

## **Fairtrade Africa COVID19 Update #07**

### **Scope: Government Action and Product Updates**

**Week of, May 13- May 20, 2020**

#### **1. Government Actions per Country**

##### **1.1 Ghana**

Ghana maintained her spot as West Africa's most impacted after cases tally to 5, 735. The good recovery rate continued with a tally of 1,754. Enhanced testing and research are ongoing. There is domestic production of PPEs. The Ghanaian Parliament has approved the amendment of the income tax bill to create an exemption for the withdrawal of the Tier 3 Provident Fund for specific groups of workers.

Parliament has also approved the request to waive taxes on personal emoluments of health workers, for April, May and June and additional allowance for frontline health personnel for March, April, May and June. At the latter part of last week, the government announced local test kits had successfully been developed by one of the leading research institutions in the country.

##### **1.2 Cote d'Ivoire**

The total confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Cote d'Ivoire has increased to 2,153, 28 deaths and 1,050 recovered cases. Government restriction on movements within Abidjan is still in place. The practice of hygiene protocols are also in place and public wearing of face masks is now mandatory. Schools in the country are set to reopen on May 25.

##### **1.3 Cameroun**

Since the beginning of the outbreak in March, the coronavirus has spread in all the country with half of the cases reported in the Centre region. As of May 19, there have been over 3,529 confirmed cases of coronavirus disease with 140 deaths. Medical staff in the country are asking for additional security at hospitals following a series of attacks by people upset that they or their loved ones were diagnosed with the coronavirus.

On May 1st, Cameroon eased restrictions put in place to curb COVID-19. The government is still asking people to protect themselves by washing their hands regularly and keeping a distance of at least a meter and a half from people.

Various medical supplies and equipment provided to combat COVID-19 were delivered to Cameroon's Ministry of Public Health by the Turkish Government.

##### **1.4 Uganda**

With Uganda's COVID-19 statistics heading towards 300, two key new measures; the testing of drivers before they return, and return of Ugandans from abroad have been instituted by the Government in a bid to reassure the nation on steps to control the pandemic.

As the country continues to record high COVID-19 infections among truck drivers, the government has also pointed out that it is shifting its focus on the dangers posed by porous land borders.

### **1.5 Ethiopia**

The pace of new COVID-19 infections has increased to a total of 365 cases. The death toll stands at five while 120 persons have recovered as of May 19. Considering the increase in transmission of COVID-19, the Ethiopian Ministry of Health have asked the public to adhere to all precaution measures including mandatory wearing of face masks when outdoors.

### **1.6 Rwanda**

The total confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Rwanda has increased to 308. The total recoveries remain at 209 while no deaths have been registered. Rwanda has partially lifted its national lockdown allowing businesses to operate from May 4. Movement is free from 8 am to 5 pm. However, residents will need permission for movement beyond 8 pm. Meetings in public places and mass gatherings are still prohibited.

Borders remain closed. Rwanda is enforcing new strict measures at its Rusumo border in a bid to stop the spread of the virus as the number of infections spikes in Tanzania. Further, trucks and cargos are to be disinfected at the border and handed over to a Rwandan truck driver for transfer to mainland Rwanda.

Rwandan citizens and residents returning to the country are subject to a mandatory 14-day quarantine at designated locations at their own expense.

Rwanda plans to employ robots in coronavirus treatment centres and other public places. The five imported robots that have been given Rwandese names will serve as an interface between the doctor and the patient, thereby reducing human contact and risks of the virus's transmission. Besides being applied in the treatment centres, robots will also be used to measure temperatures in other public places such as bus stops and entrances of shopping arcades.

### **1.7 Tanzania**

Tanzania continued to receive criticism over its handling over the COVID-19 pandemic. The country has not provided any recent updates on the number of infections in the country raising questions on the government's transparency on actual numbers. The situation in Tanzania has led the US Embassy to issue a travel advisory on the country in which it suggests an exponential growth rate of the infection in Dar es Salaam and other parts of the country. Neighbouring countries such as Zambia have decided to close its borders with Tanzania over the fear of importation of the disease.

### **1.8 Kenya**

Kenya continues to battle the COVID-19 pandemic with cases steadily rising each day. Kenya's coronavirus tally of confirmed cases has risen to 963, as of May 19. At the same time, there have been 358 COVID-19 recoveries while deaths in the country have risen to 50 across 22 counties.

