

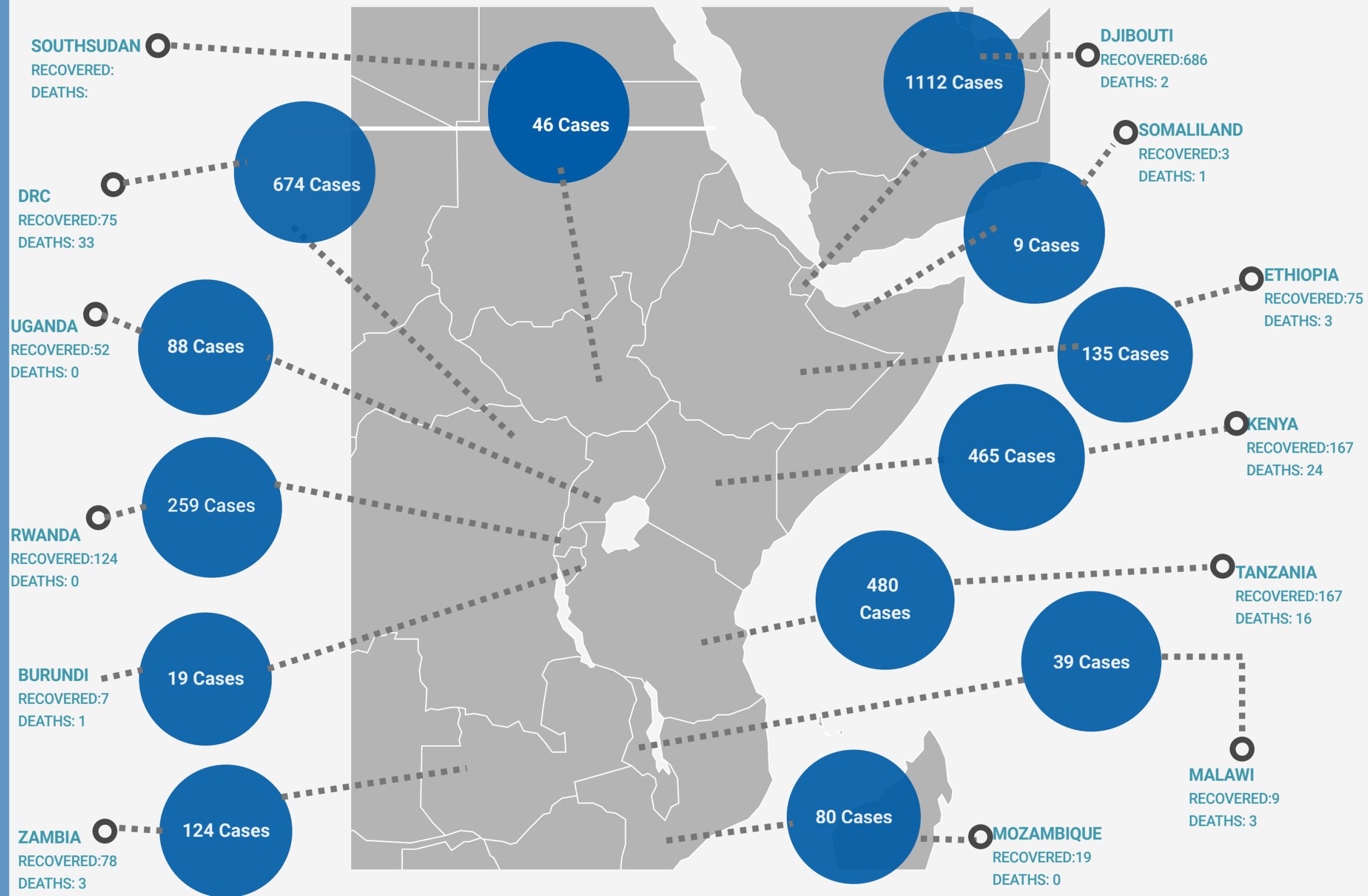
Impacts of COVID-19 on Eastern Africa Trade, Transit and Borders

April 27th-May 4th 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 04.05.2020)



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Situation Overview

Evolving policies over the concern of truck drivers spreading COVID-19 across borders has strained relations among EAC Partner States over the last week after positive tests of drivers entering neighbouring countries. Drivers are complaining of long tailbacks at the Kenyan-Ugandan border as both nations carry out mandatory coronavirus testing for them. The Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Kenya held a bi-lateral meeting on response measures to facilitate cross border trade between the two countries and to other landlocked countries in the region. A number of measures were recommended including increasing Port Health Staff at the borders, identification of designated stops and crew numbers (maximum 2). A full EAC meeting on COVID-19 has not yet taken place. TMEA and Partners will continue to monitor these measures and support framework to address emerging issues.

