

MOFPED AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS VIRTUAL MEETING ON COVID 19 & LOCUST RESPONSE IN UGANDA

31st March 2020 from 3:00 - 4:00PM

AGENDA

- Opening by the Minister of Finance
- Overview of current response/capacity and need for equipment (Minister of Health)
- Remarks by PS/ST
- Summary on current/planned DP response/capacity (DPG Health/WHO)
- Brief update on locust situation and planned response (DPG Agriculture)
- Way forward

KEY DISCUSSION/ACTION POINTS

- **Financial support:** All Development Partners to consider channelling any Financial Support for the COVID-19 Pandemic control through the Government of Uganda Consolidated Fund. Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will create a COVID-19 account to which Partners are requested to contribute as much as possible. Where support is off budget (financial or in-kind grants) DPs will formally write to MoFPED and permission will be granted in line with Public Finance Management Act 2015. This is to enable Government document, account for the resources and as well avoid duplication of any intervention. WB and IMF were requested to provide Budget Support.
- **Strategy of MoH:** Ministry of Health to share the updated Country's preparedness and Response Plan. National Task Force in place and needs to adjust to Presidential directives.
- **Need for comprehensive strategy** with budget including all sectors for holistic response.
- **Surveillance** at borders said to be effective at technical level with a need for higher-level harmonisation. District surveillance in place.
- **Equipment:** Personal Protective Equipment, gloves, masks, respirators in insufficient quantities. Funds are available but supply is the bottleneck.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT RESPONSE/CAPACITY AND NEED FOR EQUIPMENT

(MINISTER OF HEALTH)

- **GoU Preparedness and Response strategy for COVID19**
 - **Goal:** to provide a framework for coordination and control of COVID-19 by reduction of importation, transmission, morbidity and mortality as well as economic social disruption that might result from this outbreak. The implementation of this plan will be multi-sectoral involving Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Partners, private sector entities and other stakeholders.

- **Specific objectives:**
 - To facilitate coordination of preparedness and response efforts for COVID-19
 - To develop the country's capacity for early detection, confirmation, reporting and referral of suspected cases to designated isolation units.
 - To raise public awareness on the risk factors for transmission, prevention and control of COVID-19
 - To develop capacity for case management and psychosocial support for COVID-19
 - To strengthen the infection prevention and control measures required to mitigate spread of COVID-19 in health facilities, institutions and at the community level.
- **The GOU Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID19 has 8 pillars:**
 - Coordination and leadership
 - Case management, infection prevention and control
 - Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
 - ICT and innovation
 - Mental health and psychosocial support
 - Surveillance and laboratory
 - Risk communication, social mobilisation and community engagement
 - Logistics and Operations (including Human resources)
- **Current situation.** 33 positive cases, all in hospital, apart from 1 and all in stable condition. About 600 people under institutional quarantine. Task force is in place, and budget available to implement above measures. However, this is not enough to address the anticipated cases. Therefore, there is urgent need to support the Country in terms of the logistics such as equipment which inadequate and to Government of Uganda has in put different scenarios and is currently operating under the worst-case scenario which includes an attack rate –about 4% of the Ugandans – intensive care rate at 20% - 1,680M infected– 336,000 (hospitalisation). Currently the Country's ICU capacity is at 50% with about 123 ICU beds in Mulago hospital and 7 beds ICU at regional referral hospitals.
- **Regional coordination.** Even before COVID, Uganda had put in place cross border surveillance coordination mechanisms and these are being implemented. However, at a higher and or political level efforts, these efforts need to be further strengthened. Collective measures are being undertaken and implemented at the technical level.
- **Progress till date.** Task force in place, currently in the process of strengthening the strategy in line with national measures. Response teams are in place to respond to reported cases, national call centre in place which is closely collaborating with other ministries. The Ministry of Health is closely working with all health teams in the districts who are responding at community level. Uganda has developed national guidelines, aligned with WHO guidelines which are being disseminated. Each district has a surveillance team of 3 people (district health officer, district surveillance focal person and laboratory focal point) who links up with regional referral hospital in case of any alert and distributes PPE's. However, this has both

efficiently been implemented sufficiently across all hospitals due to shortage of the required infrastructure and equipments.