Besides this, Kenya announced the acquisition of 2 mobile laboratories that will be used to fight COVID-29 at major border points. According to the Ministry of Health, the county has also increased its testing capacity and developed a resource plan for testing. However, one of the problems facing health workers in Kenya is the use of infra-red digital thermometer guns, with users claiming the guns give inaccurate readings or are not properly calibrated - some do not even bear the CE marking to show it conforms with health, safety, and environmental protection standards



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Additionally, the government announced that it will foot bills for persons suspected to have COVID-19, the move is aimed at encouraging more Kenyans to avail themselves for voluntary testing.

The dusk-to-dawn curfew remains in effect with areas such as populous Eastleigh and Old Town – Mombasa coming under a 15-day lockdown following their flagging as some of the major COVID-19 hotspots in the country.

To enhance communication on COVID-19 pandemic, the government announced the launch of a WhatsApp chat BOT facility which is a software application that runs automated tasks, The BOT will contain basic information on the virus.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic the country has recorded high levels of rainfall, damaging homes and destroying water sources, making it impossible for families to practice handwashing or practice social distancing, measures that have been instituted to curb the virus.

### **1.8 South Africa**

South Africa now has the highest number of infections on the continent with 15,515 cases. A total of 7,960 people have so far recovered from the novel coronavirus, while as many as 488,609 tests have been conducted since the beginning of the outbreak in the country. The Western Cape remains the epicentre of the Covid-19 pandemic with 10,639 cases and 187 deaths. South Africa is due to start reopening schools on June 01.

### **1.9 Kingdom of Eswatini**

The partial lockdown has been eased with a few more industries open to produce for export. This will be review in three weeks.

There has been mass testing for all cane sugar cutters, courtesy of the Eswatini government and the sugar industry. This was done in the southern region, and there are plans to cover the rest in the North.

As the number of people with COVID-19 grows daily, Eswatini is now battling yet another health crisis on top of existing epidemics of HIV and tuberculosis (TB). Nearly one-third of adults are HIV-positive, the highest rate in the world. The country is also severely affected by a TB epidemic, with around 70 per cent of all TB patients being co-infected with HIV.

### **1.10 Malawi**

In Malawi, the total confirmed cases are 70 with 31 active cases, while 27 have since recovered and three deaths registered.

### **1.11 Madagascar**

Madagascar has reported 326 Covid-19 cases. The first death in the country was recorded on May 17, coming a week after the launch of COVID Organics (CVO), an organic herbal drink he claims can prevent or cure coronavirus patients. The country has recorded 119 recoveries.

The Republic of Madagascar is offering its COVID-Organics, a herbal concoction touted as a 'cure' for coronavirus infection, to Tanzania, Nigeria and other African countries amid the global pandemic.



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Reportedly, the herbal tonic uses sweet wormwood (*Artemisia annua*), a plant of Asian origin that gave rise to the anti-malarial drug artemisinin, as its main ingredient. The Malagasy Institute of Applied Research (IMRA) has not reported any data on the drug's efficacy against COVID-19 or side effects.

However, the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned against the use of COVID-Organics as the efficacy of the herbal product is unproven. Scientists have also warned that herbal therapy could fuel drug-resistant malaria.

### **1.12 Mauritius**

As of May 11, 2020, Mauritius declared total recoveries from coronavirus infections. So far, 322 people had recovered out of the 332 confirmed cases, with 11 deaths. May 11 marked the fifteenth consecutive day that no new case was recorded. To date, the tally remains the same.

A lockdown, however, remains in place to contain the possible spread of the virus.

Access to businesses operating in the food and services sectors, which are being authorised to resume their activities as from May 15, 2020, will be given in alphabetical order. Shopping according to the alphabetical order of surnames implemented during the confinement period to allow people to stock up on food supplies has proved very effective in containing the spread of the virus.

Mauritius becomes the second of Africa's virus-free nation after Mauritania, two months after the initial cases.

### **1.13 Zimbabwe**

To date the total number of confirmed cases is 44; recovered 17, active cases 23 and 4 deaths, since the onset of the outbreak on 20 March 2020.

On Wednesday, May 06, the World Bank announced it would lend Zimbabwe \$7 million to fight the pandemic—despite the country is more than \$1.2 billion in arrears to many multilateral development banks.

### **1.14 Zambia**

Zambia has confirmed 772 cases, with seven deaths. The Vice President, has directed the immediate distribution of medical supplies meant for the prevention of the deadly corona virus disease to all provincial centres across the country before the opening of schools on June 1st.

