Ramped up efforts to support people through the pandemic

An emergency center and medical equipment

→ The teams from Sonatel (Orange in Senegal) and the Sonatel Foundation actively contributed to the efforts to tackle Covid-19 in Senegal by helping to refurbish and fit out a 100-bed emergency center in Dakar's Léopold-Sédar-Senghor international airport. Sonatel also donated medical equipment (including transport and ICU ventilators) and expanded its Covid-19 freephone call center capacity to deal with the sharp rise in demand.

There for young people at risk

→ In Poland, the Orange Foundation supported the Empowering Children Foundation in setting up an anonymous hotline and email support service to help children and teenagers struggling with mental health problems aggravated by the pandemic. The service received over 5,200 calls and 1,145 emails in March 2020, leading to 89 emergency interventions. In Slovakia, the Orange Foundation and the NGO IPčko set up a 24/7 free helpline for people in need as a result of Covid-19, which went on to become one of the country's most in-demand phone services.

Free gigabytes to facilitate daily life

All our entities offered customers a range of free services so they could take advantage of extended mobile internet capabilities. For example, in Moldova, 50 GB of data was offered to 10,000 teachers in May and June 2020, while over 4,000 doctors in more than 1,000 healthcare establishments enjoyed two months' free voice and data traffic.

Continued support for victims of domestic violence

Our teams in France rallied to provide a technical solution for people working on the national domestic violence helpline so they could continue taking calls and supporting victims from home by providing them with headsets and microphones, laptops and a connection to the helpline.

Connecting patients with their loved ones

→ The "Paciente Conectado" project run by Orange Spain donated over 10,000 tablets to hospitals and care homes. Donations from the Orange Foundation made it possible to install videoconferencing solutions on these devices to enable patients to stay in touch with their loved ones and reduce their feeling of isolation. Similar initiatives were rolled out in the Group's other operating countries.

10 GB

In April 2020, Orange offered an additional 10 GB of mobile internet to over 600,000 business customers and companies in France that had used up all their data.

Producing face shields at Solidarity FabLabs

→ With the supply of face masks seriously lagging behind demand in the first half of 2020, several FabLabs (digital fabrication workshops) started to design and produce their own face shields. This community-oriented reaction to the emergency facing the world was made possible thanks to the flexibility and potential of digital technology. The Orange Foundation helped 52 of our Solidarity FabLabs across 10 countries to produce over 220,000 certified face shields that they donated to local hospitals.

Personalized video messages for our loved ones

Orange's #OnResteEnsemble initiative allowed people in France, Luxembourg, Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan to send video clips that would be broadcast on TV for the older people in their lives—a less tech-savvy group that is among the most isolated during lockdowns.

Content everybody can access

During the first lockdown in March 2020 in France, Orange provided free access to its OCS package (OCS Max, OCS City, OCS Choc and OCS Géants) and kids' channels. We also made pay-TV channels for kids and families available free of charge in all our operating countries in Europe and offered free perks to people playing subscription-based mobile games in Romania.

>€9 million

invested by the Orange Foundation in 2020 across 30 countries to carry out emergency health initiatives, distribute food parcels, help people learn to use digital technology and support struggling students.

Supported healthcare professionals

In these unprecedented times, the people at Orange Business Services worked diligently to ensure critical healthcare services continued to operate without disruption.

Although the pandemic put hospitals under incredible pressure and severely affected the way they work, digital technology facilitated patient care and ensured continuity in many healthcare services. To maintain social distancing and speed up the patient journey, the teams at Orange Business Services deployed digital planning tools to schedule appointments, as well as process online pre-admissions. For example, the hospital in Valenciennes, northern France, organized patient care for positive or suspected Covid-19 cases using Memoquest, an SMS reminder platform operated by a chatbot, which was adapted during the pandemic to make it easier to stay in touch with out-patients.

As more and more people shifted to working from home, even in healthcare, remote collaboration tools were deployed on a large scale, which considerably increased exposure to the threat of cyberattacks. That's why we rolled out secure solutions to transfer, process, share and host medical data, thereby safeguarding privacy and patient confidentiality. We also secured remote access to hospital software and raised awareness among employees about the risk of phishing.

To enable multi-disciplinary healthcare teams to collaborate effectively, we set up conferencing solutions through an encrypted data exchange interface. Healthcare establishments relied on the solutions developed by Orange Business Services to adapt and effectively communicate during this time of crisis. The hospital in Béziers, southern France, bolstered communication among its employees and made it easier to share information by making its patient files available online. As a result, the quality of patient care improved and the teams became more efficient. Furthermore, around 20 healthcare establishments enlisted Enovacom, the Orange Business Services healthcare subsidiary, to implement the Surycat alert platform, which makes it easier to deploy and execute emergency plans by automatically mobilizing medical teams by SMS, email and phone. The hospital in Chalon-sur-Saône, eastern France, was able to double its number of intensive care beds by connecting additional biomedical equipment to the IT system via Enovacom's biomedical interoperability solution.

Orange Cyberdefense keeps its promises

Right from the start of the first lockdown in March 2020, healthcare establishments found themselves the target of a wave of cyberattacks. Orange Cyberdefense rapidly set up a free hotline to strengthen security throughout its IT system and activated its protection service in the event of a denial-of-service attack.

Harnessed data to address the pandemic

01 TousAntiCovid

→ As requested by the French government, the French national research institute for digital science and technology met with public and private stakeholders in April 2020 to develop a Covid contact tracing app. TousAntiCovid sends users an alert if it detects they have been in close contact with another app user who has tested positive for Covid-19 and helps them find their nearest testing facility. The app, which uses Bluetooth technology, protects user anonymity and privacy. We helped develop the app and the associated platform and ran tests on over 100 smartphone models on the French market. We also developed our own captcha for the app and manage the security firewalls.

02 Anticipating lockdown movements

→ We use our Flux Vision solution to produce statistics on people's whereabouts and movements based on data from our mobile network. Several years of research have gone into the algorithms which comply with recommendations made by the French Data Protection Authority to remove all personally identifiable information. This enables us to extrapolate the entire population's behavior—including their movements between regions—from a cross section of devices connected to our network. This anonymous representation of movements helps health authorities and governments in Europe and Africa identify regions that need extra medical assistance. Since the beginning of the pandemic, it has been used by Orange and Inserm in the joint research project ANR EVALCovid-19 to model the course of the pandemic and inform the government's decisions, as well as by the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies to identify where people had moved to in France during the first lockdown.

03 The STOIC project

→ STOIC is a project led by GE Healthcare, Orange and TheraPanacea in collaboration with Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Paris to develop a database of chest scans taken to diagnose pneumonia in suspected SARS-CoV-2 patients. Providing secure network access and hosting infrastructure for health data, we rolled out a 3D imaging web application that a group of expert radiologists use remotely to annotate images of lung damage. Not only does the resulting database help develop artificial intelligence solutions that automatically measure the extent of the damage, it can also recommend treatment options for patients and assess the effectiveness of treatments.