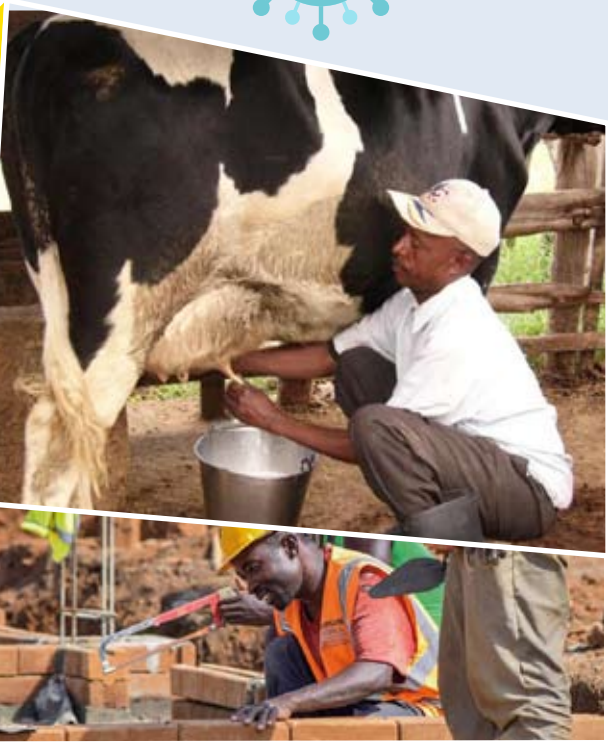




UGANDA BUREAU OF STATISTICS

COVID_19 INFORMATION SERIES NO. 20 (2020)

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2020



NATIONAL NEWS ROUNDUP

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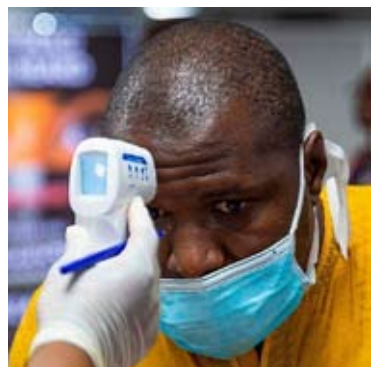
THE EFFECT OF COVID COVID-19 ON THE UGANDAN ECONOMY: SUGGESTED POLICY INTERVENTIONS



MASKS NOW A MUST WEAR IN PUBLIC



- Going forward, it is now criminal to appear in public without a mask, breach of which attracts a penalty of 14 days in quarantine.
- This is after the Public Health (COVID-19) Rules, 2020 were amended on May 08, 2020 and signed off by the Health Minister, Hon. Dr Ruth Aceng.
- In the amendment, rule 8A was inserted making it mandatory for any person to wear a facial mask while outside his / her place of residence. This takes effect on May 19, 2020.
- Dr. Musenero (MoH) has since advised that masks must not necessarily be bought from the shops. She says that 'home made' cloth masks can also work well provided they are consistently washed, ironed and / or spread in the sun which acts as a natural disinfectant.
- President Museveni has also cautioned that wearing a mask is not for comfort, decoration nor fashion. That it is medicine instead.
- Different local industries including NYTIL, NEC (the UPDF industrial arm) are already involved in the mass production of facial masks.



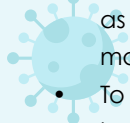
Masks





According to the World Health Organization:

- Before putting on a mask, clean your hands with an alcohol based hand rub or soap and water.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean yourself with an alcohol based hand rub or soap and water.
- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
- To remove the mask; remove it from behind (do not touch the front of the mask); discard immediately in a closed bin and thereafter clean your hands with an alcohol based hand rub or soap and water.



NSSF BILL UP FOR AMENDMENT: What is at Stake?



- The concept of social security has come under more scrutiny during this pandemic as a cross section of workers continue to call for midterm access of their savings from the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). They argue that this is necessary to cushion them from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Government has since tabled a bill before parliament, aimed at revolutionizing the sector. The bill among others, proposes mandatory saving for all workers in the country.



**Richard Byarugaba, NSSF
Managing Director**



The current law exempts entities with less than five (05) workers from making contributions to the NSSF.

