

GMCP RESPONSE TO COVID-19

MLE SUPPORT

MLE & PRISONS SUPPORT

OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 outbreak has been categorized as a global health emergency and pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). The infectious disease, which has reached almost every country in the world, has proven to spread at a rapid rate, creating the need to adapt preventive measures to contain its further transmission.

A recent report on drug market trends during COVID-19, launched in May 2020 by UNODC, reveals that the measures implemented by governments to curb the COVID-19 pandemic have interrupted some drug supply chains and traffickers are looking for alternative routes, including trafficking by sea. Maritime routes seem to be increasingly used to traffic heroin, as shown by seizures of opiates in the Indian Ocean Eastern Region.

As first responders, Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE) Agencies play a pivotal role in promoting safety and security. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, this role extends to preventing the further spread of the disease, as well maintaining the capability to respond effectively to criminal activity. To this effect, GMCP is supporting maritime law enforcement agencies to strengthen the safety and effectiveness of MLE measures in the context of the pandemic crisis. Interventions include reviewing boarding procedures and operations at sea and providing recommendations and training to ensure both prevention and mitigation measures are adhered to.



AREAS OF WORK

✓ EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

- COVID-19 HeatMap of Coastal Regions in Southeast Asia and the Pacific - an initiative for Maritime Operations Centres to evaluate the risks that seafarers in the region are facing, especially when engaging with vessels that have transited multiple ports in Southeast Asia.
- COVID-19 Prevention and Control factsheets distributed to Kenya Prisons Service.
- COVID-19 educational brochures in Arabic and Somali distributed to the Yemen Coast Guard and Somali Corrections Sector.
- Translation into Sinhala and Tamil of the "Virus and Places of Detention" guidelines for the Sri Lankan Department of Prisons.



✓ TRAINING AND REGIONAL COORDINATION

- Forum for MLE Personnel on "Managing COVID-19 Cases at Sea" in partnership with the WHO and UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa.
- Contact tracing training with law enforcement agencies from Pacific Island countries in cooperation with the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Fiji.
- Online conference to assist Lusophone states from the Gulf of Guinea in dealing with COVID-19 during their maritime operations.
- Webinar on using innovative IT solutions to support criminal court proceedings in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak in Nigeria.
- Webinar in Ghana in collaboration with the Interregional Coordination Centre (ICC) and INTERPOL on the impact of COVID-19 on capacity building in West and Central Africa.



✓ PROCUREMENT AND DONATIONS

- PPE and welfare items distributed to Somali prisons and MLE agencies.
- Delivery of PPE and sanitization items to the Sri Lankan Department of Prisons.
- Delivery of computers to prisons across the Western Province of Sri Lanka, in order to facilitate remote court hearings.
- Distribution of PPE and sanitization items to three Kenyan prisons.
- Delivery of PPE to the Caribbean Regional Security System (RSS) in Barbados.