### **1.15 Egypt**

With a population of 100 million, Egypt has about 13,484 confirmed cases and at least 659 deaths. On May 19, Egypt registered 720 new coronavirus cases, making its highest daily toll since detecting the first confirmed case in February.

The daily tally of cases has been rising after the government slightly eased a night curfew and other measures. The country will bring forward the start of its curfew by four hours to 5 p.m. and halt public transport from May 24 for six days during the Eid holiday, as it seeks to curb the spread of the virus.



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### 1.16 Palestine

As of May 19, 567 Palestinians in total are confirmed to have contracted COVID-19. On May 16, Palestinian Prime Minister declared that while all shops can still open only between 10:00 to 19:00, they will now also be allowed to open every day. However, for the Muslim Eid al Fitr holiday, 22 to 25 May, all movement will be banned between, and within, governorates, and all public and private facilities will close, except for pharmacies and bakeries.

### 1.17 Morocco

With a total of 7,023 confirmed cases, 193 deaths and 3,901 recoveries, the Moroccan Ministry of Health have started providing mobile laboratories that perform COVID-19 tests for the country's remote areas. Morocco will extend its national lockdown to contain the spread of the new coronavirus until June 10.

### 1.18 Tunisia

Tunisia has so far recorded 1,044 confirmed cases of the new coronavirus and 47 deaths. Tunisia has started relaxing restrictions on movement and businesses this month, allowing half of the government employees to return to work, but the pandemic is hammering its tourism sector which contributes nearly 10% of gross domestic product.



World Health Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Africa

COVID-19

WHOAFRICAUPDATE19.05.20

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Country	Total cases	Total Deaths
WHO Africa Region			Tanzania	509	21	Burundi	42	1
South Africa	16,433	286	Congo	414	15	Eritrea	39	0
Algeria	7,201	555	Ethiopia	352	5	Botswana	25	1
Nigeria	6,175	191	Benin	339	2	Gambia	24	1
Ghana	5,735	29	CAR	336	0	Namibia	16	0
Cameroon	3,529	140	Mauritius	332	10	Seychelles	11	0
Guinea	2,796	16	Togo	330	12	Comoros	11	1
Senegal	2,544	26	Cabo Verde	328	3	Lesotho	1	0
Cote d'Ivoire	2,119	28	Madagascar	322	1	WHOAFRO Total	61,991	1,778
DRC	1538	60	Rwanda	297	0	WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region		
Gabon	1432	11	South Sudan	282	4	Egypt	12,229	630
Guinea Bissau	1038	6	Uganda	260	0	Morocco	6,930	192
Kenya	912	50	Sao Tome & Principe	240	7	Sudan	2591	105
Niger	909	55	Liberia	229	22	Somalia	1455	57
Mali	874	52	eSwatini	205	2	Djibouti	1,518	7
Equatorial Guinea	825	7	Mozambique	145	0	Tunisia	1,037	45
Burkina Faso	796	51	Mauritania	81	4	Libya	65	3
Zambia	761	7	Malawi	70	3	Africa Total	86,721	2,787
Sierra Leone	519	33	Angola	50	2			
Chad	519	54	Zimbabwe	46	4			

WHO only publishes verified information. Data may reflect differences in reporting methods, retrospective data consolidation, and reporting delays.

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## 2. Updates on Fairtrade Certified Products

### 3.1 Flowers

#### Kenya:

There has been return of international flights, mainly cargo flights serving European destinations to deliver exports and bring back essential medical supplies. In addition, the government announced plans to collaborate with 12 other airlines in order to supplement the freight capacity provided by Kenya Airways which doesn't meet the current demand.

British Airways launched a daily cargo-only service from London to Nairobi which may see a significant improvement in flower exports to the country.

Overall, global demand has shown marginal improvement with about 40% of orders being serviced. Furthermore, some substantial positive response is coming from Norway, Germany, Sweden, UK and Switzerland.

Demand now stands at 3,500 tonnes per week, but the available cargo capacity is only 1,300 tonnes due to the logistics block. Many producers are appealing to KQ to lower cargo prices to meet recovering demand.

Airfreight costs is a big issue, Kenyan government not supporting much- some retailers e.g. Agrotropic, Migros shifting to Uganda, Ethiopia.

It is challenge getting FT Flowers, currently markets in Europe offer very low prices, most producers now prefer selling through the auction, destined for Russia, US, Arabic countries- 35%.

Among flower farms, rejection of produce at the farm is still common practice. Harvested flowers are being converted into compost manure. Remarkably, the gradual improvement of orders has seen flower farms equally begin recalling some of their workers to carry on with their day to day duties.