- Currently, each contributing employee saves 15% of his/her salary to the fund, with the employer contributing 10% and the 5% by the employee.
- According to the current law, for one to access savings, among other conditions, one has to clock 55 years of age, be unemployed for a minimum period of one year or be in exempted employment.
- However, the new bill now before parliament proposals a midterm pay-out of 20% of the members' accumulated balances to offset the effects of COVID-19. That members who have been out of employment for a period of three (03) months, have saved for a period of 10 years and / or have clocked 45 years of age should qualify for this payout.
- To further induce a saving culture among Ugandans, the bill proposes other benefits among them to cater for unemployment, medical, education and mortgage / housing.
- However, social security experts have warned government on the proposals in the bill insisting that the NSSF assets should not be liquidated to finance knee jerk requests. That such an initiative if successful would undermine the long-term cardinal principles of social security.



13 Trillion (UGX) current fund value.

2.3 million total members.

1.2 million core members.

8.3% of the core members own 75% of the fund.

The NSSF is a quasi-government agency responsible for the collection, safekeeping, responsible investment and distribution of retirement funds. It was established by an Act of parliament in 1985.



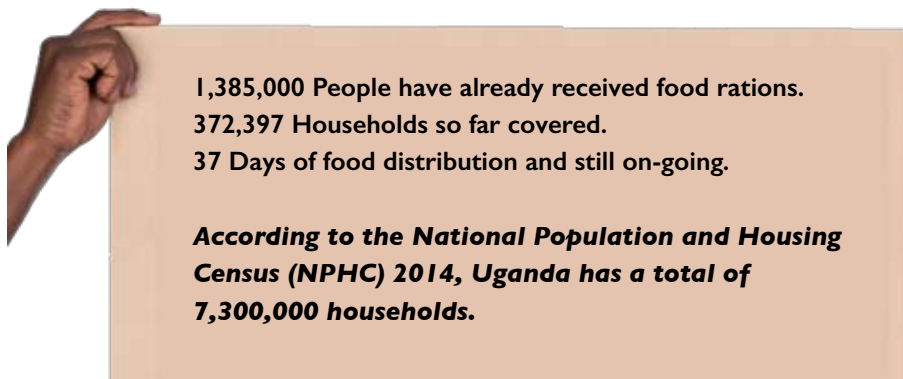


Security personnel prepare to distribute food to vulnerable people in Kampala

OVER ONE MILLION VULNERABLE PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED FOOD AID FROM GOVERNMENT

- The shock effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have rendered many people temporarily jobless, rendered many people jobless with majority having no immediate sources of livelihood.
- To fill the gaps, government identified a target of 1.5 million people mainly the urban poor in Kampala and other surrounding districts to receive food rations during the pandemic.
- Each member of the household was apportioned six (06) kilogrammes of posho and three (03) kilogrammes of beans. Different stakeholders including corporate and individual well wishers, religious leaders, community groups, cultural institutions and other groups weighed in to donate food portions to cater for vulnerable groups of people in upcountry districts through the respective district taskforces.
- In Kampala and the surrounding districts, government relied on UBOS data to locate the vulnerable households. In distributing the food, the national taskforce has been complemented by select members of the security forces.

- Reporting on the progress, the deputy army spokesperson Lt. Col. Henry Obbo, early this week said they have already distributed food to 1,385,000 people covering 372,397 households in a period of 37 days.

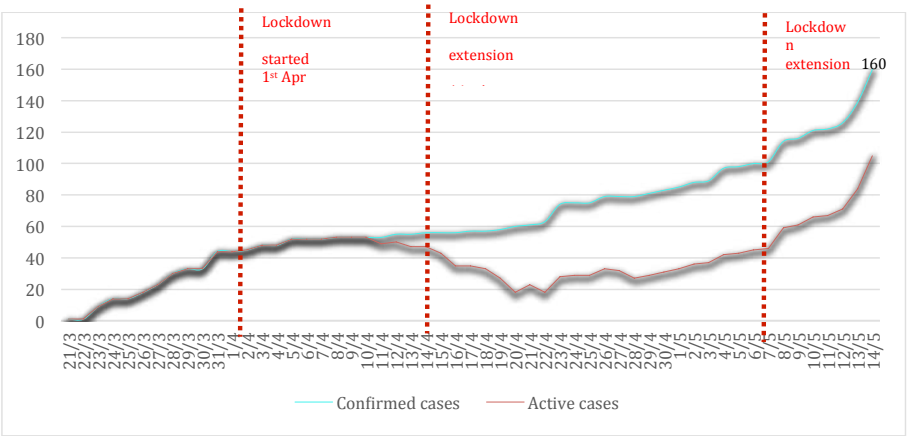


CONFIRMED AND ACTIVE CASES OF COVID-19 IN UGANDA

As of May 14, 2020, Uganda has 160 confirmed cases with 62 active cases and of these, 32 are hospitalized, 63 have recovered and there is no death recorded so far. Of the 160 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Uganda, 100 are cargo truck drivers constituting about two thirds of the cases (63%). **Figure 1** shows that the pandemic is taking an upward trend. The first 14 days of lockdown successfully flattened the pandemic curve but the continued open land border posts (mainly for cargo transportation) during the lockdown extensions has not yielded much in controlling the number of new infections in Uganda.

