

COVID-19 SAFETY STRATEGIES AND MITIGATION PROTOCOL FOR ELTAP-ELAP EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION IN ETHIOPIA

Communications, Evidence, and Learning (CEL) Project Work Assignment – E3 Land and Urban Office

Covid-19 Safety Strategies And Mitigation Protocol For ELTAP-ELAP Evaluation Data Collection In Ethiopia

Communications, Evidence and Learning (CEL) Project

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# Introduction

EconInsight is a hub of cutting-edge research and data analysis in Ethiopia. Its mission is to generate quantitative and qualitative data to promote knowledge and evidence policies in Ethiopia. The global outbreak of COVID-19 has had major health, labor market and economic repercussions. The Government of Ethiopia (GoE) responded to the pandemic by increasing partial lockdowns and containment measures to combat the spread of the virus. On April 10th, 2020, the GoE declared a five-month State of Emergency to curb the transmission and spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Following the declaration of the state of emergency, the government took a series of measures to stem the spread of the virus including the following: restricting borders, closing schools, freeing thousands of prisoners to ease overcrowding, spraying main streets in the capital with disinfectant, discouraging large gatherings, banning public gatherings of more than four people , requiring most employees to work from home, banning greetings by handshake, reducing the number of passengers load by 50 percent for all national and local travel, prohibiting sports, social, religious and other types of group gatherings, as well as mandating compulsory mask wearing.

In alignment with these measures, EconInsight management suspended field activities and allowed staff to work remotely. Additionally, EconInsight paused in-person data collection and leveraged phone-based surveys to protect the study participants and the survey team from COVID-19.

In September 2020, Ethiopia lifted the state of emergency and eased COVID- 19 restrictions including lifting the stay-at-home order, allowing gatherings of up to 50, and businesses such as restaurants and transportation operators to resume service. There is no change in these policies at least up until January 18, 202.Over the last coupleof months , various local private and public and international research institutes including the World Bank (at least DEC and DIME), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the main government research and survey institutes such as the FDRE central statistical agency (CSA) and FDRE Policy Studies Institute resumed data collection and in person work.

Landesa and the EconInsight team have agreed on a protocol to start face-to-face data collection without compromising the health and safety of study participants, its staff, or their families. To achieve this objective, EconInsight has conducted a community assessment as well as a review of all the relevant policies and statutes related to COVID-19 safety requirements. We have also developed health and safety protocols that will be applied during field planning, travelling, training and data collection. EconInsight has aligned its COVID-19 safety measures to the Center for Disease Control, local laws and other applicable medical guidance. This will ensure that face to face data collection, focus group discussions and other research activities of the project under “USAID Communication, Evidence, and Learning (CEL)-6080” will not expose participants or staff to added risks. All research activities will be conducted strictly following the ICRW, Ethiopia Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ethiopia Public Health Institute (EPHI) guidelines for conducting research involving household surveys, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions or other in-person interaction with Individuals. To this end, EconInsight will fully implement COVID-19 safety mitigation strategies and measures to actively prevent the transmission of COVID-19, as per the Center for Disease Control and other applicable health regulations to protect the health and safety of research participants, data collectors, and anyone else performing in-person interaction for ICRW research purposes. EconInsight will also comply with local laws and requirements for conducting research in-country.

# Community Assessment

EconInsight has successfully completed a community assessment of all relevant policies and statutes related to COVID-19 safety requirements, including the following:

1. Review and identify local and national restrictions on movement and business activities due to COVID-19.
2. Contact remotely relevant Woreda and village level key informants to identify additional disruptions or restrictions to conduct face to face interview and focus group discussions in the study communities.
3. Analyze Ethiopia’s current COVID-19 situation and trends using time series data from official sources.
4. Review the national government Ethiopian Public Health Institute) categorization of risk regions/towns/ clusters.
5. Contact remotely relevant Woreda and village level key informants to highlight the current situation and trends of COVID 19 in the study Woredas and the local government categorization of risk Woredas/Community /Clusters.
6. Contact remotely relevant Woreda and village level key informants to gauge the current climate within study communities regarding in-person data collection or visits from groups of individuals who may not be part of the community.
7. Contact remotely the managers of the study Woredas and sample community leaders to discuss and explain the purpose of research and to check whether written permission from the higher administrative level (federal, region, Zone, Woreda and Kebeles) is required to enter communities for data collection purposes.
8. Contact remotely federal, regional, Zone, Woreda and kebele leaders to obtain written permission to enter communities for in person data collection.
9. Review the national research ethics review guidelines to check if the envisaged ELTAP-ELAP Evaluation data collection project will require approval from an in-country IRB before surveying can take place.

The remaining section of this chapter is organized as follows. The first section briefly presents a review of the national or local government restrictions in place on movement or businesses during the expected staff training, field planning and data collection period. The second section presents the detailed review of the current COVID -19 situation in Ethiopia. The last section will summarize the main results from the phone-based community assessment survey that we conducted recently as part of our due diligence work in the preparation for field planning and data collection in the rural highlands of the five study regions.

## 2.1. Covid-19: Local Restrictions, Laws and Requirements for Conducting Research

The current GoE directive issued for the prevention and control of COVID-19 pandemic was issued on October 5th, 2020, following the lifting of the state of emergency proclamation issued by the Council of Ministers pursuant to Article 4(1) of Proclamation No 3/2020. There is no any other latest directives, proclamation orrestructions in Ethiopia issued related to the prevention and control of Covid-19 up until January 18, 2021. According to the new directive issued on October 2020for the prevention and control of COVID-19 pandemic, staying at home is no longer a requirement, schools are open, transport service providers are allowed to operate at full capacity, and restrictions on movement and any other business activities are lifted. Additionally, the directive, substantially increases the limit for the maximum number of meeting participants from 4 to 50 people and eases most COVID-19 restrictions. According to the EPHI, MOH and Ethiopia government, the state of emergency was lifted and restrictions eased due to low transmission rates of COVID 19, compliance with national and regional public health rules, and local awareness COVID-19 prevention methods, as well as access to safety materials (mouth mask, alcohol, sanitizer, gloves and other disinfectants for free or at a low cost.

Additionally, with the lifting of the state of emergency, various national and international organizations including the World Bank (at least DEC and DIME), and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) have given the go-ahead for in-person work in Ethiopia. The main government research and survey institutes such as the FDRE central statistical agency (CSA) and FDRE Policy Studies Institute have also resumed data collection.

However, it should be noted that the current directive that was issued on October 5th, 2020 does include some restrictions on individuals and places of business. The following are the relevant restrictions, prohibited activities, and precautionary measures in the directive. These restrictions have implications for field planning, traveling, training and face to face data collection, key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

1. **Prohibited Activities**

* No person can make deliberate physical contact (e.g., shaking hands, hugging) with each other;
* No person (above six years of age) can be found without a mask anywhere outside his residence or move from one place to another;
* No public or private organization can provide service without maintaining a distance of two adult strides (at least 2 meters) and without wearing masks;
* It is prohibited to stand or sit without maintaining a distance of two adult strides in market places, transport depots, places where public services are provided or any other public space where a large number of people are found.

1. **Duties Imposed**

* Any person shall inform the Ministry of Health, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute, the nearest health institution, or official of any person he suspects of being infected with COVID-19;
* Any public or private organization shall use various mediums to make information regarding COVID-19 accessible to their employees; shall provide sanitary materials useful for preventing the spread of the virus and provide precautionary materials useful to prevent spread of the disease, and ensure that customers are wearing masks and taking the necessary precautionary measures;
* Any cross region or inter-city transport service providers have a duty to carry passengers in accordance with the law setting the maximum carrying capacity, deny service to individuals who are not wearing masks, and open windows to allow sufficient air circulation in the vehicle.

1. **Precautionary Measures**

* As much as possible, meetings should be hosted online rather than in-person unless it is mandatory;
* Meetings or trainings with up to 50 participants are allowed without an additional permit as long as the precautionary measures previously listed are taken; over 50 participants a permit is required;
* Any meeting (training) hall should allow for the distance of two adult strides (two meters) between attendees, ensure sufficient hand wash and implementing precautionary measures including providing sufficient information on coronavirus, transmission and prevention of the virus and precautionary rules of the meeting. Meeting halls should also have sufficient air ventilation, separation of entrance and exit, and cleaning materials for participants use. All the same applies for break rooms;
* The name, phone number and address of each training /meeting participant should be kept for 14 days as a way to track and trace;
* A person should be assigned to take necessary COVID-19 measures throughout the meeting. If any attendee shows sign of infection the Ethiopian Public Health Institute should be alerted.
* During meeting/training breaks, service providing individuals shall wear a face mask and it is prohibited to serve more than three people in a table, and there shall be a two-meter distance between each table.

The above-mentioned restrictions and laws shall be applicable to all efforts conducted in Ethiopia to prevent and control the COVID-19 pandemic, including research that involve human interactions such as household surveys, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. To our understanding, resuming face-to-face data collection and in person enumerator training and traveling by strictly following the aforementioned restrictions and regulations is feasible. The restrictions and precautionary measures are consistent with the ICRW implementation guidelines for conducting research that involves human interaction except their limit on the maximum number of meeting participants. EconInsight will align and implement COVID-19 protocols that comply with both the ICRW implementation guidelines and Directive No. 30/2020. In instances, where the ICRW guidelines and Directive No. 30.2020 are not aligned, EconInsight will apply the higher measure.

In addition to the ICRW guidelines and the protocols listed in the Directive No. 30/2020, EconInsight will also check remotely and confirm with local authorities that there is no other national or local government regulations and restrictions in place on movement or businesses during the expected staff training and data collection period (March to July 2021) except the aforementioned restrictions, prohibited activities and imposed duties.

The EconInsight team will fully obey with the EconInsight’s COVID-19 safety and health protocols and strategies. EconInsight management has put in place a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to non-compliance with its protocols listed in chapter four of this report for reducing COVID-19 transmission risks. Any survey team members who are found to disobey the listed EconInsight protocols more than once will be removed from the team.

## 2.2. The Trend and Current COVID-19 Scenario In Ethiopia

Ethiopia activated its Public Health Emergency Operation Center (PHEOC) for COVID-19 preparedness and response on January 27th, 2020 and has been taking different measures for effective preparedness and response. The first COVID-19 confirmed case in the country was reported on March 13th, 2020.

Since then, the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) in collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO), and other partners have provided training and orientation for the public and health professionals on COVID-19, intensifying the response efforts to prevent the spread and severity COVID-19 in Ethiopia.

They also provide up-to-date information daily on COVID-19 to the public and relevant stakeholders using different means of communication such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, brochures, flyers, national media broadcasts and their own home page. The cumulative number of laboratory tests and test results, active cases, total number of deaths and total recovered are included in daily posts. Also reported is new cases, new death, active cases and critical cases. Regional and town disaggregated data for the last reporting period has also been made available on the official website at www. covid19.ephi.gov.et. Unfortunately, further disaggregated data has not been readily available from EPHI, MoH and any other secondary sources. EconInsight compiled daily reports on the total number of total laboratory tastes, new confirmed cases (COVID-19 positive results), number of active patients; sever cases, recovered person and death that they report on daily basis from March 13, 2020 to January 18, 2021.

Based on official data that EconInsight team computed the total cumulative number of laboratory tests, active patents, confirmed cases, deaths and recovered persons. We also computed the laboratory positivity test, recovery and death rate to analyze the trends, including growth of transmission and severity of the COVID-19 spread in Ethiopia. We disaggregated our analysis by region and towns to study the possible variation in the growth and rate of spread of COVID-19 across the regions.

According to the EPHI official data, as of January 18, 2021, there were a total of 131,546 COVID-19 cases and 2033 deaths across the country. Compared to the cases and deaths reported the week prior, the cumulative cases and deaths increased by one percent. So far 116,355 cases have recovered from COVID-19. The total number of tests stands at 1,891,910showing a one percent increase compared to the prior week of January 18th, 2020. As it can be inferred from Figure 1, the number of confirmed cases has remained very low and has started to slightly fall after September 2020. The number of persons recovered after September is higher than the new confirmed cases. The number of deaths per day remains very low throughout this period as well. This is consistent with the justification of the Ethiopia government, MoH and EPHI to lift the state of emergency and ease COVID-19 precautionary measures and restrictions on September 2020.

Figure : The trends in COVID 19 daily laboratory tests, confirmed cases, recovered and deaths

The laboratory test positivity rate for the WHO-Epi- ranges from 7 percent to 8.5percent over the last several weeks. As shown below the average laboratory test positivity and death rate from the date Ethiopia confirmed the first confirmed case (March 13th, 2020) to January18th, 2021 remains on average below five percent and three percent respectively while the recovery rate is on average above 45 percent with a standard deviation of less with the interquartile ranges of 4.4, 0.6 and 25 percentage points respectively. This categorizes Ethiopia as a low COVID-19 country.

**Table 1: Test Positivity, Recovery and Death rate**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| stats | Laboratory Postivity Test | recovery rate | death rate |
| Average | 4.6 | 45.0 | 2.4 |
| Standard deviation | 5.9 | 23.1 | 1.9 |
| Inter quartile range | 4.4 | 25.0 | 0.6 |
| 10th Percentile | 0.8 | 15.2 | 1.1 |
| 90Th Percentile | 6.9 | 85.5 | 6.9 |

Source: Own compilation based on the data available at [https://COVID19.ephi.gov.et/,on](https://covid19.ephi.gov.et/,on)

As shown in the time series graph depicted below (Figure 2), the recovery rate is much higher than the death rate and the laboratory test positivity rate since April 2020. Even though the recovery rate follows a random trend before September 2020, it shows a consistently increasing trend after September 2020. The laboratory positivity test and death rate remain low since October2020 and stagnant or even show a declining trend since December 2020. These findings justify the basis for changes made to ease prior COVID-19 restrictions on September/ October 2020.

Figure 2: The trends in COVID 19 daily laboratory positivity tests, recovery and death rate

As shown in Figure 3 below, the cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 positive cases, active patients and critical cases remains very low and shows only a very small growth throughout the study period.

On the other hand, the cumulative number of laboratory tests shows an exponential growth over the period under investigation. This again justifies the basis for lifting the state of emergency in September and replacing it with an easing restriction on October 5, 2020(Directive No. 30/2020).

Figure 3: The trends of cumulative laboratory tests, recovered, confirmed cases and deaths

As it can be inferred from the table below the spread of COVID-19 also varies across the ten regional states where the highest cumulative confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths are registered in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. According to our key informants at the EPHI, MOH and Ministry of Agriculture and natural resource and their counterpart in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Sidama regional states, the spread of the COVID-19 in the rural part of Ethiopia including our study sites is extremely low or non-existent.

**Table 2: The COVID\_19 situation in the ten regional states of Ethiopia, January 18,2020**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **Total Cases** | **Recovered** | **Total Deaths** |
| Addis Ababa | 75137 | 3290 | 122 |
| Dire Dawa | 2950 | 172 | 6 |
| Oromia | 21444 | 172 | 6 |
| Somali | 1678 | 84 | 4 |
| Amhara | 6721 | 285 | 3 |
| Tigray | 6662 | 174 | 2 |
| Afar | 1865 | 94 | 1 |
| Harari | 2839 | 6 | 1 |
| Gambela | 1009 | 1 | 0 |
| Benshangul Gumuz | 2550 | 12 | 0 |
| Sidama | 3794 | 0 | 0 |
| SNNPR | 4546 | 6 | 0 |

Source: Own compilation based on the data available at [https://COVID19.ephi.gov.et/,on](https://covid19.ephi.gov.et/,on) , Note: regions in blue are our study regions.

According to EPHI review of the national government categorization of risk cities and regions, Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa and Jigjig are the top three risk cities in terms of confirmed COVID-19 positive test results in Ethiopia. As shown in the table below, the number of cumulative confirmed cases in these three cities is 75137, 2950, and 82 respectively. However, it should be noted that the cumulative number of laboratory tests were also the highest in these cities. On the other hand, all the studied regions,cities and Woredas are currently categorized as low or risk free Woredas.

