Coronavirus: EU supports with €60 million a regional response to the pandemic in the Horn of Africa

Brussels, 17 June 2020

The EU has today announced a €60 million package to help tackle the health and socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, in support of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional organisation with eight member states, in its mandate to coordinate national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Horn of Africa. The programme will focus on vulnerable groups, including migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and cross-border communities and deliver medical equipment, including more than 8.5 million items of personal protective equipment. It will also help ensure borders and critical supply chains are safe for trade and promote digital solutions to monitor the crisis.

Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, said: “The programme will help mitigate the impact of the pandemic by providing coordinated, coherent, and comprehensive actions across the region. It will be implemented in collaboration not only with partner countries but also with UN agencies, illustrating the benefits of a joint multilateral response. We want to ensure that no one is left behind. This is why we will make sure it reaches the most vulnerable communities and includes measures to fight gender-based violence. Nearly 430,000 people, predominantly women and children, will receive necessary basic care including vaccinations whilst almost 570,000 people will receive critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies and services, in addition to reaching more than 1.6 million people through awareness campaigns to help prevent the spread of the virus.”

On this occasion, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), H.E. Dr Workeneh Gebeyehu, stressed: "This project will make a significant contribution to saving lives, protecting and motivating frontline health workers, as well as preventing community transmission through rapid and coordinated contact tracing and isolation. It will boost the remarkable efforts of national response committees in IGAD Member States to contain and control the pandemic, promote trade and protect livelihoods. This project therefore will be key to support the IGAD Regional Response Strategy to COVID-19. This is a concerted multi-sectoral response in partnership with our Member States to address the impact of COVID-19 on Health, Food Security as well as Peace and Security”.

This programme will establish the IGAD Emergency Coordination Unit as well as the Rapid Regional Response Team (RRRT) to be deployed in the region. It will also support measures for the safe circulation of goods and commodities through Safe Trade Zones, thereby preserving critical supply chains, such as food, fuel and medicines.

The programme will also provide a wide range of medical and personal protective equipment, including 3.5 million surgical masks, 70,000 test kits and 24 ambulances. It will also increase access to health and socio-economic support for vulnerable groups, including migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and cross-border communities. Prevention and response interventions to address gender-based violence, in the framework of the programme, aim to reach more than 89,000 people. Furthermore, it will promote digital solutions relevant to the health COVID-19 response, such as regional surveillance and monitoring systems.

Background

This programme is a response to the call for international support made by IGAD Heads of States, Health and Finance Ministers to help mitigate the impact of the pandemic in the Horn of Africa. The Member States of IGAD are Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda. This programme will be implemented by UNOPS, UNICEF, GIZ, IOM and Trade Mark East Africa.

The Global EU response to coronavirus follows a Team Europe approach. It draws on contributions from all EU institutions and combines the resources mobilised by EU Member States and financial institutions, to address the humanitarian, health, and other consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. The total Team Europe global response package reaches almost €36 billion. In addition, the Commission also started a pledging marathon on 4 May, the Coronavirus Global Response, to lead global action for universal access to affordable coronavirus vaccination, treatment and testing, which was followed by the launch of a new campaign with the international advocacy organisation Global Citizen, “Global Goal: Unite For Our Future”, culminating in a Global Pledging Summit on Saturday 27 June.
In East Africa, €261 million from development funds are being redirected to support the immediate health care response and €475 million will help ease the economic and social consequences of COVID-19. More than €11 million worth of humanitarian funds have also been allocated to the region to support coronavirus control and prevention and help provide vulnerable groups with access to healthcare, water and sanitation.

In addition to this, the EU has also provided €32 million to address the Desert Locust outbreak in the Horn of Africa.

**For More Information**

EU Global Response to COVID-19
Factsheet: EU response to the impact of COVID-19 in the IGAD region

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