

COVID-19 Tajikistan Situation Report # 1 3 April 2020



UNITED NATIONS
TAJIKISTAN

This report is produced by the Office of UN Resident Coordinator and OCHA HAT in collaboration with international partners. It covers the period up to April 3, 2020. The next report will be issued on or around April 10, 2020.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **As of 3 April 2020 - no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Tajikistan.**
- Prime Minister of Tajikistan meets members of Development Coordination Council on COVID 19 preparedness and response on April 2, 2020
- Schools resumed on 1 April 2020 after a spring break.
- New structure of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on COVID-19 includes Heads of 36 Ministries and Agencies and chaired by Prime Minister of Tajikistan.
- Airports are closed for passengers and cargo, while railway routes remain open for cargo loads.

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Confirmed cases of COVID 19

866

Specimen tested (negative)

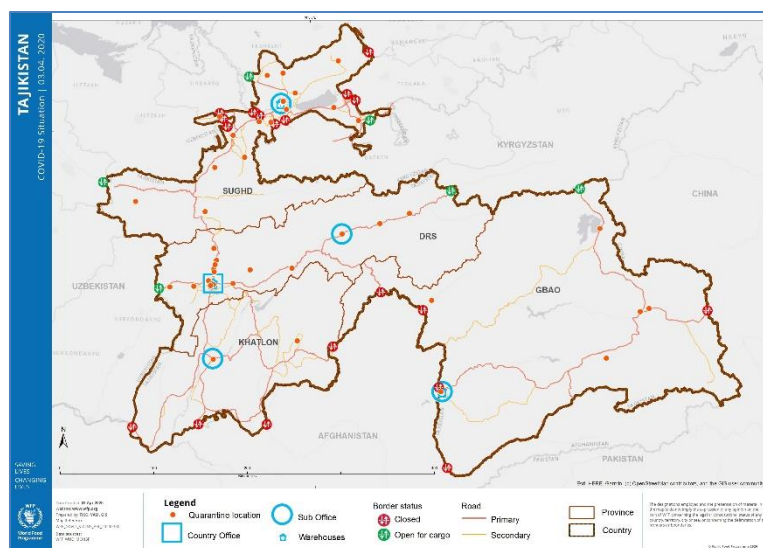
3,695

People in quarantine
(arriving from outside of Tajikistan)

Source: Ministry of Health and Social protection of the Population, Tajikistan, 3 April 2020

Tajikistan situation overview

- No major restrictions on mass gatherings are introduced around the country up to date.
- All public services (markets, public transport and etc) are functioning in regular mode. Schools have resumed on April 1, 2020 following a 10 days spring break. Government reports that appropriate disinfection measures have been undertaken in educational facilities prior to resume of studies.
- 24/7 hotline on COVID-19 is up and running. Hotline is hosted and operated by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population (MOHSP).
- Airports are closed for passengers and cargo, while railway routes remain open for cargo.
- As of 30 March 2020, all borders to neighboring countries are closed, except for cargo export. Passengers who cross the borders will either be put in quarantine for 14 days, return to Tajikistan or will be denied entering and stull in the transit zone.
- Border crossing points with China and Afghanistan are closed, while 3 border crossing points with Uzbekistan and another 3 with Kyrgyzstan are open for international cargo. International trucks are unloaded in the terminal zone and goods are loaded onto local trucks. Drivers who enter Tajikistan are placed in 14-day quarantine in districts hospitals.
- Upon cancellation of international flights and closure of airports, several chartered flights have been organized by local air carriers to return citizens of Tajikistan, nonetheless groups of people (numbers are not reported) remain stranded in Moscow airports of Russian Federation.
- No significant changes in the market prices were reported during March 30 – April 3, 2020. Main food commodities are reportedly available in Tajik markets, though a low level of wheat flour stock was reported in the Gharm central market. Prices of main food commodities remain high across the regions, which may be attributed



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to exchange rate fluctuations and seasonality. It is to be noted that the food price hike observed in March 2020 was at “crisis” level as per the Alert for Price Spikes (ALPS)¹.

- Government has vacated certain hospitals (including Dushanbe city clinical hospital “Istiqlol”) in every city to host infected patients in case of COVID 19 outbreak.
- Up to date, all countries bordering Tajikistan (China, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan) have confirmed cases of COVID-19, some declaring Emergency Situation and imposing strict lockdown in certain cities.