SUMMARY ON HEALTH DP'S CAPACITIES AND RESPONSES

HEALTH DPG:

- Most of the health partners are reviewing what resources are in country and/or can be re-allocated and are in process of seeking for additional funding
- Primary needs: safeguarding of frontline workers needs well known – global market is in shortage – US talk to their supplier to try to get supply production
- Approval from the WB to continue to emergency response credit and global funds that have been identified
- DP have contributed – CDC support on the EoC increasing, support to information systems including zoom licensing for referral hospitals, DHT.
- Some procurement and distribution of equipment – PEPFAR via WHO (limited in supply though)
- Support to countering rumours, training of health workers + support to HIV community
- Support to vulnerable populations in refugee settlements and refugee-hosting areas
- The MoH had the 1st call for the platform coordination structure – Incident manager: Isaa Macumbi and Alex WHO – twice per week meeting to coordinate the response – all health development partners are encouraged to coordinate efforts through this platform and allow for continued updates
- Given the global massive outbreak, Uganda expects of its cases to double every after 3 days. Given the anticipated increase in the number of cases, responsive measures cannot be limited to only the MoH or Health DPs but a multi- sectoral approach would be required.

FEEDBACK PARTICIPANTS:

- UNRC
 - Whole of society approach needed. SP – welcome the PM coordination of URCS, private sector and UN
 - Reprogramming and repositioning – building on all initiatives including EVD preparedness
 - Learning for countries emergency appeal and facility to support the National COVID response. Areas of focus are:
 - Health – access to vulnerable groups
 - Economic impact and digitalisation – private sector financing and how to stop poverty gap
 - People movement – need to continue to operate for business continuity of services and scale up of the response
 - Locust response, / food security
 - Livelihoods and social protection
 - Common services, financing and coordination CIVMIL and using UN supply to get PPE

- UN will further strengthen:
 - Information sharing on UN support in formal and in a well-coordinated manner
 - Look into ways to scale up SP programmes
 - Establish National food national reserve and modernising the supply chains
- Question. How does the IGAD strategy link to national and domestic resource mobilisation.
- LDPG (represented by WB)
 - The Health DPG is the lead for interaction with and support to the MOH as well as provide regular updates and highlight challenges/opportunities for DP action/support
 - The DEG DPG is working on understanding macro-economic impact of COVID19 in close consultation with relevant entities of GoU and in close collaboration with other sectors
 - The CRRF DPG is working on specific needs/responses for vulnerable populations/refugees
 - The Agriculture DPG is looking into the locust response (see summary below)
- WFP
 - Support required for supply chain or logistics – what kind of support?
 - Question. Newspaper we picked the GoU plan to support the most vulnerable? What is the plan? *Answer.* The GoU want to support the people that are unemployed due to COVID19 measures. They are working/discussing in the sub-committee on the modality to do so. Through cash or through mobile transfers.
- China
 - The representatives from the Economic and Commercial Counsellor’s Office reported the donations so far received from the China Government and other Chinese combines as below;
 - China Government through BGI Chinese company, donated 500 nucleic acid testing kits
 - Alibaba foundation Jack ma donated 20,000 kits
 - China Railway 7 group donated mattress and other items
 - Mbale industrial park donated transport systems to the President to help in the COVID-19 fight
 - Liao shen industrial park donated money to locals
 - Huawei donated video conference system to ministry of health
 - Sunbelt donated money and medical items to Ministry of Health
- Overall:
 - Issues reiterated on international supply – delivery of the orders seems to depend on the lobbying power of the country.

BRIEF UPDATE ON LOCUST SITUATION AND PLANNED RESPONSE

- Update on locust from DPG Chair (FAO). The meeting agreed to postpone the Locust and another meeting will be held to that effect.

