CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND KENYA FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING IN MARSABIT-MOYALE CLUSTER

POSITION PAPER & RISK MATRIX

PURPOSE

This Position Paper seeks to examine the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic on the planning and implementation of the project: Cross-border Cooperation Between Ethiopia and Kenya for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in Marsabit-Moyale Cluster[1]. The paper is the result of a consultative process managed by the project team engaging partner government institutions. It also responds to queries raised by the project donor (the EU).

This position paper is supported by a Risk Assessment which presents the current status of the project, the impact that pandemic and other related factors will be having on project delivery and how to better manage implementation through these uncertain times. More importantly, it is the result of a consultative process managed by the cross-border project team with respective governments. It is also aligned with what UNDP has been doing to complete a programme criticality assessment considering the COVID-19 pandemic for its programmes and projects to make it responsive to local efforts towards averting possible impacts of the pandemic thereby contributing to maintaining law and order, conflict prevention, ensuring peace and development, safeguarding socio-economic impacts that would affect community systems in the most fragile context.

COUNTRY CONTEXT- COVID-19 RESPONSE

On 13 March 2020, Ethiopia reported the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Addis Ababa. As at May 24th a total of 582 confirmed cases had been reported. So far, there have been 3,550 suspected cases with contact tracing extending to about 6,810 total contacts of which 4,604 contacts completed follow up[2].

Kenya also reported the first case on March 13th, 2020. As at May 24th the country reported a total of 1, 214 confirmed cases. So far, 59,260 samples tested[3].

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[1] The Cross-border Cooperation Between Ethiopia and Kenya for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in Marsabit-Moyale Cluster is UNDP's three-year initiative (February 2018-March 2021) implemented in collaboration with the Governments of Ethiopia and Kenya, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in a response to the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Governments of Ethiopia and Kenya to promote sustainable peace and socio-economic development in the border region of both countries. Achievements of the project outcomes is critical and believed to enable Ethiopia and Kenya to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and respective national and local development plans.
[2] https://www.africanews.com/2020/05/24/ethiopia-coronavirus-covid19-hub-updates/
[3] https://www.cnbcafrica.com/africa-press-office/2020/05/24/coronavirus-kenya-covid-19-update-24-may-2020/

As part of the national response, an inter-ministerial task force chaired by the Prime Minister has been established and, effective 16 March, decided to close primary and secondary schools for two weeks then for unlimited period of time as the number of cases increase; shift tertiary education to virtual instruction; ban large meetings and conferences; enforced 14-day self-isolation for all passengers arriving in Ethiopia through mandatory suspension of Ethiopian Airlines flight to 98 destinations; allocated Birr 5 Billion (approx. USD 10M) out of which Birr 300 million was allocated to the Ministry of Health to procure health supplies; since April 8 declared five month State of Emergency; Tigray and Addis Ababa City Administration started a door-to-door screening exercise to identify individuals at-risk of contracting COVID-19; remote working arrangements and new working business model introduced within the Ethiopian public service; new law on limiting the number of vehicles on the road per day is put in place to limit unnecessary movement; border closure; the continued public outreach and awareness about the virus by religious authorities and renowned artists to respect and adhere to government restrictions and advices of health professional; avoid holding gatherings and temporarily closing night clubs and bars. The Ethiopian Public Health Institute has also prepared a Response Plan costed at close to USD 14 million, although these figures are likely to increase over time.

In this fight against the pandemic, the government is also attempting to address the immediate socio-economic challenges by establishing foodbanks, mobilizing fund from the private sector and diaspora to reach the lower income groups of the society, introducing monetary and other instruments to support the economy. However, the task will be challenging for Ethiopia both during and in the aftermath of the recovery as the country is facing difficult economic and political conditions including the postponement of the planned 2020 elections and the resultant economic downturn amidst its stage of fragile recovery. Food insecurity with a rising crisis with the locust infestation, failed *bulg* rains in some localities and flood are also threatening crop production and livelihoods in some of the most vulnerable regions. Traditional practices and limited public awareness of responsible public health behavior, as well as issues of poverty could substantially worsen the trajectory of the pandemic. The pandemic is also expected to have a significant adverse impact on the prospects of Ethiopian government's plan to create 14m jobs in five years (until 2025).

