World Health Organization has declared Coronavirus or COVID-19 a global pandemic. We strongly urge you to strictly follow the advice of health experts and protect yourself from getting sick.

**Does Presidential Directive on COVID-19 also apply on refugee settlement?**

Yes. Following the directives from the Government of Uganda, the national preventive measures will be enforced across all refugee settlements with immediate effect, started as of Friday, 20 March for the next 32 days.

**What happens to schools and other educational institutions?**

All schools, Early Childhood Development Centres, Child Friendly Spaces and Vocational Training Institutes in the refugee settlements have been closed as of Friday, 20 March 2020 and remain closed until 20 April 2020.

**Will worship places be open?**

No. Places of worship will remain closed for any mass gathering. Please pray at home.

**Is there any restriction on mass gathering?**

There is ample evidence that mass gatherings can increase the risk of transmission of infectious diseases such as Coronavirus (COVID 19). Therefore the Government has banned congregation of more than 40 people at any given place and time for the next 32 days. This includes: prayer congregations, pilgrimages, political or cultural gathering, sports and musical events, weddings, parties, and monthly markets.
How will the refugees collect food, if mass gathering is prohibited?

WFP is putting in place operational guidelines to minimize chance of transmission and contacts of COVID-19 and effectively respond to the food needs of individuals and communities in refugee settlements. The revised set-up of and process flows include measures for physical distancing and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures such as strict use of hand washing, disinfection of sites, temperature checks and isolation facilities. It will also include a temporary suspension of biometric identity verification through finger-print readers and Iris scans. Where logistically feasible in terms of preparations and time required, WFP will prepare ‘kits’ of family rations in advance of the distribution cycle.

Is it true that all recreational places will be closed?

Yes. Any activity that involves or attracts more than 40 people are prohibited, including gathering at community centres, youth centres, women’s centre and sport activities attracting crowds (football).

What about funeral arrangements?

Funerals are to be carried out by close relatives only, avoiding any gathering of extended family members and friends. The borders are open for commercial reasons only and you will not be able to carry the bodies of your loved ones back to their country of origin during the COVID-19 lockdown. Burial of a suspected corona virus victim will be carried out by the state.

Does the same apply on weddings?

Any wedding celebration taking place in the next 32 days should either be postponed or done low profile, allowing no more than 10 people to attend.

Can refugees travel within Uganda?

On 25 March 2020 The Office of the Prime Minister suspended movement of refugees in between settlements. In line with the presidential directive of 25 March 2020, movement on public transport has been also suspended for the next 14 days, including boda boda, taxis, minibuses, buses and passenger trains. If you use private transport, the presidential directive of 25 March dictates that no more than 3 people should be onboard.
Can refugees travel outside / into Uganda?

No. Uganda has announced a temporary ban to the entry and exit of foreign nationals, including refugees and asylum seekers, through its land, or ports. Only cargo trucks can cross the borders, provided that crew members do not exceed three people. The country has also halted all incoming and outgoing flights until further notice.

Given that the Government of Uganda has announced to close its borders, how would new asylum seekers enter the country?

The Government announced on 19 March that entry of new asylum seekers in the country will be halted for the next 30 days, following the President of Uganda’s directive to “intensify border controls and restrict movement of people in big numbers.”

What about people who are already at the transit and reception centres?

Refugees and asylum seekers, who are already at transit and reception centres will be screened for COVID-19. Anyone presenting symptoms (cough, fever, sneezing) will be isolated and tested. Registration of asylum seekers currently at transit and reception centres will continue, in adherence to the protocols from the Ministry of Health. UNHCR will continue facilitating transportation of refugees from the transit centres to the reception centres and further to settlements in line with the protocols from the Ministry of Health.

Will work places be closed in refugee settlements?

According to the Presidential Directives, only farmers working in the fields may continue their work but observing hygiene habits, such as, thoroughly washing hands, avoiding physical contact with others and maintaining social distancing.

All open markets that often attract huge public gathering will also be closed. Grocery shops will not completely shut down, however, you are advised to go out only when you must and adhere to the government’s directives.

Will health facilities in the refugee settlement stay open?

Yes. Health facilities will remain open in all refugee settlements. Refugees visiting these facilities must maintain public distancing of at least one to three meters and practicing hand
washing. If you observe symptoms like coughing, sneezing, flu and fever, immediately consult your village health team members or go to the nearest health facility. Please ensure that you cover your nose and mouth with a cloth at all time, especially when sneezing and coughing, avoid hand shaking or being close to people including family members on your way to the health facility.