**Table 3: Top ten COVID-19 risky towns in Ethiopia ,January 18 2020**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **City** | **Total Cases** | **Recovered** | **Total Deaths** |
| Addis ababa | 75137 | 3290 | 122 |
| Dire Dawa | 2950 | 172 | 6 |
| Jijiga | 82 | 3 | 0 |
| Metema | 52 | 0 | 0 |
| Mekele | 24 | 4 | 0 |
| Semera | 15 | 10 | 0 |
| Cross Border Drivers | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Gewane | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Batu/zeway | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Bahirdar | 9 | 3 | 0 |
| Humerra | 9 | 0 | 0 |

Source: Own compilation based on the data available at [https://COVID19.ephi.gov.et/,on](https://covid19.ephi.gov.et/,on)

## 2.3 Findings From Key Informant Interviews

EconInsight remotely contacted relevant Woreda and key village informants to (i) highlight the current situation and trends of COVID 19, as well as categorization of risk in Woredas/Community /Clusters, (ii) identify additional disruptions for conducting face to face interviews and focus group discussions, (iii) gauge the current climate within study communities regarding in-person data collection or visits from groups of individuals who may not be part of the community, (iv) check whether written permission from the higher administrative level (federal, region, Zone, Woreda and Kebeles) is needed to enter communities for data collection purposes, and to assess the level of difficulty to obtain such written permission from the federal, study region, zone, Woreda and Kebeles level office, (v) identify important information to get the cooperation of the local communities during data collection and (vi) assess the most relevant prohibited activities and imposed duties and regulations of EPHI that are most effectively implemented and practice in the study Woredas and villages.

### 2.3.1. Sampling and Data Collection

The phone based key informant survey was conducted from December 3rd to December 7th, 2020. Prior to the survey, we interviewed relevant federal officers at the Ministry of Health and Ethiopian Public Health Institute. We then explained and discussed the purpose and the geographic coverage of the study to the land administrative management staff and leaders at the GoE Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources. EconoInsights obtained the contact details of the relevant regional leaders in the four of the five study regions from the MoANR land management office. From each of the respective regions, we got the contact details of the relevant zone offices that comprise our sample Woredas. In total, EconInsight obtained the contact details of 26 Woreda leaders, and through them, we identified 54 community leaders. Out of the 54 community leaders the phone number of 14 community leaders did not work. Accordingly, we conducted the phone based key informant interviews with 26 Woreda leaders and 40 community leaders. All of the Woreda and community leaders were very collaborative and willing to provide interviews.

Due to the current conflict between the Tigray regional state and the federal government of Ethiopia, communication is fully blacked out, including the internet and telecom infrastructure.

Therefore, it is not currently possible to conduct interviews with regional, Woreda and community leaders in Tigray. However, from our contacts at the federal MOH, MoANR and EPHI we are able to obtain updates regarding the past, present and future COVID-19 and political situation in Tigray. In short, they presume that the future situation in Tigray will not be different from the rest of the four study regions. We also believe the same.

Annex 1 shows the English version of the qualitative survey instrument that was used to conduct interviews. The questionnaire was programmed by one of EconInsight’s experienced programmers using ODK collect. The program was tested and debugged prior to the start of interviews.

Data collection was conducted using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) techniques. The project lead and survey team designed and utilized a questionnaire guide that includes explanation of key terms accompanied by examples and illustrations. The EconInsight team secured verbal consent from the Woreda and community leaders before proceeding with interviews and also assured confidentiality. It was also explained to each participant that they are not required to answer questions and that their willingness to participate or not, will not in any way affect their employment. Throughout the study period the EconInsight team took appropriate precautions to avoid putting any enumerators or key interviewees in danger.

Following the completion of the last interview for each round, the row data was exported and submitted to the field coordinator in STATA for further review and cleaning. We post coded the responses for the open-ended questions and analyzed the data using stata and excel.

### 2.3.2 The Profile of Key Informants

The vast majority of our respondents were Woreda land administration head (26) or kebele managers (35). The remaining few respondents are either deputy leaders or COVID-task force. The majority of the respondents (88 percent) are male indicating that the land administration and leadership position in the rural part of Ethiopia is male dominated. The average age of the respondents is 33 years old. A majority of the respondents have university degree (62 percent). 23 percent of the respondents have also completed vocational school while the remaining 15 percent have either some primary or secondary school. None of the respondents were illiterate.

### 2.3.3. The Trend and Current COVID-19 Scenario In Study Communities

The total number of cumulative confirmed COVID -19 positive cases in our study regions of Oromia, Tigray, Amhara, SNNPR and Sidama, as of December 6th, 2020 was 16,716; 6662;6094 ;3863 and 3039 respectively. The recovery rate in all the study regions was extremely high (approximately 100 percent) and the death rate almost zero. The total number of deaths in Oromia, Amhara and Tigray region was only 6; 3 , and 2 respectively and 0 in SNNPR (and Sidama) region (see table 2 above ). Our key informant interviews with federal and regional level officers confirms these numbers as well. These federal and regional leaders also claimed that the number of deaths and total confirmed and active cases will be much lower in the rural highland of the study regions. This again suggest that the current face to face survey study and focus group discussions will almost add no COVID -19 risk on our survey team. The key informant interviews with the Woreda and community leaders in our survey sites also indicated the extremely high recovery rate and an almost zero death rate. In our survey 82 percent of the Woreda leaders confirmed that the communities in their respective Woreda have access to COVID-laboratory testing centers in their region or nearby towns. The cumulative total number of individuals tested COVID-19 positive in the entire 25 sample Woredas up until the first week of December 2020(December 3 to 7) was only 235. 24 out of the total 26 Woreda leaders and the entire 39 sample community/kebele leaders confirmed that the national or regional government has never categorized any of their communities as a risky zone/cluster. Only a couple of communities in the two sample Woredas namely Tarmaber and Fagita lekoma were categorized as a COVID-19 risky Woreda/community in the past (before September 2020). There is not any community/ Kebele in all of the sample study Woredas who has been categorized as COVID-19 risky village/kebele/Woreda/zone/cluster.

