A volunteer in Nigeria hands out handbills as part of campaign to raise awareness about COVID-19 and explain what people need to do to limit the spread of the disease. Photo by Nigeria Centre for Disease Control

All Aboard: Nigeria's Federal Government Streamlines Pandemic Response Coordination

When Africa's most populous country, Nigeria, confirmed its first case of COVID-19, President Muhammadu Buhari tapped the former head of the country's HIV/AIDS control program, Dr. Sani Aliyu, to design the country's COVID-response coordination system. Aliyu's coproduction model partnered Nigerian government experts with United Nations agencies and other organizations that had essential capacities and gave each of them with specific roles. Because Nigeria's federal system of government endowed the states with major responsibility for public health, Aliyu's team worked to support governors and state-level emergency operations. The team soon realized that lockdowns were very difficult to maintain in a country where most households depended on income from the informal sector, so it employed a hot-spot strategy in lieu of nationwide lockdowns. To help fine-tune the response, the team conducted weekly national polls to assess residents' knowledge, perceptions, and behaviors and then adjusted its messages to secure greater compliance with safety measures. Gradually, the government also reached several million vulnerable households with social and economic support. Nigeria ended the first year of the pandemic without repeated surges in serious cases requiring medical care, and it was able to close many of the temporary treatment centers it had set up.

READ MORE

See another new case, [The Value of Vigilance: Costa Rica's First-Year Response to COVID-19](#) and visit our website to learn more about [center of government COVID coordination](#).

Innovations for Successful Societies

+1 609-258-5258 | iss@princeton.edu | successfulsocieties.princeton.edu

Join the ISS Network

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY