



**NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMITTEE ON  
CORONAVIRUS**  
**UPDATE OF CORONAVIRUS IN THE COUNTRY AND  
RESPONSE MEASURES AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH, 2020**

Fellow Kenyans,

Welcome to the daily updates on the current status of Coronavirus disease outbreak in Kenya.

In the last 24 hours, a total of two hundred and thirty four (**234**) samples from suspected cases of COVID-19 have been analyzed in our various Laboratories.

Out of the 234 samples, we have received confirmation of Nine (**9**) people who have tested positive for the Coronavirus disease. This now brings the total number of confirmed COVID -19 cases in Kenya to fifty nine (**59**).

Tracing of close contacts of the fifty nine **(59)** confirmed cases is on-going. So far, the total number of close contacts that we have so far been monitoring stands at **1668**. Out of this number, **508** have been discharged from contact follow up process after completing the 14 days follow up period. Currently, our teams are monitoring **1160** close contacts of confirmed cases.

Following our statement yesterday, we would like to mention a few areas that touch on our level of preparedness.

## **1. Isolation centres**

Early this month, we launched Mbagathi Hospital as our main isolation centre for patients who test positive for Coronavirus disease. The hospital with a capacity of 120 beds continue to play a key role in terms of testing and isolating those who are found infected with the virus.

We have also taken over the Kenyatta University Teaching Research and Referral Hospital (KUTRRH)

that has a bed capacity of 300 beds which we are in the process of equipping to boost our capacity. Out of this number we intend to isolate some beds for ICU.

As I informed you yesterday, we are also exploring the usage of our boarding schools countrywide in the event the situation worsens. We have requested the County Governments to identify specific boarding schools which will be able to assist us in this matter. We are also looking at hangars and fields as well. This is expected to offer us an additional 300,000 bed capacity.

The National Government is closely working with the County Governments as well. To this end all County Governments have been directed as per the Executive Order by the President to utilize level four and five hospital for purposes of the COVID-19 cases. Already, 37 County Governments have complied. The rest are in the process of complying.

## **2. HEALTH WORKERS**

Fellow Kenyans, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our health workers for a job well done. These wonderful people work under tough conditions to be able to keep us all healthy. They also have families to look after and for this reason we should never take them for granted.

As you are all aware, we do not have enough healthcare workers in our facilities, and God forbid if the situation gets out of hand then it would likely stretch our healthcare system if no measures are put in place.

Protecting our health care workers is our top most priority. We are in the process of hiring 1000 health workers to boost our capacity

## **3. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

We are scaling up acquisition of PPEs to our health care facilities countrywide. However, following the outbreak of the disease worldwide there has been a global shortage.

The Government has however resolved to get the same through our local manufacturers. For instance, we are in the process of engaging the EPZ to manufacture face masks, suits to be distributed countrywide. In the same vein we are also looking at manufacturing of protective suits for our health care workers.

As per our modeling which we are working with at the Ministry we have already quantified the needs of the PPEs and come up with allocation criteria in our critical clinics.

## **TESTING CAPACITY**

Currently, we have two national testing centres namely the National Influenza Centre and the KEMRI laboratories. Currently the two centres have a capacity to test upto 660 samples in a day.

Therefore, as your Cabinet Secretary for Health, I am once again appealing to you for your help so that we can overcome this disease as we tackle it among ourselves.

1. I appeal to you to continue maintaining the social distancing because you cannot be able to tell who is infected at face value.
2. I also want to appeal to you to utilize the call line facility number 719 to report on any cases regarding the disease and \*719# to receive the correct messages.
3. I am also appealing to our County Governments to ensure the Coronavirus Committees are not only up and running but they are pro-active in putting in place all the necessary precautionary measures.
4. I am also appealing to those in the transport industry to observe the hygiene measures which we have already announced to you. Matatus should carry the required passengers to maintain social distance, provide sanitizers and their vehicles should be disinfected regularly.

I thank you.

**HON. MUTAHI KAGWE, EGH,  
CABINET SECRETARY.**