Ethiopian Airlines, has, in lieu of passengers, significantly increased its presence in the cargo market. The East African carrier is now flying shipments of supplies to 74 destinations worldwide.

### 3.2 Coffee (Status remains the same)

In Kenya, demand has remained high and steady; the effect of COVID-19 is yet to be felt in the supply chain. Harvest season in various parts of the country has commenced. The advent of heavy rainfall has, however, disrupted the activity and is affecting cherry ripening. Moreover, the dusk to dawn curfew is affecting picking and delivery of harvest as farmers now have to deliver early in order to comply with the stipulated timelines. This is also having an effect on the quantities harvested.

In Tanzania, there is no new demand for old stock. Neither are there any new contracts entered for the 2020 crop season. Already, some cancellations have been reported owing to restrictions in some product destinations.

In Uganda, only 2 SPOS have reported cancellation of contracts. 5 POs with contracts are working towards fulfilling them. Another one is, however, facing the challenge of capacity to meet major contracts due to low labour. However, all delays are communicated to the buyers who are showing support. As for harvest, the next 3-4 months will be the peak season for Arabica coffee. While harvesting can be routinely done, delivery to washing stations will be a



challenge because of the nationwide curfew. Also, the staff present to receive coffee deliveries are few.

For producers in Ethiopia, business is proceeding as usual. Producers are taking advantage of the free port service offered by the government of Djibouti for the next 3 months.

### **3.3 Tea**

#### **Kenya:**

With exports being at an all-time low, it is estimated that the country may face at least a 25 per cent decline in export revenue in light of the Covid-19 pandemic since many of the affected countries particularly in Europe are key trading partners of Kenya.

#### **Malawi: (Status remains the same)**

**Kawalazi Tea Estate:** Operations are going on as normal with the observation of social distancing, frequent hand washing with soap and awareness of the virus to their workers.

**Satemwa Tea Estate:** Like Kawalazi Tea Estate operations are going on as normal with the observation of social distancing, frequent hand washing with soap and awareness of the virus to their workers.

**Phata Sugarcane Outgrowers Cooperative:** Operations are going on as normal with the observation of social distancing, frequent hand washing and suspension of all meetings as per government recommendations. This cooperative is advantaged because they start their cane harvesting in June.

**Kasinthula Cane Growers Association:** There is uncertainty on when the Illovo sugar mill will start crushing cane. Under normal circumstances, the mill was supposed to start mid-April. Delayed cane harvesting will result in crop loss for the association as most cane will carry over to the next season leading to loss of income to the farmers. On top of this, the association just had a malicious fire in one of their cane fields. This means no income for the owners of the fields for the year 2020.

**Sukambizi Association Trust:** The farmers continue to supply their green leaf to Lujeri Tea Estate. Tea logistical challenges due to the closure of ports and borders have affected tea exports leading to a reduction in sales of made tea.

**Msuwadzi Tea Association:** The farmers continue to supply their green tea to Satemwa Tea Estate. However, it is tea export from Satemwa that has been affected due to logistical challenges being faced as a result of the closure of borders and ports

**Thuchila Tea Association:** The farmers continue supplying their green leaf to Eastern Produce Limited. Just like the other tea SPOs, it is the export of made tea that has been affected due to the closure of actors along the tea supply chain.

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### **3.4 Cocoa**

#### **Ghana & Cote d'Ivoire:**

The Ghana Cocoa Board has announced support to farmers to minimise the impact on them, by the distribution and application of fertilizers as well as support offered by Agricultural Extension Officers.



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Fairtrade Programme Officer in Ghana in charge of Village Savings and Loans Scheme (VSLA) are assisting the POs on how to support their members during this time through efficient and prudent fund management and allocation to members who may require support.

### **3.5. Banana and other products (Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroun, Burkina, Senegal, Benin, Togo) (Status remains the same)**

There is no major impact in the production of fresh and dried fruits so far, however, the local demand is continuously dropping due to lockdown of most populated towns.

There has been a major decrease in cotton in both prices and sales. In Senegal, producers may have to keep their cotton as local buyers' storage spaces are getting full.

Some areas in the Eastern region of Ghana have recorded cases of the virus; no employee of Fairtrade banana plantations has been affected.

### **3.6 Wine**

Unfortunately, many wine producers will only feel the benefits of the lifting of the ban on the export of wine in the coming few months. They took quite a bit of strain during the period that it was banned as wages and other costs had to be paid regardless of no income.

