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SCIDA III - EU Digital Solutions to Strengthen Disease Surveillance and Monitoring Systems for COVID-19 in the IGAD Region

Challenge

The IGAD region in the Horn of Africa is home to approximately 260 million people in 8 countries (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda). Almost 70% of the region is characterized by arid or semi-arid lands (ASAL), which often results in drought-related disasters. Due to adverse climatic conditions, drought-related disasters and internal and cross-border conflicts, the IGAD region has witnessed a long history of migration and cross-border population mobility (CBMPs). In addition, the Horn of Africa region is populated of nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists who relocate periodically. In the Horn of Africa, the spread of the COVID 19 pandemic has been facilitated. Effective surveillance of the COVID 19 outbreak has been a major challenge for the IGAD region due to:

- The high mobility and transnational migration of the cross-border communities
- The weak public health systems of the majority of IGAD member states
- The lack of comprehensive and integrated disease surveillance and monitoring system common to IGAD member states.

Objective

The project aims to implement a regional, transnational, real time monitoring & analysis system (SORMAS) in the IGAD region. The platform will allow the flow of health information between IGAD

member states towards the disease containment control of pandemics and prevent their propagation across borders. The project support IGAD and its member states in establishing a regional health policy framework for sharing and protecting IGAD health data. The project will provide technical advice to IGAD member states on their cross-border operations and support for the training of health workers to use the technology implemented effectively. The project is designed to accomplish the 3rd sustainable development goals “good health and well-being for all” this would contribute greatly to a healthy, and prosperous future for

Project name	Strengthening the Capacity of IGAD towards Enhanced Drought Resilience in the Horn of Africa (SCIDA-III). Component 3 : EU digital solutions to Strengthen Disease Surveillance and Monitoring Systems for COVID-19 in the IGAD Region
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ);
Co-funded by	European Union (EU)
Project region	IGAD Member States: Djibouti (HQ), Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda), Eritrea (currently suspended)
Legal executing agency	Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
Duration	09.10.2020 – 10.09.2023
Budget	EUR 8,400,000



EU-IGAD Covid 19 response, 5th steering committee meeting in Djibouti



In the left Dr.Ahmed Bashir Lead of Digital Health team and Jochen Schmidt Head of Component of the SCIDA III project of GIZ in the Finalization of Digital health workplan workshop in Nairobi, Kenya

Approach

The project operates in close collaboration with the IGAD secretariat and its Health and Social Development division, whose mandate is to assist Member States in building their capacity for effective surveillance, response and monitoring of regional health emergencies. IGAD is the point of liaison between GIZ and health ministry of the member states.

The following are three priority fields of action:

- Introduction of a regional, transnational, real-time surveillance, and monitoring system for disease surveillance to mitigate pandemics
- Implementation of the IGAD Regional Health Data Sharing and Protection Policy Framework in the Member States
- Capacity building training of health workers at the cross-border facilities on health data sharing to enable effective national and regional pandemic preparedness.

The approach aims to strengthen the functionality of the Regional Economic Community (REC), and most notably the IGAD Digital Health Office as a regional digital health coordination hub. The approach also intends to harness synergies with the major regional health agencies in Africa. (Africa CDC, WHO Africa, WAHO...). In addition, the approach seeks to facilitate Member States' access to and sharing of health data within and across national borders. In this regard, it is essential that GIZ and IGAD support member states in establishing national health legislation, policies and regulations on health data sharing to ensure compliance with interoperability standards.

Benefits

The project aims at achieving the following benefits:

- Establishing a regional disease surveillance & analysis platform at IGAD.
- Strengthening national disease surveillance systems, including the introduction of SORMAS (Surveillance, Outbreak Response Management and Analysis System) in the IGAD member states
- Implementation of the IGAD Regional Health Data Sharing and Protection Policy Framework by all the IGAD member states
- Well-trained and qualified health personnel are in place in cross-border areas to collect and share health data that will be very beneficial in mitigating the pandemics.
- Improvement of the Health ICT infrastructure for IGAD member states, especially in health facilities in cross-border areas to ensure efficient health data flow.



13th IGAD Health Ministerial meeting in Mombasa, Kenya

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