



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

One People, One Destiny



EAC COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

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EAC COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

- a) On 25th March 2020, EAC Secretariat convened a joint meeting of Health and Ministers responsible for EAC Affairs. The meeting culminated to adoption of a joint and coordinated EAC COVID-19 response plan to complement Partner States national response plans.
- b) EAC COVID-19 Response plan is anchored under the EAC Treaty which provides for Partner States to take joint action in the prevention and control of pandemics and epidemics that might threaten the health and welfare of the citizens of the Community.
- c) In addition, EAC Secretariat has prepared and issued regional administrative guidelines to ensure smooth and uninterrupted movement of goods and services during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Essential commodities include food, agricultural commodities, inputs, emergency and humanitarian relief food

EAC SUMMIT

- a) A meeting of EAC Summit held on 12th May, 2020 (attended by Presidents from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and the Republic of South Sudan).
- b) The Heads of State identified agriculture, trade, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality industry as some of the key sectors adversely affected by COVID-19 pandemic.
- c) Directed Partner States to prioritize regional value/supply chains to support local production of essential medical products and supplies
- d) **The Heads of State further directed Partner States**
 - ✓ To facilitate farmers to continue farming activities during this pandemic and post covid-19 period,
 - ✓ Support agro-processing and value chains as an import substitution measure
 - ✓ Establish special purpose financing schemes for small and medium enterprises, to cushion them from the negative effects of the covid-19 pandemic.



IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

- a) Regional guidelines have facilitated movement of essential food supplies but main challenge currently is truck drivers transporting COVID-19 across the borders. A regional mechanism for testing and certification of truck drivers has been put in place. However, test results take long resulting to delays at the border.
- b) Lack of uniformity in the application of the regional guidelines. For instance, this has led to closure of Tanzania and Kenya border last week.
- c) Heavy rains in the EAC region have triggered destructive floods
- d) Desert locust invasion has already aggravated the food and nutrition security situation in the EAC

a) EAC Partner States can align COVID-19 response interventions to the already existing EAC Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (FNSAP) 2018-2022 and accelerate implementation. The Plan focuses on the following interrelated objectives:

- To improve sustainable and inclusive agricultural production, productivity and trade of crops, animal and animal resources, fisheries, aquaculture, apiculture and forest products;
- To strengthen resilience among households, communities and livelihood systems;
- To improve access and utilization of nutritious, diverse and safe food;
- In the prevailing situation and during the post COVID-19 period, Partner States encouraged to prioritize, invest in and fast-track implementation of interventions in the FNSAP to ensure sustainability of food and nutrition security systems and resilience of livelihoods in the next two years

b) A number of development Partners willing to support EAC in the development of tools and instruments to facilitate implementation of the

COVID-19 response plan. For example, **Trade Mark East Africa** is considering supporting the following areas

- ✓ Development of relevant hygiene, food safety, animal health and plant health standards and guidelines
- ✓ Enhance capacity of value chain actors to increase compliance to the standards and other SPS requirements
- ✓ Enhance simplified cross border inspections
- ✓ Promote implementation of E-certification in the region

The Europe- Africa- Caribbean- Pacific Liaison Committee (COLEACP) expressed interest to support digital capacity building for fruits and vegetables value chain actors. Main focus is to sustain food production and food safety management processes that take into consideration COVID-19 mitigation measures.

