of epidemics. When a vaccine for COVID-19 is made available, Gavi will play a central role in ensuring those who need it have access. While the pandemic is ongoing, Gavi will also continue ensuring routine immunisations continue alongside the COVID-19 response. On 21 March, Gavi announced its commitment to help lower-income countries fight COVID-19. Gavi will allow beneficiaries of its health system and immunisation strengthening program to reallocate up to 10% of their grants to fill critical gaps in their COVID-19 responses. Gavi funds can be used for things such as: Hygiene and infection control training for health workers, Infection control supplies, Surveillance, Laboratory testing.

 The Global Fund is a partnership organisation designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, TB, and malaria as epidemics. The Global Fund works with partners to put an end to these epidemics by investing in and funding health resources and interventions, like doctors, nurses, innovative technologies, and education programs. On 20 March, the Global Fund issued new guidelines allowing beneficiary countries to use up to 5% of approved grants to fight COVID-19. Countries will be able to use the funds to help mitigate the impact COVID-19 may have on their ability to fight HIV, TB, and malaria. The reallocated Global Fund grants can be used on: Epidemic preparedness assessment, Laboratory testing, Sample transportation

Use of surveillance infrastructure, Infection control in health facilities, Information campaigns

The Gates Foundation is a global nonprofit focused on building partnerships to tackle critical issues in five areas including global health. Its Global Health Division is focused on improving the delivery of high-impact health products, delivering services to the world’s poorest communities, and helping countries expand access to health coverage. The Gates Foundation is a global nonprofit focused on building partnerships to tackle critical issues in five areas including global health. Its Global Health Division is focused on improving the delivery of high-impact health products, delivering services to the world’s poorest communities, and helping countries expand access to health coverage.  On 5 February, the Gates Foundation announced it would commit up to US$100 million to help bolster the global response to COVID-19. Up to 20% of this funding will be specifically dedicated to helping public health authorities in Africa and South Asia protect at-risk populations by: Strengthening their emergency operations centers, Strengthening their emergency operations centers, Implementing effective disease surveillance efforts and Improving their capacity to safely isolate and treat confirmed cases.

 Founded in 2016, the Africa CDC is a young institution designed to support member states of the African Union with public health initiatives and strengthen public health institutions to detect, prevent, control, and respond quickly and effectively to disease threats. Across its member states, the Africa CDC is undertaking a number of initiatives to respond to the threat of COVID-19 including: Procurement of emergency medical equipment stockpiles Training for laboratories to diagnose COVID-19, Provision of testing kits, Development of an online training portal to enhance care and treatment for COVID-19 patients Communications training to manage the flow of information to the public.