

BORESHA SHEKO

COVID-19 EDITION

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FOREWORD

INTRODUCTORY NOTE



The COVID-19 Pandemic has taken the world by storm and in Kenya the number of cases is rapidly increasing by the day, Mandera County is among the areas that reported the initial cases of the virus and we have developed emergency response action plan to quickly stop the spread of the virus, the steps taken include; formation of County Emergency response committee in line with Presidential directive on the same, formation of Ministry Of Health Technical committee on COVID-19 preparedness and broad containment intervention measures.

At the Sub-county, the County formed Covid-19 Rapid Response Teams to assess and initiate all intervention measures to prevent and manage corona virus outbreak at sub county level. A County Emergency Operation Centre and Telephone Hotlines both at MOH HQ (Mandera Town) and at all sub county level were also formed while effort was also put on the identification and preparation of isolation center across all level 4 and 5 health facilities.

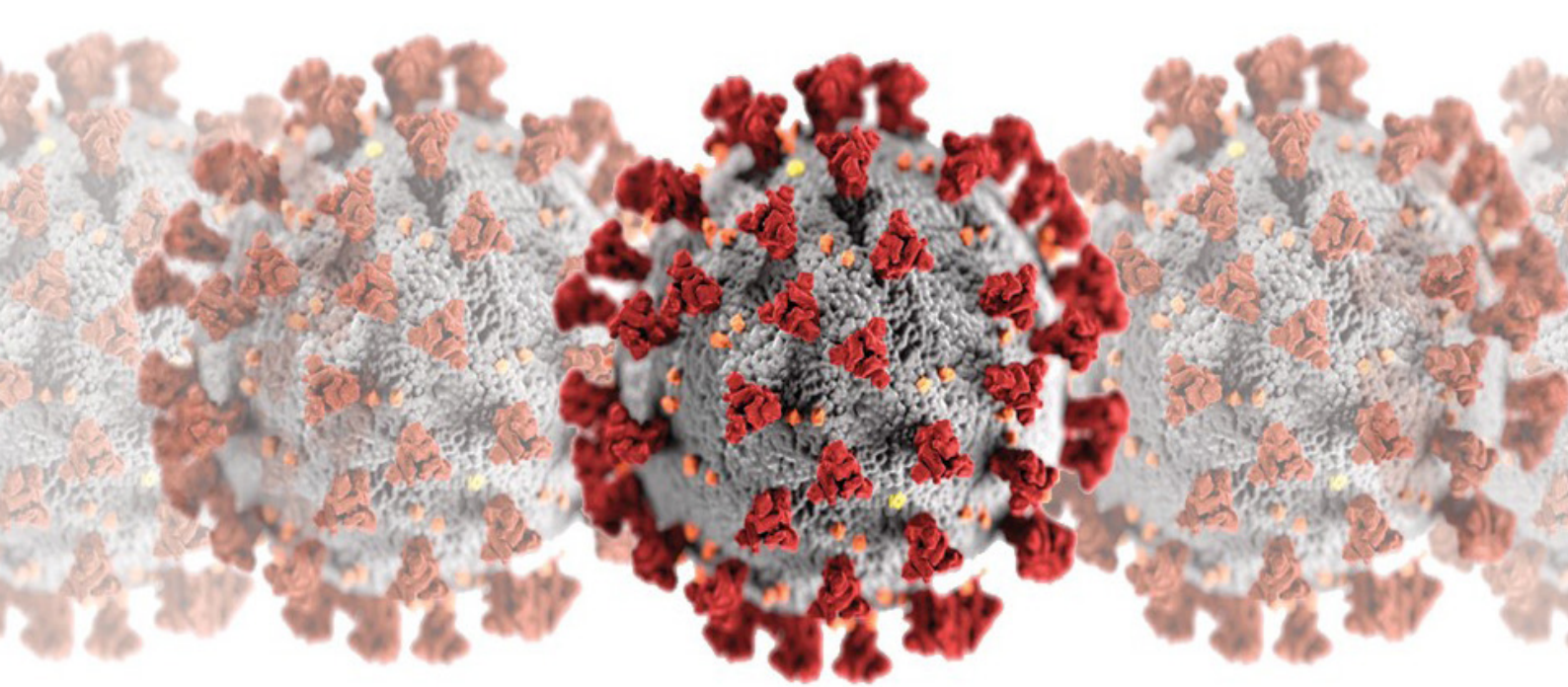
The county has also conducted stakeholder meetings at all sub counties to sensitize the people, conducted cross border surveillance and installed hand washing facilities in all public places throughout the county. Mandera County Government also distributed Covid-19 IEC materials throughout the county and conducted fumigations of markets exercise.