Will UNHCR continue resettlement travels?

UNHCR and IOM have immediately put on hold all resettlement activities, such as, cultural orientation, pre-departure medical clearance, resettlement interviews and resettlement departures until 2 April, 2020. This is a temporary measure taken in light of the COVID-19 global health crisis and restrictions around international air travel. Please immediately report any offers or promises of taking you out of the country at the below mentioned FFRM helpline number.

How can refugee protect themselves from COVID-19 or Coronavirus?

Refugees can prevent getting infected if you do the following:

- Regularly wash your hands with water and soap for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid contact with anyone with a cold or flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sneezing)
- Avoid touching your, face, nose, eyes and mouth with unwashed hands
- Stay at home when you are sick
- Avoid physical contact, such as shaking hands and hugging when greeting people
- Maintain social distancing at water collection points, health centres, food collection point and at the reception centres
- Cover the nose and mouth when sneezing and coughing with a tissue, handkerchief or flexed elbow. Throw used tissues in the bin and thoroughly wash your handkerchief with water and soap before using it again.
- Thoroughly cook meat and eggs
- Avoid unprotected contact with wild or farm animals
- Avoid going to crowded places
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as door handles and phones

Remember, the best way to be safe is to protect yourself and others.
How is Coronavirus spread?

The Coronavirus is transmitted from person-to-person through cough droplets. As such, keeping a social distance of at least one meter and avoiding handshakes and hugs help to prevent contracting coronavirus.

What should a refugee do in case of flue-like conditions?

If you observe symptoms like coughing, sneezing, flu and fever, immediately consult your village health team members or go to the nearest health facility. Please ensure that you cover your nose and mouth with a cloth at all time, especially when sneezing and coughing, avoid hand shaking or being close to people including family members on your way to the health facility.

Where can children living alone without any caregiver or adult receive services or support?

UNHCR and child protection partners extend support to children at risk or those without any carer. Such children can directly approach UNHCR on the inter-agency helpline number – 0800 32 32 32 or our child protection partners in the field for support. If you let us know where you live, we can share the location and contacts of UNHCR’s child protection partner with you. If you wish, we can also refer you to the partner directly and they will contact you as soon as possible.

Will social worker continue their work of providing services to children living alone without any caregiver during this time?

UNHCR and partner services remain available for emergency and urgent concerns for children at risk, including those separated from parents or other family members. If you let us know where you live, we can share the location and contacts of UNHCR’s child protection partner with you that is providing support. If you wish, we can also refer you to the partner directly and they will contact you.

Will refugees be able to report SGBV incidents and receive appropriate support amid this COVID-19 crisis?

Yes, refugees shall be able to report and get multi-sectoral assistance even during the COVID-19 crisis. Life-saving SGBV interventions should continue to ensure critical SGBV response
services are available at all times for those who are in need. You could contact the UNHCR’s implementing partner such as NRC/CAFOMI for assistance if you are person of concern living as urban refugee or asylum-seeker in Kampala.

I am a new asylum seeker in Kampala, I went to the Refugee Desk, but I have not been received, I do not have any identification paper. What should I do?
In a bid to reduce the spread of the COVID 19 virus, the government has temporarily put on hold reception of asylum seekers. At the moment, the Government of Uganda has scaled down direct engagement with refugees and asylum seekers following the announcement of the Covid-19 outbreak in the country. The status quo will continue until further notice.

My ID and Asylum seeker certificate have expired, what should I do?
The office of the Prime Minister has communicated that refugees and asylum seekers will continue to receive services until all operation return to normal. No person of concern will be denied services on the above grounds.

I want to be transferred to one of the settlements. What should I do?
The Government has currently put on hold all movements or relocation as measure to control the spread of the Corona Virus. You are advised to wait until the restriction on movement is lifted.

My interview for Refugee Status was scheduled within this period but I was not attended to. What should I do?
All face to face engagement with persons of concern have been scaled down. Please contact the office of the Prime Minister for a new appointment once the office resumes activities.

Coronavirus is dangerous, it spreads fast and can lead to death. Be safe and support one another.

For more information and reporting COVID-19 symptoms:

Call the Ministry of Health toll free line on: 0800 100066, 0800 203033 or send a free SMS to Ureport on 8500.

For general inquiries: call the inter-agency (FRRM) helpline number: 0800 323232