Out of these cumulative confirmed cases, 228 individuals recovered and only seven individuals in the study Woredas passed away as of the first week of December. At the time we conducted the phone-based interviews, there were no active COVID -19 cases in all of the study Woredas and sample communities (See Figure 5).

Figure 5: Cumulative total number of confirmed cases, death , individuals recovered and active cases, severe case

As shown in the table below, the disaggregation of the analysis by the study Woreda shows some variations across study regions interims of total number of confirmed COVID-19 positive cases and total number of deaths. The relatively higher number of cumulative confirmed cases (20 to 33) up until the first week of December 2020 is recorded in Tiyo, Tarmaber, Dugda, Fagita lekoma, Kewet and Debub Achefer Woreda. Still the recovery rate is very high in these Woreda and the number of deaths in each of these Woredas is very low. In remaining 20 study Woredas of the rural highlands of Oromia, Amhara, SNNPR and Sidama regions, the recorded number of cumulative confirmed COVID-19 cases is very low or zero. The average cumulative confirmed cases in our entire sample Woredas is below 10. More interestingly in all of the sample Woredas, the total number of active or sever cases is zero reflecting the highest recovery rate (above 97 percent) and the death rate (lower than 3 percent) is very low.

**Table 4: The Total number of confirmed and active cases , deaths and recovered persons in the Study Woredas.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Total Confirmed cases** | **Active cases** | **Total recovered** | **Total death** | **Sever cases** |
| Chiro | 7 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Dangla | 11 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Dawa chefa | 11 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Debub Achefer | 20 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Dugda | 23 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 0 |
| Fagita lekoma | 23 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 0 |
| Hatuti Hulo | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jabi Tehenen | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jaju | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Kewet | 21 | 0 | 18 | 3 | 0 |
| Lemo | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Manna | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Semen Achefer | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Silite | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Sodo | 13 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| Sodo Zuriya | 9 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 0 |
| Tarmaber | 30 | 0 | 29 | 1 | 0 |
| Tiyo | 36 | 0 | 36 | 0 | 0 |
| Welmera | 7 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| Were | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wera Dicho | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Wonberima | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Wondo Genet | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| **Average** | **9.7** | **0.0** | **9.5** | **0.3** | **0.0** |

EconInsight will exert its best effort to determine how the proposed in person survey and focus group discussions adds to existing minimal risk and mitigate those risks on the study communities by strictly implementing the EconInsight COVID-19 safety mitigation strategy and protocol (see chapter 3) which align with COVID-19 safety measures per the Center for Disease Control and the national directive for controlling and the preventing the spread of COVID -19 (Directive 30/2020).

### 2.3.4. Compliance of COVID -19 Precautionary Measures and Restrictions

The vast majority of our key informants (95 percent) reported that due to awareness raising campaigns for social distancing and using safety materials such masks and disinfectants, individuals in their communities did implement these precautionary measures (April 2020 to September 2020). However, after the government lifted the state of emergency proclamation and replaced it with a relatively less restrictive directive, individuals in their communities stopped following precautionary measures strictly, and begun to doubt the existence of Covid-19. Informants noted that this can be attributed to the observed low spread and transmission of COVID-19, as well as the high recovery rates in rural Ethiopia. Economic and religious factors also play a role according to our informants. Even though the government of Ethiopia, development partners and NGOs still keep on exerting an effort to raise awareness in rural communities for implementing preventative measures, a substantial number of individuals in rural Ethiopia do not currently implement most of the listed COVID-19 precautionary measures and restrictions that are imposed on individuals, private and public service providing business. As shown in Table 5, 81 percent of our key informants reported that individuals in their community quite often shake hands with another as a greeting and make deliberate physical contact with each other. Except two key informants, all of our 64 key informants also informed us that it is common for any person to be found without a mask anywhere outside his residence or move from one place to another. This is a bit worrisome as it may contribute to the spread and transmission of COVID -19 in the future. Consequently, our key informants identified the current mal practice (less use of masks, sanitizer and other disinfectants) in their community towards the COVID-19 precautionary measures as potential disruptors for conducting face to face surveys. To mitigate the risk of transmission to enumerators and study participants our key informants strongly suggests the free provision of mouth masks, sanitizers and alcohols to survey study subjects. EconInsight will provide mouth masks and sanitizers for both the interviewers, focus group note takers and study participants. Any team members who violate these protocols twice will be removed from the team.

**Table 5: Which measures is mostly practiced in tour community/Woreda?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **COVID-19 Precautionary measures and restrictions** | **Percent** |
| No person can make deliberate physical contact with each other; | 9 |
| No person can be found without a mask anywhere outside his residence or move from one place to another | 3 |
| No public or private organization can provide service without maintaining a distance of two adult strides (2 metered) and without wearing masks; | 53 |
| It is allowed to have a meeting of up to 50 individuals without an additional permit | 64 |
| Schools are open | 97 |
| Restaurants, Hotels and Bars are operate implementing precautionary measures | 53 |
| Public transport operates at their full capacity | 100 |

In addition, slightly less than half (47 percent) of the Woreda and community leaders witnessed that employees of public or private organization in their communities have been providing services without maintaining a distance of two adult strides and without wearing masks. Similarly, in only a slightly less than half of our study communities, restaurants, hotels and bars are implementing precautionary measures.