Despite these initial milestones in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic the county of Mandera is still facing serious challenges that require support from donors and national government with the county sharing a long porous border with both Ethiopia and Somalia that makes it difficult for the county to screen and control movement of people. The county government is facing shortage of crucial health care supplies such as PPE kits, masks, hand sanitizers, ventilators, face masks and other requirements. It is also challenging to assemble the logistics for sensitization and delivery of supplies to different areas. It is important to note the general attitude of the population in Mandera who do not mostly observe social distancing coupled with more than 80% illiteracy level as well as the pastoralist nature of the community makes it hard for sensitization campaigns requiring door to door campaign to be implemented. Social distancing is complicated by the general lifestyle of the population with extended families, majority of which are poor and the partial lock down has negatively impacted on the livelihood requiring increased distribution of food aid.

The pandemic is quite unprecedented and no institution, authority may purport to say they can handle the challenges and therefore concerted efforts from well-wishers and the humanitarian community is highly required and appreciated.

Our appeal to donors and other well-wishers which is in line with appeal recently shared by the Governor, His Excellency Capt. Ali Roba is to support us with 1. medical supplies including the PPE kits for health workers, face masks, ventilators, and hand sanitizers, 2. support maintaining of Isolation and quarantine centres with supplies such as beds, mattresses, food ration, water, bed covers, payment to volunteers 3. To support our livelihood programs across the county with cash transfer programs, food distribution and cash for work programs 4. Support WASH programs especially in isolation and quarantine centres and public places with interventions such as hand washing facilities, toilet facilities, soap etc.

H.E Mohamed Arai
Deputy Governor
Mandera County Government
Mandera COVID-19 Multiagency Task force Chair



STATEMENT

BORESHA STATEMENT ON COVID-19

According to the WHO, COVID-19 is a new respiratory disease which is highly contagious and it's mainly spread from person-to-person. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, it is therefore very important for all our staff, beneficiaries and partners to follow the WHO recommendations in term of personal hygiene and social distancing.

The global nature of this pandemic underlines the fact that we are all in this together: no country, community and race is immune from its effects, this is the time for us to show solidarity in order to get through this situation.

The wellbeing of the communities we work in, staff and our partners, are our highest priority. We have taken several precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 including sensitizing our staff and beneficiaries on the Corona Virus and the basic protective measures that can help reduce the risk of getting sick or infecting others. Our primary aim is to reduce the risk of exposure to our staff and beneficiaries.

Measures we have taken in response to COVID-19:

- Mainstream COVID-19 preventive measures in all our activities and communication products
- Total compliance with the restrictions imposed by the governments of Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia
- Pursue internal and external funds to help in intervening directly especially for information dissemination for awareness creation

- Observe the unfolding situation and prioritize the activities that do not in any way antagonize the issued directives by the three governments

The global situation with the spread of COVID-19 and especially in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia where we work is one that is evolving rapidly on a daily basis and this is a source of concern to all of us, there is therefore a greater need for all of us to play our part to keep ourselves and our communities safe. There is no doubt that the current situation has taken a toll on both our personal and professional lives, however we remain committed to our mission and responsibility to the communities we serve and serve in.

Our work is now more important than ever considering the potential impact of COVID-19 on the communities we serve. In this regard we shall be rolling our several key measures geared towards the prevention of the spread of COVID-19.

To PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19:

1. Clean your hands often. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub.
2. Maintain a safe distance from anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
3. Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
4. Cover your nose and mouth with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
5. Stay home if you feel unwell.
6. If you have a fever, a cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention.
7. Follow the directions of your local health authority.

