HIGHLIGHTS

- 1,210 cases of COVID-19 and a 3rd fatality have been confirmed by authorities in Djibouti this week.
- A Presidential decree details the conditions of a gradual deconfinement starting 17 May.
- Air, sea and land borders for passenger traffic will resume on 1 September. Religious, commercial, transport, secondary school and service activities will be subject to strict adherence of distancing and hygiene measures.
- The IMF approved a US$ 43.4 million disbursement to Djibouti and debt relief to address the pandemic.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- As of 9 May 2020, the Ministry of Health has confirmed 1,210 cases of COVID-19 in Djibouti (22% women). On 6 May, a 64 years old patient died as a result of multiple co-morbidities (chronic

Results of COVID-19 tests carried out daily in Djibouti
obstructive pulmonary disease, tuberculosis and diabetes), making a total of 3 fatalities in Djibouti since the beginning of the crisis (Case Fatality Rate – CFR 0.3%).

- The country recorded a slight decline of COVID-19 confirmed cases since 20 April, and again a peak on 9-10 May. Tracing, testing isolation and treatment of positive cases continues. The Ministry of Health continues to call for caution as the transmission is still active and respect for hygiene and distancing measures paramount.

- On 1 May, the Government launched a testing campaign across Djibouti city, aimed at providing the Djiboutian government with evidence to refine the strategy and measures to be taken to deal with this health crisis.

- After some uncertainty over the weekend, on 10 May, a presidential decree was issued, detailing the conditions of a gradual deconfinement plan. The decree emphasizes on preventive measures to avoid a resurgence of the epidemic whilst allowing the economy to restart. The use of facial masks in all public or private spaces in which social distancing cannot be observed is now mandatory, so is the installation of hand-washing facilities in any public or private establishment open to the public. Gatherings of more than 10 people are not allowed. Public and private construction activities will be able to restart as of 10 May. As of 17 May, some shops and businesses, as well as urban public transport vehicles (buses, minibuses, tricycles and taxis) will be authorized to resume their activity, together with public institutions, central administration services, and higher education institutions. By 23 May places of worship are authorized to receive believers during prayer hours, as long as social distancing measures are respected. From 15 June Restaurants and cafés can resume their activity while hotels, leisure facilities, community centers, sports fields, can do so by 30 June. The opening of air, maritime and land passenger traffic will resume only on 1 September, together with nightclubs, theatres, conference rooms and cinemas. Schools and extracurricular activities will remain closed until the start of the 2020/2021 school year. Depending on the evolution of the situation, the COVID-19 crisis steering committee will strengthen or ease these measures and, if necessary, trigger of a new phase of confinement.

- Government organized repatriations of Djiboutian nationals are still on-going. A flight from Somaliland arrived on 7 May. Returnees are tested upon arrival and put in quarantine.

- The UN Secretary-General has launched a Global Appeal to Address and Counter COVID-19-related hate speech, calling for concerted global action to quash the ‘tsunami’ of hate speech that has risen alongside the pandemic, and appealed for an all-out effort to end it globally. “We must act now to strengthen the immunity of our societies against the virus of hate”, he said.

- The pandemic is intensifying inequalities experienced by the world’s one billion people with disabilities, UN Secretary-General said in launching a report issued on 6 May that calls for a disability-inclusive recovery and response to the crisis. “When we secure the rights of people with disabilities, we are investing in our common future”, the UN chief said. Mr. Guterres underlined the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in creating more inclusive and accessible societies. He also added that the UN is doing its part through the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy which was launched last year. Relatedly, the UN human rights office last week issued a guidance note setting out key actions Governments and stakeholders can take to support people with disabilities during the pandemic. (Read official statement here)

- On 7 May, the African Union launched the African Youth Front on Coronavirus. This high-level policy and advocacy framework for young people to co-lead Africa’s response to the pandemic will engage youth in decision-making with a seat at the table to contribute to finding solutions, decision making and support the implementation of The African Continental Strategic Plan for COVID-19 PANDEMIC. (See more on the subject here).

**PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE**

The IMF Executive Board approved a US$ 43.4 million loan to Djibouti to support the authorities’ response to the COVID-19 crisis, as well as debt relief under the Catastrophe Containment and Relief
Trust, which will generate additional resources of US$ 2.3 million over the next five months, and potentially up to US$ 8.2 million over the next 23 months. IMF support will provide additional resources for the essential health and other emergency spending, including social safety nets. The loan is also intended to help catalyze additional donor support. The authorities are committed to use the additional IMF resources transparently and to ensure that expenditures are well-targeted and cost-effective.

**HEALTH** – At MoH request, WHO launched the procurement of three ambulances and two cars to facilitate the transport of suspected/confirmed patients to the isolation sites and of the medical teams from and to different regions. WHO also continues to provide technical support to MoH, in collaboration with health partners, to reach the most adequate response to contain the spread of the disease.