Figure 1 also shows that the gap between confirmed cases and active cases has consistently remained the same because as the cases increase the active cases increase. However, some of the active cases have returned to their countries of nationality.

Figure 1: Cumulative trend of confirmed COVID-19 cases



SEX DISTRIBUTION OF CONFIRMED CASES

Men continue to be the majority of confirmed cases (130) constituting 81% as seen in **figure 2**. This is also explained by the high incidence among the truck drivers who make the largest share of confirmed cases.

Figure 3: Sex Distribution of COVID 19 Confirmed Cases



HOW MANY UGANDANS ARE INFECTED?



About half of the confirmed COVID 19 cases in Uganda are Ugandans (49%). The non-Ugandans are majorly constituted of Kenyans (45) and Tanzanians (25) as seen in **figure 2**. All the Kenyan, Tanzanian and Eritrean nationalities among the confirmed cases are truck drivers.

Also, a sizeable number of Ugandan truck drivers go out and come back with the virus. This should be a pointer that countries surround Uganda with the virus in their communities since there are no community cases in Uganda. Currently, over 90 percent of the hospitalized Ugandans are truck drivers.

Figure 2: Nationality of COVID-19 Confirmed Cases

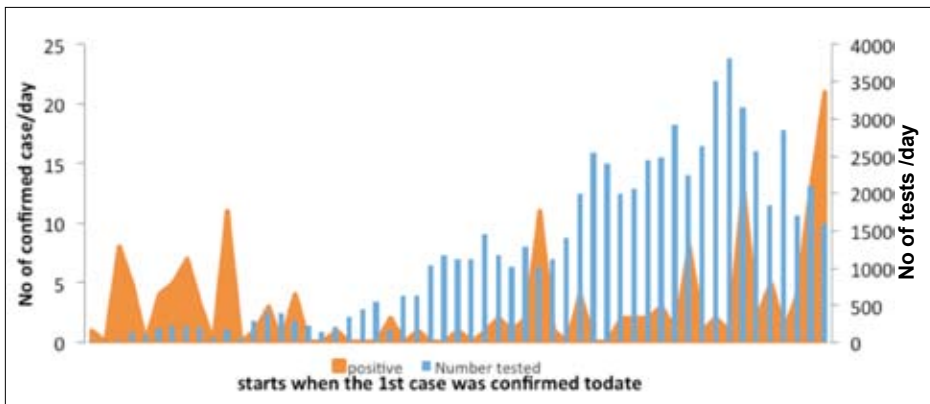


DAILY TESTS FOR CORONA VIRUS



The number of tests done daily has been increasing gradually from the date when the first case was confirmed on March 21, 2020. **Figure 3** shows that the daily number of tests was fewer in the beginning but more targeted so they got a lot more positive cases. Thereafter, there were more tests with fewer positives but upon focusing on cargo trucks coming into the country and the rapid community assessment, the number of daily tests further increased with scattered high number of positives recorded in a day. The country is currently calibrating instant test kits that will be used at the borders which will significantly reduce the waiting time of the truck drivers.

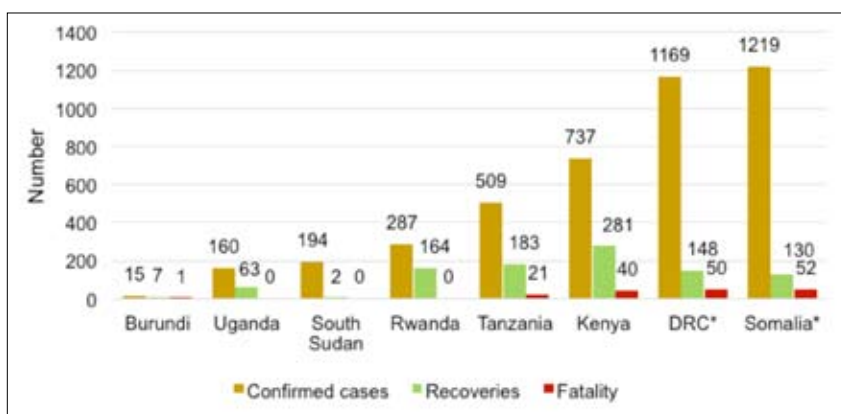
Figure 3: Number of Tests done and Confirmed Cases daily