Preparedness and response

Decisions and measures undertaken by the Government

- The Inter-Agency Standing Committee on COVID-19 preparedness and response (Standing Committee), has been reformed on March 18, 2020 by the order of President of Republic of Tajikistan. In line with the new structure, the Standing Committee is chaired by the Prime Minister, Mr. Kohir Rasulzoda and brings together the Heads of 36 Ministries, Agencies and state services. Secretarial services are provided by the MoHSP. In line with the same Presidential Order, similar Committees should be established at all administrative levels by local authorities, as well as within all Ministries and Agencies.
- The Inter-Agency Standing Committee on COVID 19 has developed cross-sectoral Action Plan, which was approved by the Prime-Minister of Tajikistan on March 22, 2020 and includes 84 action points.
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection with WHO support developed and adopted Tajikistan COVID-19 Country Preparedness and Response Plan. The Plan is built around 10 cross-sectoral areas, foreseeing US\$ 111,700 000 for its full implementation.
- On March 19, 2020 Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) launched “Action Plan for prevention and reducing the national economy’s exposure to potential risks of COVID-19” approved by the Prime Minister of Republic of Tajikistan.
- On April 2, 2020 Prime Minister of Tajikistan held a meeting with the Development Coordination Council (DCC) sharing information about actions undertaken by the Government and appealing to development partners for assistance and support. Among actions taken by the Government, Prime Minister mentioned that relevant policies are being drafted on provision of tax benefits and tax exemptions to vulnerable small and medium-sized businesses.

Response by international partners:

- WHO Tajikistan continues provision of technical advice to Government of Tajikistan, through MoHSP on overall preparedness and response to possible outbreak of COVID 19.
- UNICEF supports MoHSP in ensuring and coordination of public outreach.
- World Bank has approved \$11.3 million assistance, that will help expand intensive care capacity through equipment, supplies, and training, as well as supporting coordination with the public. The most vulnerable households will also be protected through temporary social assistance.
- The **overview of the assistance provided by International Partners** (including bi-lateral assistance) prepared by DCC Working Group on Health can be found at: <https://untj.org/dcc/covid-19/>

Needs

- Government of Tajikistan through office of Prime Minister has appealed to international partners for assistance in acquisition of critical medical items, including mechanical ventilation machines, express tests for COVID-19 detection, as well as Personal Protective Equipment.
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population requested assistance to improve its communication capacities (IT equipment);

Coordination arrangements

- National coordination of the COVID-19 preparedness and response is undertaken by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee chaired by the Prime Minister.

¹ ALPS: *The Food Prices Early Warning is done using an indicator that monitors the extent to which a local food experiences abnormally high food price levels. For details on methodology and Price data/analysis, please visit the SNAP website at: <https://snap.vam.wfp.org/main/>*

- MoHSP is the central operational body within the Government and Standing Committee, responsible for coordination and liaison with the international partners.
- Overall coordination of development partners in Tajikistan on COVID-19 preparedness and response is undertaken by the UN Resident Coordinator with the technical guidance of WHO.

Communication and information sharing:

- To contribute to regular Situation Reports and to be included in the mailing lists, please contact: **Shahlo Rahimova, OCHA NDRA @ +992939999451; rahimova@un.org**
- For any urgent information related to COVID-19 (situation, needs, response etc.), please contact: **Dr.Safarov Abdulakhad, NPO WHO @ +992 98 515 23 32; safarova@who.int**

Links to useful COVID-19 materials

- Coronavirus: what we know so far about the outbreak spreading in China and abroad_02_02_2020 (video): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zru5REL9ANg&feature=emb_rel_pause
- How to protect yourself from COVID-19: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for the public: Myth busters: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>
- Online training as a weapon to fight the new coronavirus: <https://openwho.org/courses/introduction-to-ncov>
- Questions and answers on coronaviruses: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>
- Novel coronavirus: common information <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

WHO's standard recommendations for the public:

- Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth;
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough, keep distance (at least 1m) between yourself and others, particularly anyone who's coughing or sneezing;
- When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands;
- Stay at home if you have mild respiratory symptoms and no travel history; and
- Seek medical care if you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, telling health provider of travel history