This is again an important input for EconInsight to design a mechanism to mitigate such risks and managed uncertainties. During the field planning and training phase the EconInsight team will contact hotels in advance to understand what COVID precautionary measures they are implementing to prevent the risk of contracting COVID-19. EconInsight will recommend to its survey team that they stay at the hotel with the most stringent precautions.

The qualitative community assessment also exposed that the SNNP region and some Woredas in Amhara region require an additional permit for meetings even up to 50 individuals, even though the federal directive provides does not require an additional permit for meetings up to 50. According to our informants this is attributed to the fact that in the rural Woredas it is difficult to get a hotel or meeting hall that allows for the distance of two adult strides between attendees, ensures sufficient hand wash and implementing precautionary measures. This has an important implication to limit the size of focus group discussion in the rural Woredas. As a result, EconInsight will limit the number of focus group participants, note takers and focus group facilitators. The total will not to exceed eight.

The analysis of our qualitative data also uncovers that restriction on movement and business operations is highly relaxed and lifted in our study Woredas currently. The vast majority of the community and Woreda leaders confirm that public transport providers operate at their full capacity and schools are open and conduct classes face-to-face. This justifies the reason to presume face to face data collection following strictly the COVID-19 precautionary measures and restrictions.

### 2.3.5. Disruptions and COVID-19 Restrictions for Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

During the phone based key informant interviews, the Woreda and community leaders in the study areas as well as the regional and federal officers were requested to list out past, current and future COVID-19 restriction and any other disruptions that could make face to face surveys and focus group discussions difficult. Most confirm that at the initial phase of the COVID-19 out break the local government undertook partial lock down similar to the national government. They were not welcoming people from urban areas, schools, restaurants, bars, churches and mosques were closed. The local government also banned large gatherings of more than four people including mass sporting events, wedding, funerals and other social activities. Additionally, handshake greetings were banned and local transport capped capacity at 50 percent in addition to requiring masks.

Currently, local governments have relaxed most of these restrictions and the majority of individuals in these communities have stopped complying with these restrictions after the Ethiopian Member of Parliament lifted the state of emergency. More than three-fifths of the key informants do not support the lifting of the state of emergency and the ease of the COVID-19 strict restrictions. A quarter of the key informants do support the for easing the restrictions considering the economic impact of the restrictions and low level of COVID risks in rural areas.

Very few key informants listed natural disasters such as drought and heavy rain during the rainy season, national election, another round of state of emergency due to potential ethnic conflict or political instabilities as additional disruptors for conducting face to face surveys. This clearly uncovers the importance of the timing of the quantitative and qualitative survey. EconInsight suggests finalizing the quantitative survey before the main rainy season (august). It is highly likely that the national election could take place immediately before the rain season (July). Thus, it is better not to further postpone the schedule for the quantitative survey. During the election, we will pause the survey, and resume the qualitative survey immediately after the election period. Following the preliminary descriptive analysis of the survey data, qualitative research is planned to be conducted.

Some key informants also emphasized that farmers will be very busy during the harvest season and will be less cooperative to provide face to face interviews or participate in focus group discussions. This again emphasizes the need for careful planning of the survey timing.

In sum, EconInsight will continuously assess risks of doing in person surveys in the selected study Woredas and will exert its bet effort to manage uncertainty. Even though the EconInsight team can never eliminate risk entirely, it always strives to determine how the proposed in person survey adds to existing risk and how to minimize and mitigate those risks.

### 2.3.6. Current Climate Within Study Communities for In-Person Data Collection

The EconInsight survey team also spoke with key informants within the study Woredas and communities to gauge the current climate within communities regarding in-person data collection or visits from groups of individuals who may not be part of the community. The key informants were asked to evaluate the current climate to conduct face to face survey and/or focus group discussions in their communities considering all things and using four likert scales where, 1=Very bad 2=Bad 3= Good 4= Very good. The analysis of the data suggests that all of the community and Woreda leaders believe that the current climate to conduct face to face survey and/or focus group discussions in their communities is (very) good. Only one key informant thinks that the current climate to conduct face to face survey and/or focus group discussions in their communities is bad, considering the challenges associated with harvest season in his community.

The community leaders and the Woreda land administration heads were further asked to evaluate the likelihood of households in their communities to collaborate with data collectors who may not be part of the community regarding in-person data collection again using four likert scale (1=very likely, 2.=likely, 3=unlikely, 4=very unlikely) under three different scenarios. The summary of their responses is depicted in Figure 6. All of the key informants think that it is very likely that household in their communities to collaborate with data collectors who may not be part of the community as long as the data collector is from the same region and speaks the local dialect. The result also indicates that being able to speak the language is more important than being from the same region. The key informants also suggest the importance of getting a formal written permission from the Woreda office and the provision of a small-time compensation for the study subjects, local guides and facilitators to get the utmost collaboration of the local communities. They added that the team should act ethically, respect the social norms and culture of the local communities and don’t discuss political or religious affairs. EconInsight will strictly employ these steps and recommendations during the field team recruitment and field planning.