RATES ACROSS THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

According to the corona virus worldometer as of May 14, 2020, within the EAC member states, Kenya (737) ranked highest followed by Tanzania (509) with the highest number of confirmed cases. On the other hand, Rwanda now has the highest rate of recovery at 57%. The DRC and Somalia, which are close to East Africa, have also a high number of COVID 19 cases. these should also be of concern given the porous nature of our regional borders. Burundi and Tanzania have not reported any statistics to the global tracker for more than a week. South Sudan has had a great increase and has surpassed the record for Uganda within a week.

Figure 4: Comparison across the EAC countries



*Countries neighbouring East Africa but not in the EAC



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ISSUES RED ALERT TO ITS CITIZENS IN TANZANIA OVER COVID-19



H.E John Pombe Magufuli, President of the Republic of Tanzania

- The official total number of confirmed cases in Tanzania stands at 509 persons.
- However, the country has not updated its COVID-19 figures since April 29, 2020.
- Accordingly, the US department of State on May 13, 2020, issued a Global level 4 Health Advisory Alert to its citizens urging them to remain indoors and only move out when its unavoidable for instance when shopping for groceries.
- The USA further warns that hospitals in Dar es Salaam have been overwhelmed in recent days and that this could be as a result of unreported COVID-19 cases. It warns thus, the possibility of contracting the virus in Dar es Salaam is very high.
- The US embassy rallied its citizens, that they will be informed of any evacuation opportunity out of Tanzania.
- H.E John Pombe Magufuli recently queried the COVID-19 testing protocols used in his country. A number of health officials have since faced the axe over the same.