According to Dr. Lia Tadesse, the Minster of Health, the situation is becoming a challenge to contain the virus as Ethiopia is also expecting a rise to the number of citizens to be expelled from Middle-East countries as well as due to the number of Ethiopians and other nationalities crossing the borders with all neighboring states of Ethiopia.
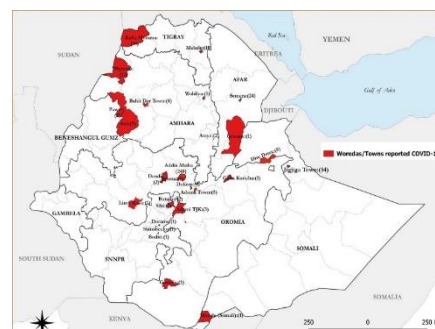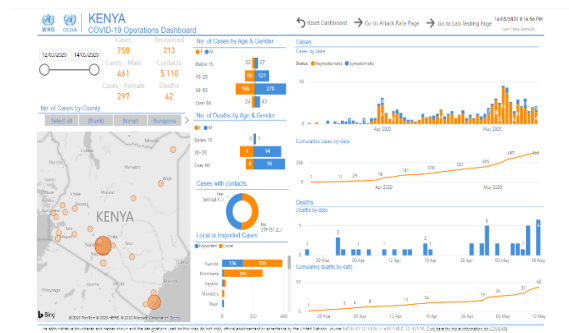
Spot map of localities with conformed cases-Kenya and Ethiopia, 24th May 2020

LOCAL CONTEXT- COVID-19 RESPONSE

Cross-border localities between Kenya and Ethiopia are affected by combination of the COVID-19 pandemic, invasion of desert locust, and non-seasonal rain and flood are threats to the border population. More significantly, situations all together pose substantial risks to the local public health and wellbeing of the population in Borana and Dawa Zones and Marsabit County in general impacting the local pastoralist economy, affecting livelihoods, and further worsening food security in the border region.

In Moyale District, government offices are partially functional, and courts are closed with diverted attention to the pandemic. The unseasonal heavy rainfall in the region is likely to cause devastating floods that could create a risk of malaria, cholera and malnutrition. Residents of Moyale town live in crowds with serious lack of Personal Protective Equipment, safe water and hygienic conditions. As at May 24, 2020, 24 persons are in quarantine waiting for COVID test results. So far, one who was tested positive for COVID-19. Local governments have less capacity to respond to the pandemic. An alarming security situation occurred due to the recent killing of the Head of the Moyale District Security and Administration Officer by insurgents.

Cross-border business activities and services are most affected economic sector. Needless to mention that agriculture and rural livelihoods which are equally affected by the crisis due to border closure, challenges of accessing markets. The Impact of COVID 19 is beyond the foreseeable health crises that might lead to social and economic inequalities and deep-rooted poverty.

In the peace and security sector, efforts aimed at increasing the participation of communities and local government authorities in peacebuilding and conflict resolution activities are affected due to shifts of priorities to combating COVID 19.

However, despite the impacts of this crises on participation in peacebuilding, critical government staff, community representatives, traditional leaders, women and youth should still be at the frontlines of the crises as an active agent.

IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON PROJECT PROGRESS

Currently, both the Ethiopian and Kenyan governments, leading partners of the Ethio-Kenya Marsabit-Moyale Cross-border project, are overwhelmed with the task of fighting the spread of COVID 19 with little to no strategic efforts to address the underlining complex peacebuilding and conflict situations in the cluster. Activities of the project focusing on capacity building trainings, community level sensitization workshops and awareness creation are very much embedded in face-to-face discussions and interactions and consensus-based approaches. Thus, one of the negatives of the social distancing response to the pandemic, means no such live and interactive trainings, meetings, and workshop that require engagement of large number of participants. Besides, the travel and mobility restrictions under the State of Emergency in Ethiopia is another constraint to reach targeted communities in the locality. A case in point is the recent postponement of the capacity building training jointly organized by IOM and UNDP for Border Management Committees of both countries to take place May 19th and 20th in Marsabit County.