Source: World Health Organization

UPDATE

KEY PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Finalization of 5 technical briefs and 1 position paper on cross border coordination in resilience
2. Vaccination campaign in Ethiopia reaching over 62,000 livestock.
3. Business Development Skills curriculum finalized and training rolled out.
4. Ongoing training, savings and loaning among VSLA members
5. Additional IBLI farmers compensated and IBLI challenges discussed in several forums
6. Completion of rehabilitation/construction of additional strategic water points

UPCOMING MAJOR ACTIVITIES

1. Disbursement of grants to the additional 27 round 2 grantees and 51 round 1 grantees
2. Dissemination of communication products – i.e. Technical briefs and position papers
3. Implementation of community level and institutional level responses to COVID-19
4. Ongoing support to LCIGs, VSLAs and TVET beneficiaries
5. Implementation of the prioritized CMDRR activities
6. Ongoing support for additional sites through cash for work

NEWS

USING RADIO FOR COMMUNITY SENSITIZATION ON COVID-19 IN MANDERA

Author | Maslah Mumin



© Chris Kiwawulo

In the age of the Internet, cell phone and television, radio remains a powerful way for people to connect, learn and discuss issues important to their lives as well as coming together to solve their problems as a community. The simplicity of radio causes many to overlook its power as a communications tool. However, radio plays a powerful and life-changing role in isolated

communities across the world and certainly in our areas of operation in the Horn of Africa. It provides a vehicle for true empowerment and development. Gaining access to accurate, timely, factual and consistent information as well as having an opportunity to voice opinions through call-in shows, communities can use radio to address problems and find lasting solutions.

BORESHA is using this tool to reach communities in the border areas Mandera, Dollow and Dolo Ado to sensitize them on COVID-19.

COVID-19 in Mandera

The first two cases of COVID-19 in Mandera were reported on the 11th of April 2020 becoming one of the hotspot county in Kenya where movement restriction has been imposed

Mandera County COVID-19 Taskforce which had already put in place several measures to contain the spread of the virus put the two patients in isolation at Mandera Referral Hospital and kicked off the fumigation of markets, bus stations and streets exercise as well as awareness raising campaigns.

The COVID-19 task force chaired by Deputy Governor His Excellency Mohamed Arai held a number of coordination meetings to consolidate efforts by different organization in response to COVID 19 pandemic. BORESHA together with other partners took up the awareness raising campaigns and sensitization role mainly through the radio in addition to other activities which are implemented coordination with the County government.

Tackling misinformation on COVID-19

During this dangerous time of uncertainty, misinformation and half truths about COVID-19 can cost lives. That is why the BORESHA Consortium together with other partner took the lead in spreading factual and consistent information as well as recommendations through the radio. This was prioritized in order to dispel common local myths that if not countered can have disastrous consequences while also raising the understanding of the community members on the pandemic. To this end BORESHA has crafted Several radio programmes including panel discussions with experts, talk shows where listeners can call. "All the messages are prepared in close consultation of the public health officials in order to disseminate the correct information and the preventative measures people can take to stop the spread of COVID-19" said Abdi Mohamed, BORESHA Senior Coordinator.

BORESHA has also looped in the religious leaders and elders in order to have everybody on board and for the elders to shed some light on the cultural contexts that may be avoided or enhanced to support the efforts that are aimed at minimizing the spread of COVID 19.

The messages will be running for three months and will be disseminated during the primetimes especially in the evening when everybody is at home.

Joining Hands

Apart from the messages BORESHA is running in several radio stations, the radio companies have also pledged to contribute some minutes to disseminate COVID-19 messages where they will also be sharing the latest information, reliable advice and relevant stories, keeping us connected at a time of social distancing. They will be in the front line to expose and refute fake COVID-19 advice and news.



BORESHA Staff, Abdi at one of the radio stations in Mandera, 2020 © Abdi / BORESHA

STORY

Author | Abdiwali Mohamed

MEET THE MAN USING SIMPLE INNOVATIONS IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19 IN SOMALIA



Abdikadir Adan in the process of making a handwashing station. Dollow, Somalia, 2020 © Abdiwali Mohamed / BORESHA

Abdikadir Adan aged 39 and a father of 9 children, lives in Dollow, Somalia. He is the owner of Horseed Garage, winner of an award in 2019 under the Grant Fund Facility of BORESHA under the Grow Your Business category. Established in 2016, Horseed Garage is currently the main auto mechanics business in Dollow District specializing in the maintenance and repair of all types of vehicles, air conditioners and diesel generators for both electricity generation and farm irrigation.

