



UPDATE ON COVID-19 IN ETHIOPIA

March 15, 2020

Since Ethiopia confirmed the first case of COVID-19 on March 13, 2020, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute has been tracing the contacts of the first confirmed case and so far about 117 contacts were traced in collaboration with Addis Ababa City Administration and Oromia Regional Health Bureau and being quarantined and under close follow up. Additionally, sample collection and testing is undergoing for contacts of the first confirmed case.

Based on this tracing, we have found three more additional patients that have become positive for COVID-19. The three cases include two Japanese citizens aged 44 and 47 and one is Ethiopian aged 42. All of them work in Addis Ababa had a close contact with the first confirmed case. The clinical condition of the first confirmed case is progressing well and currently does not have clinical symptoms and under close medical follow up at designated isolation and treatment center.

One of the important strategies in place to contain outbreak is to identify all contacts and close monitoring of their health status and this process is underway. Hence, these three cases were captured through active follow up of the traced contacts and are currently admitted, in stable condition and under close medical follow up. We have started tracing the contacts of this three cases. We would like to remind the public that these are not new imported cases but contacts of the first index case.

It is known that National Public Health Emergency Operation Center was activated since January 27, 2020 and preparedness and response strategies are devised based on WHO recommendations. Similarly, Regional/City Administration Health Bureaus have activated their Public Health Emergency Operation Center and implementing the preparedness and response strategies.

The Ethiopian Government and Federal Ministry of Health with its partners, has continued its efforts to contain the outbreak and early detect cases if any, through close follow up and monitoring, as well as mitigate its impact if transmission occurs.

By confirming the fact that the Ethiopian Government is doing everything to contain the spread of the disease and reduce its impact, we at Ministry of Health and Ethiopian Public Health Institute urge our people not to panic but stay calm and do everything it can to stop the spread of the disease in our country.

We encourage the public to continue taking the following precautionary measures to protect against COVID-19

- I. Frequently washing our hands with water and soap
- II. Avoid mass gathering as much as possible
- III. Avoid close contact with people who are coughing and have flu like symptoms. If you have these symptoms, stay at home
- IV. Avoid handshakes
- VI. Get information from reliable sources only.

In case of a need for further information, please call 8335 round the clock. The call center (8335) has now expanded its capacity to collect rumors.

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