

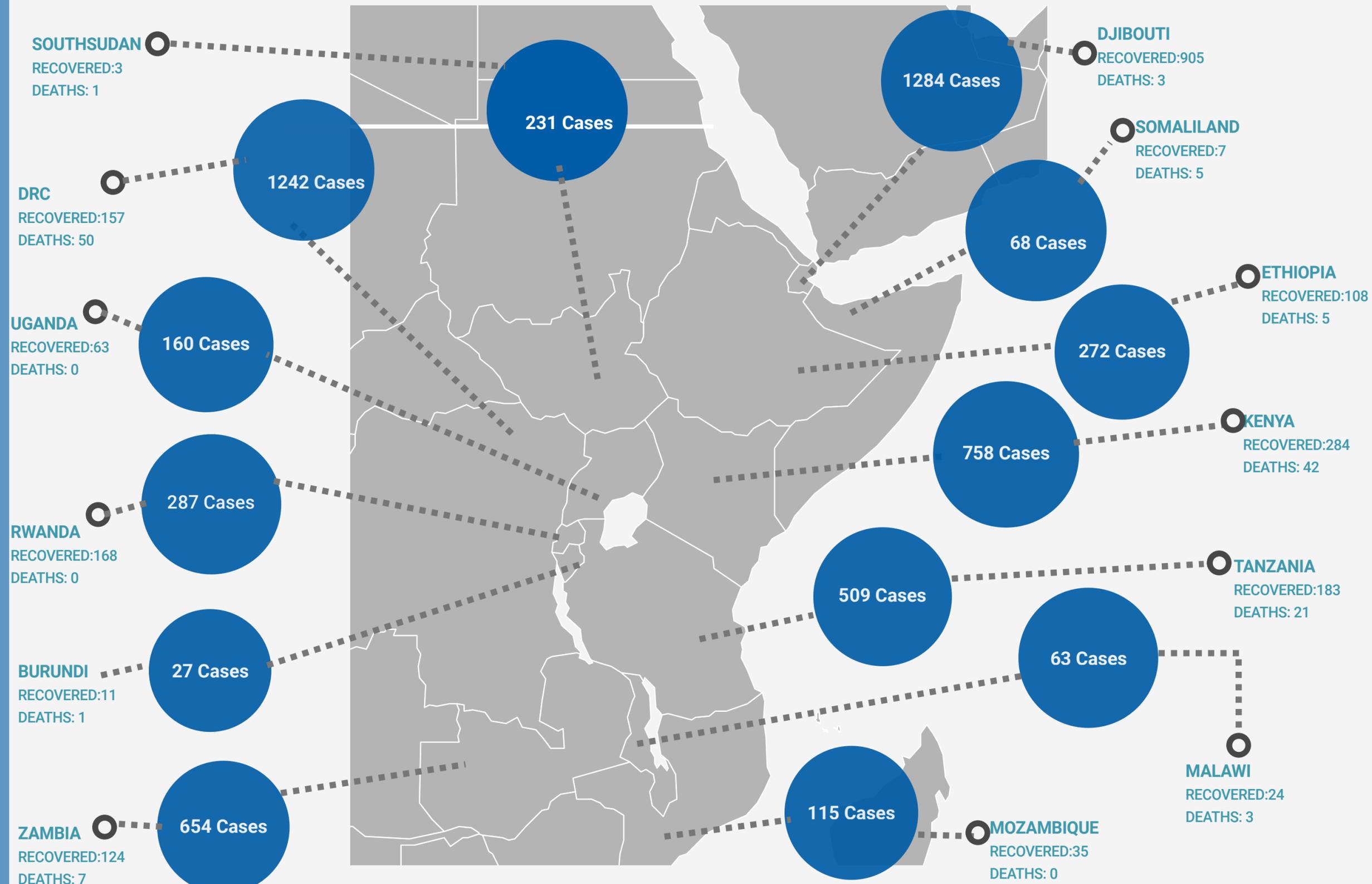
# Impacts of COVID-19 on Eastern Africa Trade, Transit and Borders

## May 11th-15th 2020

### Introduction

TradeMark East Africa works closely with Government and Private Sector partners across the region. The following is a weekly compilation of the dynamic situation on the ground due to the current COVID-19 crisis. TMEA has captured daily updates as they became known to us through our partner contacts, as well as from media reports. Please note that this information changes rapidly and the details below may become obsolete or overtaken by events as quickly as it is distributed. The map on the right provides an update on the number of cases across TMEA's current and planned operating countries.

