

COVID-19 regional update

Date: 20 – 24 April 2020

Somali region

Key activities undertaken in the Somali Region this week are:

- National and regional security forces held a meeting with the Somaliland government in Tog-Wajale to implement complete border closure with Ceel-Barde, Somaliland and Puntland.
- Harmukale Kebele of Dambal Woreda prohibited the stop-over of passenger and goods transports on the way to and from Djibouti.
- Sheik Hassen Yabare Hospital (Jigjiga) reduced the number of patients to be admitted at the same time, introduced the issuing of visitor ID cards and assigned police officers to control the number of people entering the premises, while the emergency center remains open to provide its usual services.
- Twenty-five (25) prisoners were released in Jarar Woreda to reduce the risks of COVID-19 spreading.
- Four districts of Dolo Zone provided a COVID-19 preparedness training for the district administrations and healthcare professionals.
- Sitti Zone held a meeting with its humanitarian partners to identify potential high-risk areas vulnerable to the spread of the virus.
- Social distancing has improved in market places, tea-inns and on public transport.

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

- Border control with Djibouti and Somalia is currently not efficient enough.
- Due to a lack of resources, the region is struggling to support poor households with hygiene and sanitation materials.
- Food prices and transportation costs keep increasing in towns like Jigjiga and Degeh Bur.
- Filtu Woreda was identified as the lowest performing in the implementation of COVID-19 prevention measures.

Harari Region and surrounding areas

Key activities undertaken in Harari Region this week are:

- Hiwot Fana Hospital established a treatment center and prepared staff members for COVID-19 response. In addition to 500 pieces of PPE and 6 ventilators are in place.
- The Harari Regional Public Health Emergency Operation Center established a 24-hour reporting center.
- Classes started to be broadcasted on Harari FM 104.1 between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm in Harari, Afaan Oromo and Amharic languages.

Dire Dawa

Three new cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Dire Dawa this week. The individuals are all returnees from Djibouti.

Key activities undertaken this week are:

- House-to-house information recording is ongoing.
- 27 samples were submitted for testing. All the test results were negative.

Some of the challenges Dire Dawa is facing in regards to COVID-19 preparedness and prevention are:

- No strong measures are in place to trace travelers, while those who are identified and placed in quarantine centers keep escaping.

Oromia Region

Key activities undertaken in Borana Zone this week are:

- VSF-Suisse, in collaboration with the zonal government, continued its social mobilization campaign in Dharito, Areri and Haraweyu Kebeles of Yabello District. VSF-Suisse engaged Borana Scholars Association (BOSA), a newly emerged civic association of university lecturers, in the COVID-19 social awareness creation campaign.
- The zonal government relaxed previously taken regulatory measures, such as market and public transportation restrictions.
- A COVID-19 testing center was requested in Borana Zone, and is likely to be set up in either Moyale, Bulehora or Yabello.

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

- Livestock market conditions are unfavorable for pastoralists, as currently there are is only a limited number of livestock traders participating in the markets;
- The prices of food and household items have increased, making it difficult for pastoralists to acquire food for their families.