**Figure 6: Likelihood of communities to collaborate with data collectors who may not be part of the community based on language skill and ethnic homogeneity**

### 2.3.7 Requirement To Enter Study Communities For Data Collection

The EconInsight teams also contacted regional, Woreda and community leaders to discuss and explain the envisaged research and thereby to check whether written permission is required to enter communities for data collection. Unanimously all the key informants responded affirmatively. The community leaders indicated that written letter from Woreda offices and EconInsight is enough. However, the Woreda officers requested us to bring written permission letters from their respective office. Similarly, the zone level officers will require us to present a written permission letter from the respective region office granting us the right to enter to their zone for data collection. We got the verbal agreement of the regional land administration office to get such letters during the data collection period. The key informants strongly advise us to provide free COVID-19 safety materials.

# EconInsight COVID-19 Safety Strategies and Mitigation Protocol for Data collection

The COVID-19 pandemic has halted most face-to-face survey data collection, with survey teams either suspending work or turning to phone-based surveys. Since the start of the pandemic, EconInsight also suspended activities and moved to remote work leveraging phone-based tools to conduct surveys. During the entire period of the state of Emergency (April 10 to September 12), the EconInsight management team strictly followed the World Health Organization, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute, and the Ethiopian Ministry of Health recommendations and COVID-19 implementation guides and provided daily updates to its research, survey and support staff about the prevalence and recovery rate, risk, transmission, symptoms and prevention methods of COVID-19.

The community assessment study was conducted remotely with the federal level land administrative /management officers at the ministry of agriculture and natural resource, Federal COVID-19 task forces at the Ministry of Health and Ethiopia Public Health Institute as well as with 26 Woreda leaders and 40 community leaders that are located in the rural highlands of four of the five study regions. Due to the conflict between the Tigray regional state and the Ethiopia federal government, we were unable to complete the assessment in the region and are planning the community assessment study for early next year. However, our key informants at the federal level confirmed that the war with Tigray will be over in few days and required infrastructure for the remote survey will be reinstalled soon. They also confirmed that similar to the rural highlands of the other four study regions, the COVID-19 situation in the rural highlands of Tigray will be low and the current directive issued for the prevention and control of COVID-19 will be applicable in Tigray too.

As discussed in detail in the previous section, the EconInsight community assessment and desk review study confirmed that the national or local government restrictions that are currently in will not prevent movement between and within study regions, or prohibit us from conducting face to face data collection, key informant interview and focus group discussions during the expected staff training and data collection period. Our study also reviewed national/local government categorization of risk zones/clusters, and we find that non-of our study sites (Woredas) are currently categorized as COVID-19 risk clusters. We contacted community leaders to discuss and explain research and a verbal agreement has been reached to get a written permission from the respective study regions, zones, Woredas and kebele that are authorized to issue such permission letters to enter communities for data collection purposes. The key informant interviews with the regional, Woreda and community leaders also helped us gauge the current climate within communities regarding in-person data collection or visits from groups of individuals who may not be part of the community. The study confirmed that the current climate is very favorable to conduct face to face surveys, key informant interviews and focus group discussions as long as the survey team comes up with a written permission letter from relevant federal, regional, zonal and Woreda offices, and fully complies with the national COVID-19 safety protocol and precautionary measures. The study also confirms that the current climate within communities regarding in-person data collection or visits from groups of individuals who may not be part of the community is very favorable as long as the data collectors and their field supervisors speak the local language and act in accordance with the national directive to control and prevent COVID-19 and collaborate with community and religious leaders.

As part of the first phase of our contract with Landesa, EconInsight has designed and developed a COVID-19 safety mitigation strategies and protocol measures to be followed during all preparation planning, traveling, training and data collection. Our mitigation strategies and protocols are in compliance with ICRW Implementation Guidance for Research Involving Interaction with Individuals and national directive No. 30/2020 issued for the prevention and control of COVID -19 Pandemic by the Ethiopian Public Health Institute in accordance with Article 72 (2) of the Food and Medicine Administration Proclamation No. 1112/2019.

In general, during traveling, training and the data collection process, EconInsight will make sure all enumerators use a mouth/nose mask during the interviews. Enumerators will wear a new pair of gloves and mouth/nose masks for every survey study subject visit. We agreed that interviews should be conducted outside the respondent’s house. Enumerators conducting interviews should at all times stay at a safe distance from the interviewee and other associated members (at least 2 m). When entering and leaving the study subject office or home, hands should be disinfected with an alcohol gel (containing more than 70 percent alcohol) for 20 seconds. Any enumerator presenting COVID-19-related symptoms (fever, dry cough, extreme fatigue, respiratory problems) should be excluded from the training, field travel and survey work unless he/she tested COVID-19 negative. Each of the survey team members should follow proper respiratory hygiene (refrain from touching mouth, nose and eyes) and practice physical or social distancing at all times. EconInsight will also keep on informing its staff and survey team on the latest developments about COVID-19.

EconInsight has agreed with Landesa to implement the following COVID-19 testing and quarantine protocols at the field preparation, training and main data collection phase.