Besides managing these services, Abdikadir also designs and fabricates tools and small machines using locally available materials and his welding machine. In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Abdikadir has designed hands-free hand washing equipment which is activated by foot pedals. This is how it works: by pressing one of the pedals, the machine releases soap and by pressing the other, water flows out of the tap! The pressure on the pedal controls the quantity of the liquid soap and the flow of water.

It is simple and easy to use and currently in great demand not only with the local households and businesses but also NGOs and donors operating in Somalia. Its sales are increasing awareness of the community about safe hand washing while at the same time generating income for the business.

Explaining his innovation, Abdikadir says "The idea of innovation has been always on my mind. As a mechanic and technician, I always think about new ideas to improve the work I am doing. The new hand washing facility which can be used without using hands came to my mind after COVID-19 hit our country, Somalia. I realized we needed a different technology other than normal hand washing facility in order to ensure safe hand washing to prevent the disease."

Abdikadir is a great advocate of technical skills. He advises: "If you are serious about being successful in life then you can do nothing better than getting yourself a skill." Abdikadir's inspiration for the new technology emerged from his understanding of the potential impact of COVID-19. It will be disastrous once community transmission starts. Somalia does not have strong institutions which can provide the required support to the community to reduce the effect of the virus.

This new technology will help reduce the effect of the disease since it is easy to use. It is not difficult to develop or operate. The parts are all locally made and this makes it easy to repair. Many organizations and businesses are now ordering it, this will help to reduce the spread of the virus in public places, homes and businesses. Abdikadir adds: "When I was designing

the hand washing facility I wanted to ensure the quality, sustainability and suitability of the material and that the washing technique is appropriate for our people. It is so easy to use. What you need to do is to press the left pedal for the hand washing soap and press the right pedal using your leg to release the water. The most important thing is it is 100% safe to use it. After I tested the first sample a week ago, many people started coming to my place and ordering this equipment for their offices, businesses and households. I am now planning to produce more than 20 pieces per week. If the demand increases, I have also the capacity to produce more.”

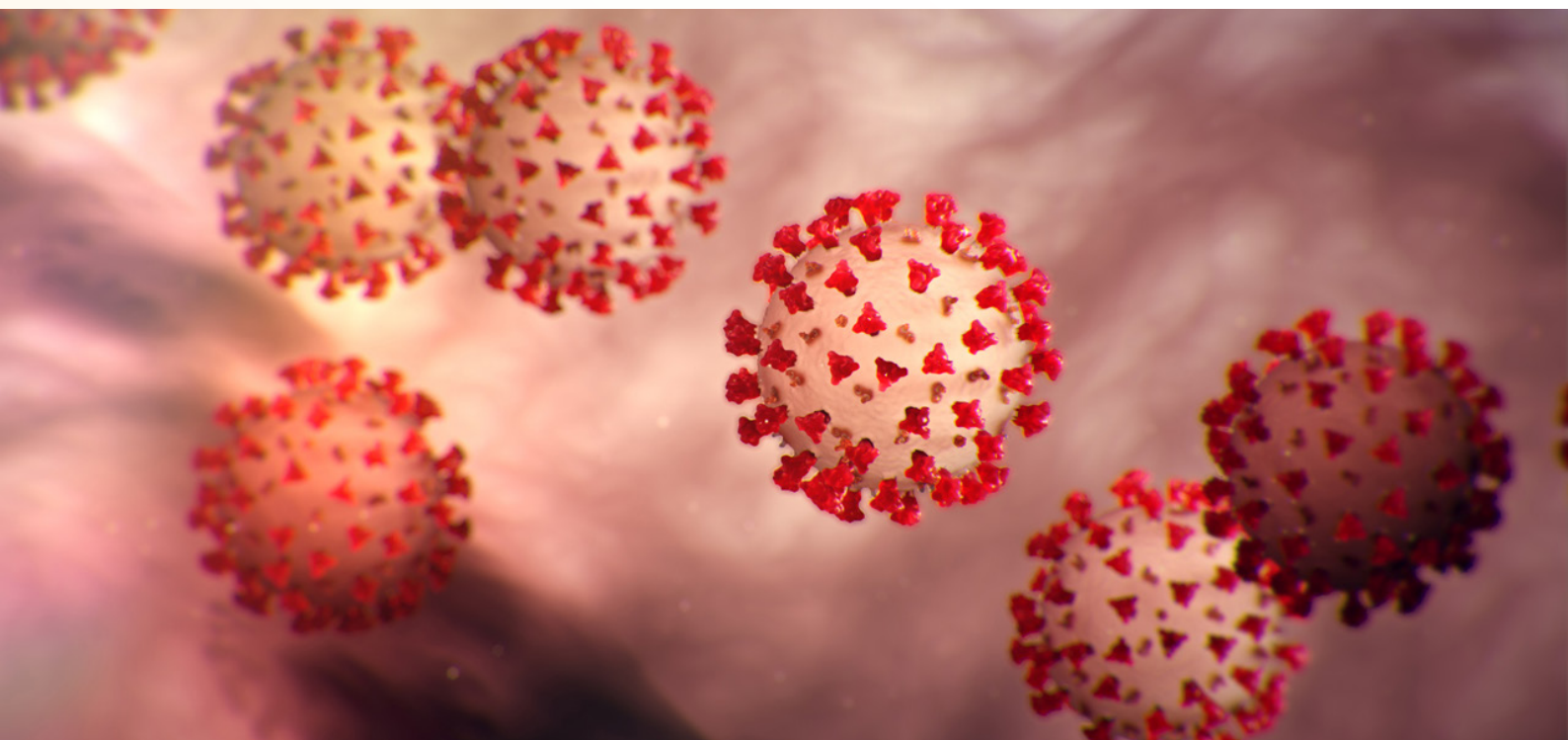
Meanwhile, with the BORESHA business grant, Abdikadir’s Horseed Garage is able now to repair up to 300 cars per month. In addition, he is now offering 30 other services including the new hand washing facility. To support this expanded business, he has employed three additional technicians, attended business skill development training offered at the BORESHA Business Development Support Centre which also regularly offers advisory services as needed.