The EU has been working with the Ministry of the East African Community, TradeMark East Africa and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in keeping trade flowing, drawing on Europe's common market experience and its own recent cross-border challenges with Covid-19. [Read more](#)

Country and Regional Updates

Djibouti

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Democratic Republic of Congo

DRC imposed a 24-hour lockdown on the mining hub of Lubumbashi on April 28, and was set to shut down Kasumbalesa, a border town on a copper export route, as authorities traced the contacts of a COVID-19 patient. [Read more](#)



24HRS

Lockdown on the mining hub of
Lubumbashi in DRC on April 28

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Ethiopia

- The first direct cargo flight from Hyderabad, India, to Ethiopia arrived on April 26th. The flights are expected to operate once per week.

[Read more](#)

- Economy of Ethiopia to shrink between 5.6% to 11% as a result of coronavirus pandemic, stated a paper by Addis Ababa University Economics Professor Alemayehu Geda. Here The EU has been working with the Ministry of the East African Community, TradeMark East Africa and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in keeping trade flowing, drawing on Europe's common market experience and its own recent cross-border challenges with Covid-19. [Here](#)

Kenya

- The government has ordered targeted mass testing of truck drivers. [Read more](#)
- Kenyan transporters have protested Kampala's COVID-19 measure that requires drivers to hand over trucks at border points to their counterparts based in Uganda. [Read more](#)
- Kenyan truck drivers want clearance of cargo destined for Rwanda and Tanzania at the Mombasa port suspended after the two countries locked them out. [Read more](#)
- The International Maritime Organisation wants port staff designated as essential services. [Read more](#)

Malawi

A Malawi High Court extended indefinitely an order barring the government from imposing a 21-day lockdown which was announced by President Peter Mutharika earlier this month. [Read more](#)

Mozambique

- Tourism in Mozambique is practically non-existent and forecasts are very bleak. According to the Association of Travel Agencies and Tour Operators of Mozambique (AVITUM), losses are in the order of US\$30 million per month. [Read more](#)

Rwanda

- The government has said customs clearance, which was previously conducted in Kigali, has been extended to border points to continue facilitating regional trade. [Read more](#)
- Government commits to supporting local tourism's recovery post COVID-19. [Read more](#)
- Rwanda Standards Board (RSB), a TMEA partner, has trained local firms on how to ensure production of quality facemasks. [Read more](#)
- The second Intra-African Trade Fair planned for September 2020 in Kigali has been postponed to September 2021. [Read more](#)



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Somaliland

- The government announced relief measures during this Covid-19 period. All food items that are being imported to Somaliland will get a tax exemption of 20 per cent. [Read more](#)

South Sudan

- South Sudan fears for food security as COVID-19 hits world's poorest country. [Read more](#)

Tanzania

- Air Tanzania now to fly cargo in passenger cabin amid restriction on travel bans and reduced passengers demand. [Read more](#)
- The tourism industry is one of the hardest-hit by the outbreak of COVID-19. [Read more](#)
- Tanzania's state-run tourism watchdog promotes 10 strategies for continued tourism promotion. [Read more](#)

Malawi

Malawi High Court extended indefinitely an order barring the government from imposing a 21-day lockdown which was announced by President Peter Mutharika earlier this month. [Read more](#)

Uganda

- The government has designated places where cargo drivers in transit from the neighbouring countries will stay before continuing to their final destinations. [Read more](#)
- Authorities at Mirama Hills border struggle to implement several standard operating procedures. [Read more](#)
- The government has begun disinfecting all trucks that are entering the country. [Read more](#)
- President Museveni has said that banning cargo from entering the country "is absolutely suicidal" and "unnecessary." Here
- The government has issued strict guidelines for truck drivers. See all resolutions [Here](#)

Zambia

- Zambia is highly unlikely to impose restrictions on the mining sector because current practices are working very well, a senior executive at First Quantum said. [Read more](#)



10

Strategies Tanzania has devised to promote their tourism industry

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Regional Eastern Africa

- East Africa Business Council (EABC) promotes new approaches and new forms of collaboration as crucial to increase overall resilience of the regional manufacturing sector during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. [Read more](#)
- EABC issued a brief on the Impact of COVID-19 on EAC Trade. On average, EAC countries source only 6% of their total imports from the region, and supply 20% of their total exports to the region. Informal cross-border trade importance in poverty reduction in EAC is significant; women SMEs constitute about 74% of the traders, and cross-border trade accounts for the livelihood of about 60% of EAC residents. Increased restrictions threatens livelihoods and will reduce revenue for Partner States. EABC made the following recommendations for the immediate period;
- EAC should propose regional coordinated approach on mitigating the impact;
- Allow free movement of both, essential and nonessential goods within and out of EAC;
- Full liberalisation of open skies for free movement of cargo within and out of EAC;
- Add health workers at the borders to facilitate movement of cargo effectively and efficiently;
- Source for alternative markets for EAC imports and exports to reduce dependency on a few countries; and,
- Embrace use of technology (online transactions) in sourcing products from outside the EAC. The government announced relief measures during this Covid-19 period.
- All food items that are being imported to Somaliland will get a tax exemption of 20 per cent. [Read more](#)



20%

Tax exemption on all food items
entering Somaliland