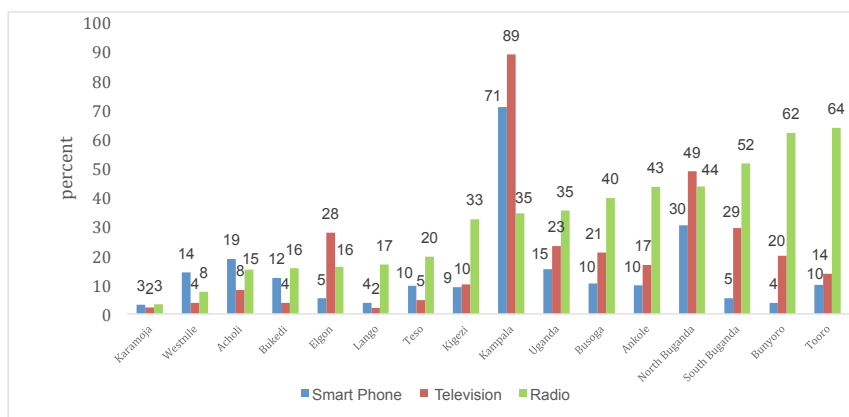
SCHOOLING DURING THE LOCKDOWN



Schooling during the lockdown

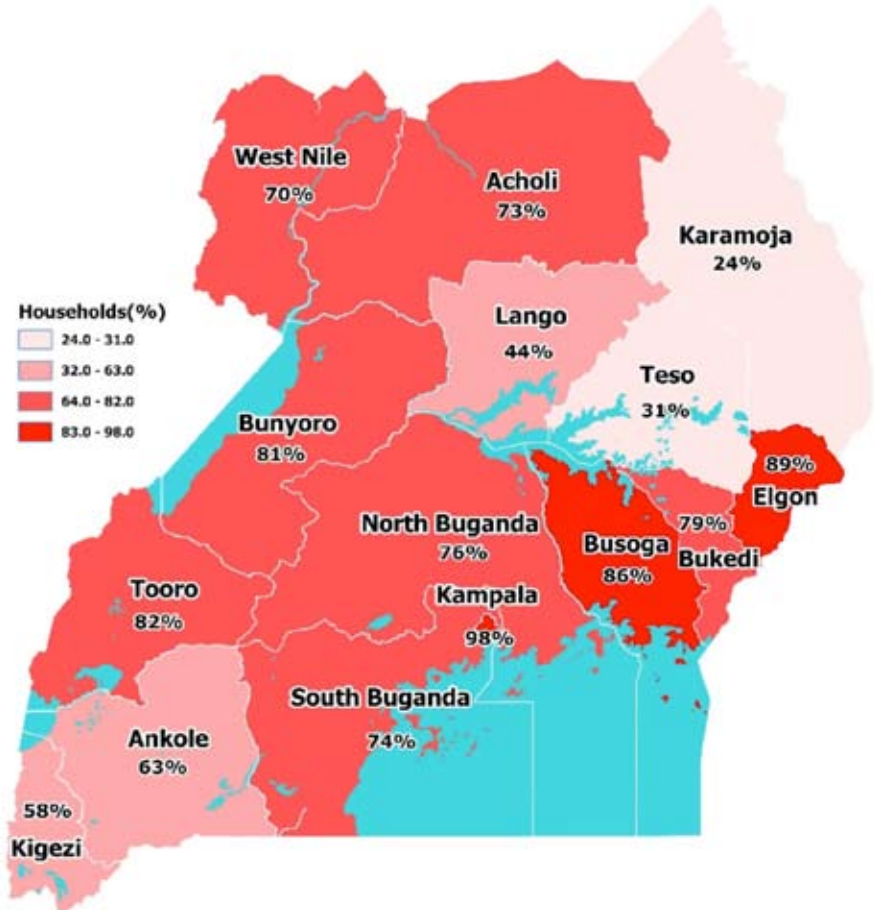
The nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19 has necessitated that school children study online via radio, television or through Internet access. However only 35% of the households with primary school going children have a radio and the percentage varies by region as seen in **figure 5**. Karamoja and West Nile regions are the most disadvantaged. More households in Elgon, Kampala and North Buganda have television compared to radio. Therefore, the use of multiple media would ensure more children are reached.

Figure 5: Households with a Media of Learning



The map below further reaffirms the regional imbalance and confirms that multiple media will help to reach many children. The Ministry of Education and Sports should consider this.

Figure 6: Households with at least one Media of Learning (a radio or TV or Smartphone)



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON KEY ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN UGANDA AND SUGGESTED POLICY INTERVENTIONS

In this analytical paper we present the diagnosis of the structure of Uganda's economy, based on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) activity/production estimation approach, during the COVID-19 crisis since early March 2020. It provides the expected recovery period per activity and the reasons for the forecasted recovery time. The assumption of the recovery time for the economy is also given. Further, we summarise the suggested policy interventions Uganda Bureau of Statistics got from key stakeholders, mainly the private sector that could resuscitate the economy during and post COVID-19 period.



Chris N. Mukiza,
UBOS Executive Director

ASSUMPTIONS

- The COVID-19 outbreak does not escalate in Uganda with minimal community transmission of the disease, i.e registering an Infection Rate (R) less than 0.2 and all businesses resume operations in June 2020 onwards.
- The economy will be unlocked gradually in a phased manner beginning May 06, 2020 and full unlocking will be realised by end of June 2020.
- As an open economy, international cargo for most of the intermediate inputs and other essential products flows normally by June 2020.
- Final-goods industries that use the imported intermediate inputs don't suffer from any tariff increase on them for reasons of raising tax revenue or protectionism.
- Nontariff barriers in each activity (measured by quotas or some other restrictions on trade) are reduced with an aim of raising the Output/import ratio compared to the present levels.
- Fiscal and monetary policies are strongly coordinated to restore the macroeconomic balance that has been occasioned by the global COVID-19 crisis.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE REAL ECONOMY

FOOD CROPS GROWING

Impact: Moderate

Recovery period: Short term



Reasons: With favourable weather, food crop growing activities should improve after the COVID-19 lockdown following ease of marketing and increased access to inputs. Demand for food has been constrained during the lockdown especially in urban areas because of reduced incomes and regulated transportation.