- The situation is so far still largely under control in Uganda as swam activity appears minimal and eggs don't seem to have been hatching. This means that the soils were not conducive to hatching when locusts laid their eggs starting about a month ago. It can also mean that the surveillance is not altogether accurate. In our estimation it is largely the first reason (soils not conducive to hatching) and to a small degree the latter. In spite of this 'respite', food security will continue to be threatened in Uganda, especially for the severely food insecure if (after farmers have planted) locust swarms enter from Kenya, where the Government is still fighting to control the upsurge. Breeding and hatching are continuing to alarming extents in all 3 neighbouring countries of Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. The scale of the infestations in these countries remains unprecedented. Weather conditions are favouring locust reproduction. The amount of territory requiring treatment is vast and often remote.
- Therefore, the 3 priorities for Uganda in the DL response are:
 - Solidifying the surveillance/monitoring system so we can quantify (to the extent that that is possible) the actual threat to Uganda and importantly, to inform control operations;
 - Preparing for control (training personnel in safe control ops, providing personal protective equipment, preparing sprayers, pesticides and vehicles/aircraft) for when the need arises;
 - Prepare to protect livelihoods of the most vulnerable should the situation deteriorate when the time for harvesting comes around.
- Uganda will continue to have to be extremely vigilant as long as the situation in the Horn of Africa and the Arabia Peninsula continues as is or deteriorates, and FAO will continue to work on point (1) above, and is assisting in the establishment of sound surveillance/control system in collaboration with NECOC (OPM) and MAAIF as this will help Uganda develop its monitoring systems for future invasions as well.
- FAO Uganda has been allocated (from funds raised against the global appeal of USD 153 million against which USD 110 million have been pledged) about USD 6.2 million from Canada, Switzerland, The Netherlands, the EU (DEVCO), Germany, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Some of the funding is still being formalized, but pledges/commitments are there. Most of the funding is geared towards surveillance and pre-positioning of equipment and pesticide should the need arise to use them. Travel bans and airport closures have not yet had a significant impact in the timely supply of equipment and resources for control operations. Cargo is generally moving globally, and FAO HQ is in discussions with partners regarding fallback options including using UN airfreight capacity should that become necessary. About a third of these funds is being allocated to impact/food security assessments and potential livelihood recovery interventions.
- The WB is working with MAAIF to develop a USD 50 million (concessional) loan facility for Uganda for surveillance/control, livelihood protection/recovery and coordination/early warning.

NEXT MEETING

- **Agenda:** Macro-economic aspects/impact of COVID19 and update on Health/Locust emergencies.
Date/time: 8th April 2020 at 3PM

PARTICIPANTS

MOFPED	Keith Muhakanizi
MOFPED	Maris Wanyera
MOFPED	Juvenal Muhumuza
MOFPED	Azizah Nabitalo
MoFPED	Dennis Mugagga
MOH	Dr. Diana Atwine Kanzira
MOH	Dr. Sarah Byakika Kyeyamwa
China	Ms. Zhao Xiufen
China	Ms. Jessica Yin
AfDB	Peter Rasmussen
USAID	Richard Nelson
Austria	Roswitha Kremser
Belgium	Erwin De Wandel, Tine Deschacht
Denmark	Henrik Jespersen
EU Delegation	Cédric Merel, John Murphy
France	Elea Wermelinger
Germany	Iris Knabe
IMF	Clara Mira
Ireland	Nicole Mc Hugh's
Korea	Junhee Lee
Netherlands	Joris van Bommel
Sweden	Ola Hallgren, Jenny Krisch
DFID	Andrew Ockenden
UNRC	Rosa Malango
UNICEF	Doreen Mulenga, Diego Angemi
UNHCR	Miriam Malmqvist
WFP	El-Khidir Daloum
UNDP	Elsie G. Attafuah
World Bank	Tony Thompson, Rachel Sebudde, Richard Walker, Enyaku Rogers, Eva Lescrauwaet
CDC	Amy Boore (Health DPG Chair), Mark Tumwine, Flora Banange
FAO/DPG Agriculture chair	Priya Gujadhur
USAID/DPG Agriculture co-chair	Regina McKenzie
DFID/DPG DEG Chair	Laura Chappell
UNDP/DPG DEG co-chair	Yemesrach Workie
USAID	Martin Fowler