

## COVID-19 regional update

Date: 13 – 17 April 2020

### Somali region

Two individuals have been put under quarantine following their contact with a Djiboutian health professional working in the border area of Somali region, who tested positive for the virus.

Key activities undertaken this week are:

- Karamara hospital conducted a house-to-house covid-19 awareness campaign in Jigjiga town.
- The Johi laboratory was inaugurated as the first covid-19 diagnostic laboratory in Somali region with a testing capacity of 240 samples per day.
- The cascading of covid-19 prevention and response measures into the districts of the region is ongoing, with a special emphasis on marketplaces and tea inns.
- The regional health bureau requested communities to implement the quarantine regulations in cross-border movements.
- The regional health bureau conducted COVID-19 testing at checkpoints of city entrances with a focus on Awabare woreda.
- Gode TVET college prepared face masks and software for students to enable them to follow-up with their classes.
- 42 prisoners were released from Gode town prison.
- A COVID-19 task force was established in the region comprising several subcommittees, including fundraising, health, economic, logistics and quarantine teams.

Some of the challenges the Somali region is facing regarding COVID-19 preparedness and prevention are:

- Despite the regulations implemented on public gatherings and the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council's ban on gatherings in mosques and all teaching and learning centers, people continue to attend mosque congregations, send their children to teaching activities, and visit tea-inns and market places.
- Some areas, such as Lehelyub woreda of Dolo zone are not able to adapt the hand-washing measures for COVID-19 prevention, due to severe water shortages.
- The living conditions of IDPs and refugees from neighboring Somalia is putting pressure on regional resources and security. Furthermore, IDPs and refugees have only limited access to reliable information, which further complicates efforts to prepare for and prevent a COVID-19 outbreak in the region.
- The humanitarian supply chain in the region is at risk due to movement restrictions.

- The COVID-19 isolation centers in Jijjiga are lacking capacity, with one of the centers only being equipped with 15 beds, one ventilator and no basic PPE.

### **Harari region and surrounding areas**

Nine (9) suspected individuals have been tested for COVID-19 in Harari region. The results are all negative.

Key activities undertaken in Harari region this week are:

- Haromaya university started producing hand sanitizers.
- Haromaya university inaugurated its COVID-19 testing laboratory with a capacity of 384 samples every two hours. The laboratory is expected to serve the Harari region and surrounding areas in Eastern part of Ethiopia.
- Body temperature measurements were carried out on inter-district travelers.

### **Oromia region**

In Borana zone, mainly in Moyale and Miyo, there are currently 140 people in quarantine. One suspected individual has been tested for COVID-19. The result is negative.

The following are key activities undertaken in Borana zone this week:

- The regional government revised the COVID-19 control regulatory measures, such as a complete ban of markets and public transportation services. Accordingly, public transportation is allowed to convey 50 percent of its carrying capacity and markets may resume with the precondition of social distancing.
- VSF-SUISSE, in collaboration with the Yabello district health office and a local theater group, resumed the COVID-19 public awareness campaign in Dhadim, Haraweyu, Dikale, Dida Yabello and Bake kebeles and in Didahara market, by disseminating key messages through speeches, songs and physical demonstrations.
- VSF-SUISSE supported the district health professional's COVID-19 awareness creation event in Dida hara market, addressing a minimum of 5,000 individuals with social distancing demonstrations and advice on COVID-19 prevention and management.
- VSF-SUISSE provided 10 mattresses, 10 pillows and 10 bed sheets to the Yabello district's isolation center to fill its accommodation gaps.
- The regional government is planning a house-to-house COVID-19 awareness campaign, including all government employees, volunteers, and aid agency workers.

Some of the challenges the Borana zone is facing in COVID-19 preparedness and prevention challenges are:

- Despite the preventive regulations in public transport and marketplaces, people are not fully implementing precaution measures.

- The high influx of returnees from Kenya through Moyale is a key stressor for the host communities in Borana zone.
- The shortage of wash facilities and PPE, and the absence of COVID-19 testing facilities are risk factors for the communities of Borana zone. There is also limited access to food and other essentials among rural communities, day laborers and the poor in urban/peri-urban settings.



*COVID-19 awareness creation campaign*



*Figure 1: provision of mattresses, pillows and bed sheets to Yabello district isolation center*