Therefore, in cognizant of these external issues affecting the project, the existing project workplans[4] have been revisited with the following assumptions made to influence the proposed modifications to planned activities:

- Critical project counterparts in Ethiopia (Ministry of Peace, Somali Regional Government, Oromia Regional Government, Borana and Dawa Zonal Administrations, Moyale Woreda Administrations- Somali and Oromia) and in Kenya (Devolution and Arid and Semi-Arid Lands, and Marsabit County Administration) will be committed to capitalize on the gained results of the project to respond to the needs for concerted efforts towards conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the region;
- The short-term UNDP COVID-19 response support will mean, to implement selected/repurposed project activities based on the outcomes of the Risk Assessment (attached). In addition, in consultation with and approval by the donor, support will be redirected towards ensuring the continuity of Government through the creation of business continuity plans;
- Large meetings or training sessions will be postponed as these would breach the social distancing rules;
- The project Mid-Term Review is underway, and the findings will help inform the remining period of the project (March 2020 to March 2021);
- There will be gradual lift of restrictions of working in offices and slowing down signs in local government will change;
- Planned activities involving domestic or international travels will be deferred and parked;
- The donor will grant No-Cost-Extension considering the need for additional time to implement the revised activities in the time of COVID 19;

May 24, 2020

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[4] Refers to the approved project Annual Workplan for 2020

Cross-Border Project (Moyale-Marsabit Cluster) Risk Matrix

Risk	Description	Severity	Probability	Risk score	Mitigation Strategy
CONTEXT/ COVID-19					
Wide spread of COVID-19 pandemic within the cluster	• Uncontrollable movement of people • Crossing borders through illegal means • Weak preventative measures • Illicit trades may exacerbate and weaken social distancing • Inadequate availability of PPE to the community (weak economic base to deal with COVID-19 and to purchase PPE) • Limited capacity of health facilities, health personnel and logistics to provide needful equipment to community • Still weak social mobilizations being observed • Limited number of health personnel and logistics • Increasing harassment of various nature	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	○ Enhance social mobilization on COVID-19 virus, the key symptoms, means of transmission and strictly enforce observance of hygiene and distancing protocols ○ Application of precautionary measures issued by the Ministry of Health and Regional, zonal/Woreda level taskforce ○ Distribution of PPE to most vulnerable groups along with development and application of user guide at the ETCO taskforce ○ Getting awareness regularly using all available means including traditional structures, community radio ○ Apply PPEs user guide developed at the ETCO taskforce ○ Use COVID-19 risk assessment survey checklist and determine the level of risk to communities within the cluster/staff/partners ○ Support regular awareness creation ○ Follow-up information from reliable sources about the virus ○ Timely COVID-19 responses (distribution of hygiene items) ○ Regularly sensitize staff/partners/communities on issues of protection from sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse and introduce safeguarding mechanisms in collaboration with the local administration and community leaders
Lockdown may persist	• Lockdown might impede the progress of project implementation, making it impossible to contact local authorities, to hold face to face dialogue with partners and communities, • Limited/no movement between clusters • Enforced stay at home curfew • Limited health services and medical support	HIGH	MEDIUM	HIGH	○ Engagement in creative ways of doing project activities ○ Close monitoring and information sharing about the ongoing issues and adjust mitigation strategies accordingly ○ Explore opportunities to facilitate communication with local authorities using IT solutions, where that is feasible ○ Remote working is now fully in place and regular support is provided within the team. ○ Timely update and exchange of information among cluster members/partners ○ Initiate discussion with donor on possibility of no-cost extension