LIVESTOCK FARMING

Impact: Moderate

Recovery period: Short term

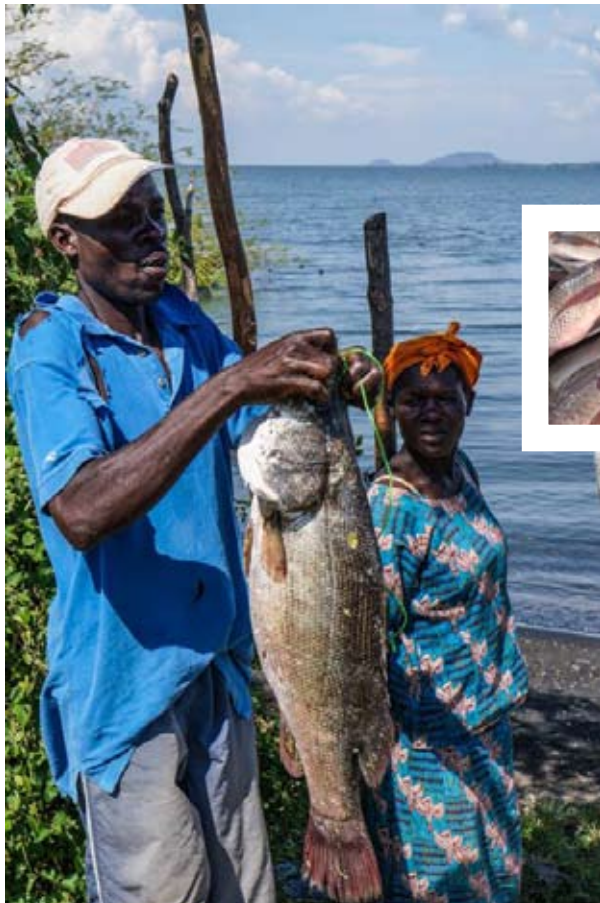


Reasons: Prices and demand should return to the pre-lockdown/ COVID-19 outbreak levels. Marketing challenges that resulted in reduction of livestock slaughter will be a short-term effect on livestock rearing activities.

FISHERIES

Impact: Moderate

Recovery period: Medium term



Reasons: Prices and demand should gradually pick up and return to the pre COVID-19 outbreak levels. Demand was severely affected by the limited export to world markets.

CONSTRUCTION

Impact: High

Recovery period: Long term



Reasons: The revival of construction activities, which are mainly private, will be dependent on how quickly other economic activities, notably financial intermediation services, will pick up.

RETAIL (NON-FOOD ITEMS)

Impact: Severe

Recovery period: Medium to long term



Reasons:

- Sales of essential items may recover quickly, while sales of non-essential items might take slightly longer to recover due to lower demand as a result of constrained purchasing power.
- Fuel sales will return or surpass the previous levels very quickly due to held up travel demands and therefore a rapid pick up in transportation.
- However, this will depend on the easing of the public and private passenger transportation business.

WHOLESALE (NON-FOOD ITEMS)

Impact: Severe

Recovery period: Medium to long term



Reasons: This industry recovery will correspond to the retail trade above.

TRANSPORTATION & STORAGE

Impact: Severe

Recovery period: medium term



Reasons:

- Slowdown in the tourism sector will have knock-on effects on passenger traffic. Heightened risk aversion will prolong the recovery.
- Cargo traffic is expected to pick up once businesses start resuming operations globally. However, low household consumption expenditure will delay the recovery.

REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES

Impact: High

Recovery period: medium term



Reasons: Real estate activities should revive within the medium term. Land transactions should pick up after the lifting of the sales suspension but in line with the recovery of the economy in general.

AGRO PROCESSING (MANUFACTURE OF)

Impact: Moderate

Recovery period: short term



Reasons: Agro processing activities have been moderately affected. Milk processing was affected before the COVID-19 outbreak while meat processing has been a victim of the closure of weekly cattle markets.

MANUFACTURING (OTHER)

Impact: Severe

Recovery period: Long term



Reasons:

- Imports of raw materials may take longer period to pick due to effect of COVID-19 in source countries, which may take time to recover as detailed below

DRUGS AND PHARMACEUTICAL, AND OTHER CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES (MANUFACTURE OF)

Impact: Moderate

Recovery period: medium term

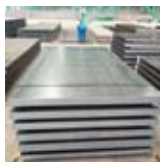


Reasons: With the normalization of inflows of active pharmaceutical ingredients and imports of machinery and spare parts. The supply chain disruptions shall be alleviated. These were affected by the lockdowns in the source countries.

METALS (MANUFACTURE OF)

Impact: Moderate

Recovery period: medium term



Reasons: The metal industry has strong forward linkages to many important activities such as: informal manufacturing, building and construction. Hence a slowdown in these activities will inevitably drive down the demand for basic metals and therefore their production

CEMENT (MANUFACTURE OF)

Impact: Moderate

Recovery period: Medium to long term



Reasons: Cement production has a strong forward linkage to construction. Hence a slowdown in the construction activities will inevitably drive down the demand for cement and therefore its production

FURNITURE (MANUFACTURE OF)

Impact: Moderate

Recovery period: Medium term



Reasons: The furniture manufacturing activities (which is mainly informal by SME) will be dependent on the revival of the aggregate demand in the economy.

FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE SERVICES

Impact: Severe

Recovery period: Long term

Reasons:

- The Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) may increase in the fourth quarter of FY 2019/20 and first quarter of 2020/2021. The reduction of the NPA will depend on how fast the economy recovers following the COVID-19 outbreak and the lockdown.
- Also the recovery of private sector domestic credit uptake to pre COVID-19 levels will depend on the outcome of the monetary and fiscal measures that the government will initiate in the following weeks to jump-start the economy. Domestic credit uptake, which implicitly determines performance of financial services, will directly be correlated to the recovery of the economy.

ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE (TOURISM)

Impact: Severe

Recovery period: Long term

Reasons:

- Even when the travel bans are lifted, both foreign tourist arrivals and domestic tourist movements are expected to remain very low because of heightened risk aversion, measures related to social distancing and lower disposable incomes.
- Slowdown in the tourism sector will have knock-on effects on hospitality industry. Occupancy rates may remain very low until Q3 2020/2021 (Jan 2021).
- In an effort to increase and improve the bottom lines, many businesses are expected to cut down travel and accommodation costs for their employees.

ART, CULTURE & RECREATION (TOURISM)

Impact: Severe

Recovery period: Long term



Reasons: This activity is expected to remain subdued because of persistence of risk aversion, social distancing and other precautionary measures aimed at averting second round COVID-19 outbreaks

MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs)

Impact: Severe

Recovery period: Long term

Reasons:

- MSMEs are expected to experience severe liquidity problems due to limited purchasing power.
- The strain in the banking system is expected to increase the credit gap for MSMEs.

Impact	Moderate	High	Severe
Recovery period	Short term (Up to 6 months)	Medium term (7-12 months)	Long term (more than 12 months)

Note: Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics



POLICY INTERVENTIONS

Uganda Bureau of Statistics has got series of feedback particularly from the private sector on possible interventions Government could undertake to stimulate economic growth in the short – to medium term and consequently maximise social welfare (consumer surplus) in the long term. The policy interventions are highlighted below.

- Support crop and livestock farming activities by extending affordable credit facilities to organised rural households (women, youth, cooperative societies), providing improved farm inputs and quality extension services to households and commercial farmers, making available water for production, strengthening storage facilities and minimising post-harvest losses, storage and transportation to improve supply chain of food crops, cash crops and livestock products,
- Need to support agro processing Industries to increase production of what is being imported that can be produced locally. For example; with milk, the country can produce pasteurized milk and powdered milk to substitute the imported ones; prioritize manufacture of animal and vegetable cooking oils; textile manufacturing from cotton lint, further processing of coffee, tea (for beverages), maize, cassava (for raw materials in manufacture of pharmaceuticals, and starch), Irish potatoes, sorghum, fish, to mention but a few.
- Accelerated support to science and innovation hubs in the geographic regions using higher institutions of learning to research in areas of for chemical, electrical and electronic products given the abundance of raw materials, base and other metals in the country,
- Provide tax incentives to SMEs and large enterprises for at least two years.
- Avoid increasing import tariff of intermediate products, reduce the non-tariff barriers and the cost of doing business to promote final-goods industries relying on imported intermediate products

Table 1 below provides a matrix of suggested cross-sectoral and specific interventions from private sector, which Government should have a close look at to stimulate the economy.

