

January 2021 Sustained Grantee Spotlight: Integrate Health (Togo)

Virtually no corner of the world has been spared from COVID-19, but despite the pandemic, basic healthcare needs remain critical. Integrate Health has adapted to make sure the health of women and children remain its top priority. In the process, its trained Community Health Workers (CHWs) have been able to utilize their knowledge to provide education about the pandemic and provide testing and contact tracing when needed.

Since March, Integrate Health has worked to procure PPE, including masks, face shields, and gloves. It has conducted more than 40,000 COVID-19 educational home visits and trained more than 120 health staff in stress management. The organization conducted a survey in the early days of the pandemic and determined that CHWs are a highly trusted source of information in the community, an important factor in providing education and other resources to help stem the rise in cases.

From Integrate Health:

“Integrate Health had plans to expand into the Kéran district in July of 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic, which hit Togo in March, changed those plans. The Integrate Health team quickly shifted into crisis mode. The team began twice weekly internal task force meetings and daily leadership briefings as all team members focused their attention on COVID preparedness. This meant we had to hit pause on launch activities.

As the trajectory of the pandemic in Togo became clearer and as the new COVID-19 activities became routine, the Integrate Health program team pivoted back to planning for the upcoming launch. Program Director, Emile Bobozi, was bombarded with requests from community leaders to continue with launch preparations. In the communities Integrate Health was planning to serve, the pandemic hadn't changed the fact that children were continuing to die from preventable diseases like malaria. They saw the Integrated Primary Care Program as the solution.

‘For us, launching the Integrated Primary Care Program during this pandemic wasn't about meeting a deadline; it was about delivering the care to women and children that they should have already had before, during, and after a pandemic.’

In response, Emile developed a revised plan to continue launch activities incorporating COVID-19 precautions.”

“The children and their mothers were not abandoned for a single moment, and the community further trusted and appreciated the services of our Community Health Workers. In this new context in 2020, Integrate Health has been able to count on the confidence and goodwill throughout the world, which has mobilized funds and personal protective equipment to guarantee the continuation of primary healthcare.”

Keep up with Integrate Health's COVID-19 response at integratehealth.org/covid-19-response.