The BORESHA grant has also enabled Abdikadir to purchase much needed equipment: hydraulic machines, mechanical apron, mechanical tools and the complete tool set for car maintenance. Abdikadir sums up the grant support “I have increased my income and have great confidence in the direction that my business is taking”.



DID YOU KNOW

COVID-19 MYTHBUSTERS



THE FOLLOWING ARE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)
ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC: MYTH BUSTERS

1. Adding pepper to your soup or other meals DOES NOT prevent or cure COVID-19

Hot peppers in your food, though very tasty, cannot prevent or cure COVID-19.

2. COVID-19 IS NOT transmitted through houseflies

To date, there is no evidence or information to suggest that the COVID-19 virus transmitted through houseflies.

3. Spraying and introducing bleach or another disinfectant into your body WILL NOT protect you against COVID-19 and can be dangerous

Do not under any circumstance spray or introduce bleach or any other disinfectant into your body.

4. 5G mobile networks DO NOT spread COVID-19

Viruses cannot travel on radio waves/mobile networks. COVID-19 is spreading in many countries that do not have 5G mobile networks.

5. Exposing yourself to the sun or to temperatures higher than 25C degrees DOES NOT prevent the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

You can catch COVID-19, no matter how sunny or hot the weather is.

6. Being able to hold your breath for 10 seconds or more without coughing or feeling discomfort DOES NOT mean you are free from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) or any other lung disease.

7. Drinking alcohol does not protect you against COVID-19 and can be dangerous

Frequent or excessive alcohol consumption can increase your risk of health problems.

9. Does the new coronavirus affect older people, or are younger people also susceptible?

People of all ages can be infected by the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions appear to be more vulnerable .

Source: World Health Organization

RAMADHAN KAREEM

The holy month of Ramadhan is here with us where Muslims are given a chance to repent their sins. The Holy month is one of the five pillars of Islam and it is a great opportunity for all Muslims to take advantage of, it offers them a chance to purify their mind, body, heart and soul by fasting from dawn till dusk and praying to Allah.

We take this opportunity to wish all our Muslim brothers and sisters in BORESHA and around the world Ramadhan Kareem and Saum Maqbul. May Allah give you the strength and courage to fast and may all your wishes and dreams be fulfilled in this blessed month of Ramadhan.

Remember to observe the COVID-19 precautionary measures and stay safe. Wishing you all Ramadhan Mubarak!

COVID-19 HOTLINES

ETHIOPIA

Addis Ababa 8335/952; Afar 6220; Amhara 6981; Dire Dawa 6407; Oromia 6955; SNNP: 6929; Somali 6599; Tigray: 6244

SOMALIA

449

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