No	Issue	Proposed Interventions
Cross Sectoral Proposed Intervention		
1.	Loan and repayment burdens must be addressed	<p>Government through Bank of Uganda (BoU) recently issued guidelines regarding credit relief and restructuring measures to address the loan and repayment burden of borrowers namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase statutory period for banks to declare non-performing assets (NPAs) from 90 to 180 days for the next 12 months • Allow commercial banks to restructure loans from 2 to 3 times: • No repossession should be allowed during the next three months from May 2020. <p>Government through the regulator of microfinance institutions is to work on measures to support borrowers from those institutions.</p>
	Businesses need short-term support in terms of liquidity, access to credit and cut costs in operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay all Domestic arrears and outstanding VAT refunds. • Capitalise Uganda Development Bank (UDB) to enable the UDB to mobilise more money by issuing its own instruments. This could be achieved by negotiating with multilateral lenders to restructure loan repayments by requesting for a two to three year moratorium on interest rate payments, which in turn is used to capitalise UDB. • Improve the Agriculture Credit Facility administration and transfer it to UDB and institute a framework to guarantee risks for 5 priority sectors (agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, construction & Trade) at 50:50 level. • De-risk Micro Small and Medium Enterprises & Households borrowers through the promotion of production under Lead Firm Structures using the Value Chain approach and linking financing to both horizontal and vertical chains. • Enact the NSSF (amendment bill) 2019 to increase the supply of long term financing for a cheap source of resources.
	BUBU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should locally source: goods or services, which are produced locally, are still being sourced by some MDAs from outside Uganda. This needs to be stopped. Private sector can give this list once Ministry of Finance agrees to the proposal. Manufacturers should be mandated to meet the required standards.

No	Issue	Proposed Interventions
	BUBU guidelines amendment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The test of BUBU should be “as where the goods are manufactured and not that who is supplying.” Necessary amendments to be done in BUBU policy to become more effective
<u>Specific Proposed Interventions- Ugandan Tourism Industry</u>		
	Loss of market share to competitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The industry appreciates the review of the Gorilla Permit cancellation policy by UWA. It however, would like to request the no upward tariffs review is done this financial year. Constitute and fund a sector-wide crisis management committee that will lead the recovery efforts of the tourism industry, including private and public sector players, that meets periodically
	Liquidity for SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support tourism sector in Uganda, liquidity could be extended to the tourism businesses especially the SMEs that are likely to be out of business for the next 7-12 months.
<u>Specific Proposed Interventions- Ugandan Agriculture Industry</u>		
	Maintain market share and growth of agribusiness industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is working on having a specific Agribusiness fund to address this issue. Funds could be channelled through UDB to be accessed for operations.
	Food Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Producer groups & cooperatives and an efficient Warehouse Receipt System. Enhance value chain in the area of marketing and establish silos and buy excess essential food products
<u>Specific Proposed Interventions- Ugandan Logistics Industry</u>		
	Export of products logistics challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recapitalise Uganda Air Cargo to ensure foreign market expansion. OR better still mainstream Uganda Air Cargo into Uganda Airlines.
<u>Specific Proposed Interventions- Ugandan Manufacturing Industry</u>		
	Long term sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategize in enhancing capacity along the entire value chain i.e. to locally produce and source raw materials, capital goods, intermediate goods and final products. Lower taxes on products produced with locally sourced raw materials as an incentive to use local intermediated inputs.

SEND US YOUR VIEWS:

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- Ivan Mafigiri Kanyeheyo WhatsApp: 0711999902
Email: ikmafigiri@gmail.com
- Pamela Nabukhonzo Kakande WhatsApp: 0772303441
Email: nabukhonzo@gmail.com

UBOS COVID_19 TASKFORCE RESPONSE TEAMS

- Sarah Nakasinde- Tel: +256-772693022 (Kampala area)
- Nsiko Israel- Tel: +256-772617768, +256-711706093 (Entebbe area)

OUR LINK TO THE NATIONAL TASKFORCE

- Jackson Kadumye, Senior Communications Officer- Ministry of Health
Tel: +256-706877903, +256-774504252

THE NATIONAL RESPONSE CONTACTS

- Dr. Allan Muruta- +256-772460297
- Dr. Atek Kagirita - +256-782909153
- Toll free- 0800-100-066, 0800-203-s033, 0800-303-033 & 919.



THE UBOS TASKFORCE ON COVID_19

- Edgar Mbahamiza – Chairperson +256-772485712
- Charles Walube- Secretary +256-772409146
- Stephen Baryahirwa – Member +256-772411067
- Sarah Nakasinde – Member +256-772693022
- Pamela N. Kakande – Member +256-772303441
- Israel Nsiko – Member +256-772617768
- Steven Kamukugize – Member +256-781419718
- Vincent Ssenono- Member +256-773312792
- Ivan K. Mafigiri- Member / Information Desk +256-711999902



This leaflet is a publication of the UBOS TASKFORCE ON COVID_19

UGANDA BUREAU OF STATISTICS

Plot 9 Colville Street
P.O Box 7186, Kampala – Uganda
Tel: +256-414-706000
Fax: +256-414-237553
Email: ubos@ubos.org
Website: www.ubos.org
 :Uganda Bureau of Statistics
 :@StatisticsUg