Source of data is from Johns Hopkins Resource Centre Here, Worldometers [Here](#) and Africa CDC [Here](#)  
\*Source from Govt situation database. [Here](#)  
(Data last updated 13.05.2020)



DISCLAIMER: The maps in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Representations and the use of boundaries and geographical names on these maps may include errors and do not imply judgment of the legal status of a territory, nor official recognition or acceptance of these boundaries by TMEA.

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## Situation Overview

1.1 Four of the six EAC Heads of State (minus Burundi and Tanzania) met virtually on May 12 ([Communiqué here](#)). They have appointed Ministers responsible for Health, Transport and EAC Affairs as focal persons for the region's COVID-19 response plans. Following intensive advocacy, the responsible Ministers agreed to a harmonised cross-border testing plan over the prior weekend, which the Heads of State endorsed. Many of the calls for action mirror support planned under TMEA's Safe Trade Emergency Facility, including:

- Adopt an EAC digital surveillance and tracking system for drivers and crew on COVID-19 for immediate use by Partner States;
- Develop a regional mechanism for COVID-19 testing, certification and monitoring of trucks drivers and to report back to the Heads of State;
- Partner States to prioritize regional value/supply chains to support local production of essential medical products and supplies including masks, sanitizers, soaps, coveralls, face shields, processed food, ventilators as part of efforts to combat COVID-19 in the region; and,
- Partner States to facilitate farmers to continue farming activities, support agro-processing and value chains as an import substitution measure and establish special purpose financing schemes for small and medium enterprises.

1.2 Though Tanzania did not join the EAC conversation, delegations from Tanzania and Rwanda met on May 15 to discuss recent challenges at the Rusomo border. The two Partner States agreed on the transshipment of containerised goods, escort of trucks with foreign drivers carrying sensitive goods, e.g. petrol, and suspended relay of drivers. They also agreed on mandatory testing at the point of origin and designated stops along the Central corridor leading to Rusomo.

Tanzania also held bilateral talks Zambia following the closure of the Nakonde border that resolved to reopen the border with the enforcement of mandatory testing of drivers to facilitate trade. The border reopened on May 15, but the disruption is an indication of the need to look at a wider COMESA, Tripartite engagement in TMEA's Safe Trade Emergency Facility.

1.3 South African goods are taking longer to get to East Africa. The Zambian government closed the Nakonde/Tunduma border with Tanzania this week, citing concerns over infected cargo drivers entering the country. TMEA staff reported that when trucks from South Africa reach the Botswana/Zambia border, the drivers are quarantined for seven days, and then for four days when they arrive in Lusaka. They then reach Nakonde/Tunduma and face the Tanzania process, which is 14 days quarantine. Hence that is a month of quarantine time. The border reopened on May 15, but the disruption is an indication of the need to look at a wider COMESA, Tripartite engagement in TMEA's Safe Trade Emergency Facility.



**MAY 12**

Four of the six EAC Heads of State appointed Ministers responsible for Health, Transport & EAC focal persons for the region's Covid-19 response plans

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1.4 A new EU Regulation is likely to impact on agri-food imports from EAC to the EU. There are already existing rigorous controls targeting specific agricultural commodities and producer-countries in the region (such as Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, South Sudan). Issues of concern are mainly chemical contaminants (e.g. pesticide residues, residues of veterinary drugs and pesticides), naturally occurring toxins (such as mycotoxins, cyanide, etc) and disease causing organisms (such as bacteria, viruses, parasitic worms and protozoa) in food. In view of TMEA's Safe Trade interventions for export supply chains, this regulation offers both challenges and opportunities.