	• Restrictive measures by authorities, including a possible curfew, will severely limit movement within the communities and between the clusters				○ Review project annual work plan in light of the risks and put in place implementation acceleration plan
Increasing criminal activities	• Lack of resources may push individuals to engage in criminal activities Organized crime and juvenile delinquency may increase	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	○ Stay vigilant and watchful, and observe all safety measures and protocols ○ Inform staff/partners to tighten security around offices and homes ○ Respect movement restrictions, curfews or any announcement by the government
Inter-clan conflict	• Resource-based conflicts among communities might erupt resulting in significant casualties and increased humanitarian needs • Resulting in restriction of movements to project sites • Major Internal displacement might be observed • Local authorities' attention would be shifted to crisis • Project staff could be forced to evacuate again • Management • Complicated the situation even further	HIGH	MEDIUM	HIGH	○ Continuous assessment of risks related to conflict ○ Continue working on peace building activities and conflict resolutions ○ Discussion among cluster members on developing events ○ Working closely with communities and gov't on both sides ○ Early detection and Information sharing on triggering factors ○ Following up reliable medias ○ Update the conflict analysis to better inform mitigation strategies and policy decisions
Zone/Woreda level coordination					
Multi-agency taskforce meeting involvement	• With the involvement of multi-agency/UN agency during the COVID-19 crisis, there is a potential for duplication of efforts, • Blurred line of command and/complicated coordination mechanisms adversely affecting timely response • Unclear and delayed information sharing among cluster	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	○ Closely attending zonal/woreda level multi-agency taskforce coordination meetings ○ Updating status of each actors/who is doing what ○ Coordinated ways of handling responses ○ Proactively mapping existing resources in collaboration with woreda and zonal authorities ○ Seek for a clear line of command ○ Maintain timely reporting and communication

	• Limited logistics to carry out assessments				
Project implementation					
Cross-border project activity implementation	• Lockdown might persist and impedes the progress of project implementation • Restriction of local and cross-border movement • Unable to contact local authorities due to restrictions • Unable to hold face to face dialogue with partners • Detachment with cluster members • Absence of well-designed and coordinated or weak local COVID Response Plan	HIGH	MEDIUM	HIGH	○ Remote working is now fully in place and regular support is provided within the team. ○ Timely update and exchange of information among cluster members/partners ○ Discussion with donors on possibility of no-cost extension ○ Reviewing annual work plan/acceleration plan ○ Close monitoring of the situation and sharing ○ Support local authorities to put in place a technically fit and well-coordinated COVD Response Plan
Inter-clan conflict	• Resource-based conflicts might ensue among communities • Restriction of movements to project sites • Heavy causalities might be witnessed • Property damages/cattle rustling • Illicit arms trade • Migration/evacuation • Humanitarian crises	HIGH	MEDIUM	HIGH	○ Continuous assessment of risks related to conflict ○ Work on peace building activities and conflict resolutions ○ Discussion among cluster members on developing events ○ Working closely with communities and gov't on both sides ○ Early detection and Information sharing on triggering factors ○ Following up reliable medias
National election					
National election (campaign at woreda level/discussion with constituency	• Political campaigns for the upcoming elections might trigger violence • UAG might strike in protest which may lead to road blockage and movement of restrictions again • Post-election violence cannot be ruled out	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	○ Observe all safety and security measures ○ Close monitoring of situations ○ Avoid conflict-prone areas ○ Information gathering and sharing among partners ○ Security surveillance
IMPACT RISKS					

| Gender focus | • Traditional norms and cultural practices inhibit the full participation and empowerment of women and girls
• Access to and control over resource would be a challenge | MEDIUM | MEDIUM | MEDIUM | ○ Create more opportunities for greater gender and social inclusion focussed programmatic interventions.
○ Create conditions within the project to engage women more actively both in the peace-making and development processes
○ Organize training sessions targeting women only
○ Consider initiating a gender analysis within the cluster |