On 30 April, IOM donated hygiene equipment to the Obock medical center. At the government-run Managara site in the Obock region, IOM provided on-site medical assistance to 163 migrants from 29 April to 5 May. From 29 April to 5 May, IOM sensitized 7,112 migrants at flow monitoring points in the regions of Ali Sabieh, Arta, Dikhil, Obock and Tadjourah.

On 8 May, IOM, in collaboration with the National Office for Assistance to Refugees and Disaster Victims (ONARS), the Ministry of Health, the Arhiba District Council and other government partners launched a sensitization activity on COVID-19 in the Arhiba district of Djibouti town, in the presence of the ambassadors of France, Germany and the European Union as well as the UN Resident Coordinator and the Executive Secretary of ONARS. Staff carried outdoor-to-door sensitization with five agents from the Arhiba district council, three from the ONARS migration unit and 10 from the Ethiopian migrant community. Some 20 handwashing devices were installed, and 1,500 pieces of soap distributed. Some 15 Ministry of Health agents, under the supervision of inspectors, carried out spraying and 120 posters in Oromo, Amharic, English and French were posted in key places in the neighborhood. This activity is part of the implementation of awareness-raising activities of the EU-funded Perennial Solutions Programme for the most vulnerable host populations, refugees and migrants in Djibouti.

On 5 May, screening tests for COVID-19 began in the 2 refugee villages of Ali-Addeh and Holl-Holl. In Ali-Addeh, 15 refugees have already been tested. The testing will continue on 6 May in Holl-Holl.

**FOOD / FOOD SECURITY** – On 30 April, UNHCR, ONARS and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity (MASS) started distributing food vouchers in urban areas. These distributions aim to provide 1,000 urban refugee households and 200 Djiboutian households with food vouchers for the next three months. To date, 402 refugee families have received these coupons worth 10,000 DJF.

ONARS, UNHCR and WFP have decided to extend the period of general food distributions for the month of May, due to start on 25th, at Ali Addeh and Holl Holl refugee villages in order to ensure an optimal distributions flows and to take all precautionary measures to avoid any risk of contagion of the virus.

WFP Djibouti and the MASS are assessing the list of beneficiaries to provide food assistance through cash-based transfers to 6,100 households affected by the COVID crisis and the April flash floods in
Djibouti city. Based on the MASS beneficiary list, this vouchers distribution (10,000 FDJ per household) is planned for the week starting 10 May.

WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture agreed to redefine the list of 7,000 beneficiaries of the "food for asset creation" activities that were affected by locusts in order to include as well COVID-19 affected populations in rural areas.

As part of the nutritional and food assistance programme to TB patients and their families, carried out in partnership with the Ministry of Health, WFP delivered the complete food basket including nutritional products for 122 TB patients in the hospital of Faure in Djibouti city.

PROTECTION – On 5 May, the Minister of Interior, the Prefect of Ali Sabieh, the UN Resident Coordinator, IOM representative, and UNICEF visited the site chosen to set up the first quarantine site for stranded migrants and ‘land travelers’ in Ali Sabieh. Work is underway at the site, which will soon receive up to 600 migrants from different parts of the country who will be quarantined for a period of 14 days before returning to their home countries. Five multi-purpose tents and two rub-halls were procured from IOM’s global stockpile from the Nairobi warehouse and arrived in the country. UNHCR has donated tents for the site and UNICEF is supporting with Water and Sanitation installations.

Lutheran world Federation (LWF) distributed diapers for 43 disabled children from the village of Ali-Addeh. UNHCR and ICAN are carrying out the identification of vulnerable in the three refugee villages children in the context of COVID-19. To date, 132 children have been identified as vulnerable, including unaccompanied, separated children and orphans. Due to the confinement, these children are either separated / neglected by their parents or one of them; or are vulnerable orphans or victims of physical violence. These children will receive food distributions from ICAN.

IOM, in collaboration with the National Police, carried out a rapid needs assessment at border posts, including land borders, ports and airports in Djibouti to verify preparedness and response as well as needs and gaps to promote effective measures to prevent/limit the spread of COVID-19.

LOGISTICS – WFP has established a Passenger Service to support humanitarian organizations, within a network of strategically located hubs. The hub for Djibouti will be Addis Ababa.

EDUCATION – The Ministry of Education is facilitating distance learning for students at national level, including refugees. To that end, it has finished printing all the self-learning pamphlets for all the subjects and all the grades (1-12) for the refugee students in the settlements. Each student will receive his/her individual copies of the self-learning pamphlets in all the subjects depending on his/her grade. The pamphlets have been supplied in Ali Sabieh on 5 May and will be distributed next week.

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