Some producers, like Koopmanskloof, are unable to carry that financial cost. Their workers have been put on temporary retrenchment until they get some funds. The government has made funds available to pay a portion of wages which companies should front in advance. However, that process takes a while. It is expected that the earliest payments will be received in August/September.

### **3.7 Sugar (Status remains the same)**

#### Mauritius:

Some farmers cannot have access to and apply fertilisers and herbicides in their farms as nearby fertiliser shops are short of supply.

Some farmers start sugarcane thrashing in April, which help them have better yields and reduce the cost of cane cutting. However, those operations are not possible for the moment because of health restrictions. Workers who are used to be paid weekly are short of finances due to the extension of the lockdown.

At the approach of sugarcane harvest, farmers will avoid applying herbicides and rather opt for manual weeding. This will cost more to the farmers.

#### Eswatini:

All employees of Eswatini Sugar Association are still working from home following the call by government for a 20-day partial lockdown. Since the Goba/Matsamo border post to Mozambique has been closed, ESA has to use the alternative longer route to the Mozambique harbour, which will affect the costs on logistics. However, the status of the business is that operations have been consistent. Agro-inputs major suppliers have adjusted the price for the next season by eleven per cent. Prices will continue going up, significantly increasing production costs. No changes in sales have since been observed. In **Maplotini** and **Phakama Mafucula**, preparations for harvesting is underway. Safety and health briefings are done every morning and sanitisers provided. None of the employees or management has contracted COVID-19. Harvesting and operations continue uninterrupted in **Mavalela**, **MM&N** Farmers



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and Komati Downstream Development Project Farmers Federation (**KDDPFF**) respectively. None of the employees or management has contracted the virus.

#### Malawi:

SPOs in sugar face a serious challenge as it is uncertain when cane harvesting will start. Cane harvesting needs a huge workforce that may not be available due to government restrictions. On another note, the Illovo Nchalo mill which processes Phata and Kasinthula cane was due to be serviced by a South African contractor, but with the lockdown, this has not happened. This means cane harvesting will be delayed posing a serious risk to the farmers. Delayed harvesting will lead to cash flow/income problems for both the management companies and the farmer associations.

### **3.8 Vanilla (status remains the same)**

The curfew imposed during health emergency has facilitated the efforts of farmers in guarding their vanilla farms. With the help of the vigilance committee in the respective village, some thieves were arrested.

Due to the prohibition of public gatherings of more than 50 people, farmers were not able to meet and discuss the contract with buyers and organization of harvests.

### **3.9 Herbs (Cinnamon; Cloves, Rooibos)**

#### Zimbabwe:

There has been limited operations and activities with the farmers. Harvesting is due at the end of April; as there is a 5 km radius allowance that has been given to the farmers, they can still work on their fields and process their crop. However, buying and transportation will be delayed due to the ban on travelling outside the 5km radius.

#### MENA:

In Egypt, the sales of fresh fruits such as oranges have gone up since it is in demand as a natural source of vitamin C. The vegetable farms continue their normal operations of working and export. In Morocco, the herbs and spices were already sold out way before the virus. There has been a decrease in the production and export of oilseeds and oleaginous fruit due to logistical challenges.

## **4.0 Some of the actions producers are taking**

### **Ethiopia**

1. Bench Maji Coffee Union donated \$43,801 (1.5 million Birr) in FT premium to Bench Sheko zonal administration COVID-19 task force in order to help to buy medical equipment and supplies for emergency preparedness as there are no COVID-19 cases reported in the area. Additionally, the union purchased face masks, sanitizer, and soap which are distributed to 96 union staff weekly. The union is also transmitting radio messages to raise awareness on COVID-19 twice in a week.

### **Kenya**

2. At Kibukwo FCS one water tank has already been installed at the factory and is operational. The other two will be set up at a health centre and shopping centre

### **Tanzania**

3. VUASU invested their internal funds (\$1610) to support 12 churches and mosques, 6 each on the provision of handwashing facilities, and 20 Ltrs of liquid hand wash soap.



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4. KIMULI AMCOS spent \$2695 in FT premium on sanitary supplies and masks for their office, medical equipment and sanitary supplies to Utiri and Kitanda community health centres and local government donations at district level to support the fight against COVID-19.
5. NKWENDA RPCS conducted a member awareness campaign against COVID-19 by disseminating brochures, distributing masks, hand washing kits and sanitizer to each member worth. The producers spent \$3447 on this and an additional \$ 3016 in local government donation. The producer utilized both internal funds and FT premium.