The immediate next step is mapping of food safety issues along key export-oriented food supply chains and providing targeted interventions to address the problem at different stages of the supply chain. From a TMEA perspective, this calls for interventions targeting smallholder producers/SMEs in selected food supply-chains to enable them supply products that meet food safety and other SPS requirements of importing countries. It is also important to build local capacities to ensure national food control systems are risk-based and supported by trade-facilitating policies.

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## Country and Regional Updates

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### Burundi

- Burundi has warned election observers sent by the East African Community will be placed under mandatory 14-day quarantine. [Read more](#)

### DRC

- Tensions building up between DRC and Zambia as Zimbabwe intervenes amid Covid-19. [Read more](#)

### Ethiopia

- Ethiopia is poised to open five more land border checkpoints along the borders with its neighbours within the next month. [Read more](#)



**14 HRS**

Duration election observers from the EAC will be placed

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## Kenya

- Bolloré Transport & Logistics has launched a rail service for export cargo from Mombasa to Uganda through the Naivasha ICD in a bid to reduce the spread of Covid-19. [Read more](#)
- Kenya will station a mobile laboratory at the Namanga border point targeting long-distance drivers as the country steps up its surveillance to contain the spread of Covid-19. [Read more](#)
- Twenty-five truck drivers from Tanzania who tested positive for Covid-19 at the Namanga border point have been denied entry into Kenya, the Health Ministry has said. [Read more](#)
- Pressure on international trade and more restrictions around port operations has decreased by 50% the number of cargo trains on the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) Jan-April 2020. [Read more](#). TMEA contacts report, however, that cargo services are now returning to pre-COVID levels.
- Foreign-based airlines have resumed flying to JKIA as demand for fresh produce rises in Europe. [Read more](#). TMEA notes that exporters still report, however, that air cargo capacity is insufficient and costs remain prohibitive. Air cargo cabotage has been noted, though limited.
- Since the Government of Kenya commenced compulsory testing of all foreign truck drivers across its borders, 78 drivers have been denied entry into its territory.

## Rwanda

- RwandAir resumes Guangzhou route with commercial cargo. [Read more](#)
- RwandAir secures deal to transport fish from Tanzania to Europe. [Read more](#). This level of cooperation with the EAC is a first during this COVID-19 season.

## South Sudan

- South Sudan's President considers imposing total lockdown if cases continue to rise. [Read more](#)
- On May 12, South Sudan's Civil Aviation Authority reopened airports despite rise in cases. [Read more](#)
- Hundreds of cargo trucks are stranded at Elegu Border Post awaiting clearance from South Sudan. [Read more](#)



50%

Decrease in Mombasa Port  
operations

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## Tanzania

- Relief as Kenya, Zambia ease border restrictions. [Read more](#)
- The Tanzanian truck drivers stuck at Namanga border complain of delays in testing. [Read more](#)
- Zambia's closure of the Tunduma-Nakonde border with Tanzania will deal a heavy blow to the economies of four countries, stakeholders say. [Read more](#)
- Magufuli skips EAC meeting even as virus cases rise in Tanzania. [Read more](#)

## Uganda

- President Museveni has said he is in consultation with his counterparts neighbouring Uganda to ensure that truck drivers are free from coronavirus before crossing into the country. [Read more](#)
- Fuel importers urged to adopt railway transport as more truck drivers test positive. [Read more](#)

## Zambia

- Traders call for solution to Zambia-Tanzania border closure. [Read more](#)
- Zambia temporarily shut its border with Tanzania to enhance measures against the spread of the new coronavirus, delaying its main copper exports via Dar es Salaam. [Read more](#)
- Zambia reopens border with Tanzania to cargo after COVID-19 closure [Read more](#)

## Regional Eastern Africa

- Ten takeaways from EAC Heads of State virtual meeting amid Covid-19. [Read more](#)
- EAC leaders hold online meet, agree to continue with cross border trade. [Read more](#)
- EAC agrees on harmonized cross border testing plan. [Read more](#)
- Coronavirus creeps along East Africa's trucking corridors as truck drivers gather at truck shops, weighbridges and custom points without observing social distance. [Read more](#)

## Global

- Shipping group A.P. Moller-Maersk warned of a sharp drop in global container volumes due to the pandemic, with weaker retail sales and depressed car production dampening demand. [Read more](#)