**Testing Protocol**

**Required:**

* At the time this protocol was prepared, testing in Ethiopia is available through public labs, (difficult to get access for non-government workers) and private labs, which provide tests on demand. Testing done by EconInsight would thus need to be conducted by a private lab. However, EconInsight checked that it’s highly unlikely that the private and public labs will be available in the rural highlands of the five study regions. In addition, EconInsight budget and field planning does not include time for teams to return to the capital city, Addis Ababa during the data collection to be tested. Thus, EconInsight recommends that all survey team members to be tested immediately after the enumerator training and before they dispatched to the field for data collection.
* EconInsight checked that results can be given in less than 48 hours from authorized private hospitals and clinics, so this would not cause significant delays to field work after the training.
* EconInsight estimates each private test costs 2000 birr (approximately $60 USD). For 40 enumerators and 8 accompanying supervisors and 1 data programmer and 1 field coordinator, one round of testing would cost approximately $3,000 USD.
* Field staff with positive COVID-19 results will be immediately asked to self-quarantine in a safe hotel at study areas or transported home as safely as possible for self-quarantine with compensation.
* In the event of a positive test during data collection preparations, training, or field work in municipalities:
* EconInsight will report any positive tests to the Ministry of Health, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute or the nearest health institution to determine whether self –quarantine is adequate or additional treatment by health professionals are required.
* EconInsight will provide private transport to the staff to the nearest medical facility if additional treatment by health professionals is required.
* Any other staff or enumerators in contact with the infected enumerator /supervisors will also immediately be asked to self-quarantine with compensation.
* Contact should be made with respondents visited by the infected enumerator or field supervisors five days prior to the test result confirmed positive.

**Recommended:**

* Once the team is dispatched to the field testing will only be conducted if and only if field staffs are symptomatic or quarantined due to exposure.

**Quarantine Protocol**

**Required:**

* Any survey team members will be self-quarantined for 5 to 14 days under the following circumstances:
* After reporting exposure to COVID-19.
* After exhibiting any symptoms, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, nausea, diarrhea, headache, fatigue, or body aches.
* After testing positive for COVID-19.
* EconInsight will pay staff per diem and lodging costs while quarantined.
* EconInsight will report any events that lead to staff being quarantined to EPHI.

**Recommended:**

* Staff can rejoin the team after 14 calendar days if they are not exhibiting any symptoms and they have tested negative for COVID-19.

The following discusses the EconInsight COVID-19 safety mitigation strategies and protocols for field planning, traveling, training, sample replacement, data collection and pausing field research in details. This includes guidance on both required and recommended elements.

## 3.1 Recruitment of Survey Team

**Required:**

* EconInsight will formulate and adopt phone-based screening questions to identify enumerators and survey supervisors at high risk of infection or who currently could be infected.
* Discuss the risks of COVID-19 and the known risk factors with each person remotely before inviting them to the training or offering anyone a position, so staff can make informed decisions on whether to join the project.
* Ask each team member if they have been in contact with anyone confirmed or suspected to be positive of COVID-19. Individuals with such contact will not be selected until they have provided a negative COVID-19 test.
* Exclude potential enumerators or supervisors if he/she has COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, headache, cough, loss of taste and smell, throat swelling, and similar other symptoms, or was in a situation making him vulnerable to COVID-19 unless proved free from the pandemic.

**Recommended**

* EconInsight will encourage short listed survey job applicants to present a recent (not more than 5 days) COVID-19 negative test result. This certificate will have a 10 percent weighting score during the recruitment process.
* We recruit only enumerators who are younger than 40 years old.
* All team members who have a medical condition that *might* put them at risk of a severe illness from COVID-19 will be notified of the risks but will be allowed to decide for themselves whether to participate in the data collection.

## 3.2 Training Survey Team

During the training, mocking and debriefing of team members, we follow the following strategies.

**Required:**

* Any of the survey or staff members who experience severe COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to enter to the training room.
* Adequate supplies of disinfectant and masks must be ensured before the training.
* There will be a designated person to conduct health surveillance of trainers and training participants including gauging the body temperature of the trainer and training participants every morning. If their temperature is over 37.5°C, then the training participants will be self-quarantined and EconInsight will report the outcome to EPHI.
* Training agenda for all data collection and field staff will include information about COVID-19 transmission, including prevention practices during interviews such as avoiding hand-to-face contact, and coughing and sneezing towards others, and shaking hands.
* Compulsory hand washing with soap for all before entering and leaving the training venue, and available through the training duration.
* All trainers and trainees must wear face masks that cover the nose and mouth.
* Training groups limited to no more than 20 people and with sufficient space for physical distancing (2 meters).
* Training settings will be informed on time of the training and about the need to have in place clear and adequate sanitation measures (e.g., doorknobs, blind pulls, tablets etc. must be cleaned).
* Minimizing the use of shared training materials, e.g., by ensuring additional copies of paper.
* Training halls should allow for the distance of two adult strides (2metere) between trainees. Training halls should also have sufficient air ventilation and cleaning materials participants use. All the same applies for break rooms.
* The name, phone number and address of each training participant should be kept for 14 days as a way to track and trace.
* EconInsight will assign one of its staff to oversee necessary COVID-19 measures throughout the meeting.
* If any attendee shows sign of infection the Ethiopian Public Health Institute should be alerted.
* Display a poster or sign reminding participants of COVID-19 risks and expected norms related to reducing/mitigating the risk of transmission.
* Ensure bathroom facilities are stocked with hand washing supplies.
* Light refreshment can be provided to the training participants under the following condition
* It is prohibited to serve more than three participants in a table, and there shall be a two-meter distance between each table.
* Service providing individuals shall wear a face mask.
* Training Participants shall wear a face mask except when eating and drinking.
* Service providing facilities shall disinfect chairs, tables, game toys, and other related tools used by customers after every service session.

**Recommended:**

* Daily reminders to avoid congregating at entrance to training venue.
* Trainees and trainers need to wear new gloves every day
* Separation of entrance and exit for training hall and break rooms
* Conduct the training outdoors
* Ask training participants to limit the number of individuals in the bathroom at the same time
* During tea break or provision of light refreshment, service providing facilities shall take necessary measures to control the pandemic by preparing required tools on the entrance and exit doors and other areas, ensure that rooms have adequate air ventilation, and provide participants with necessary personal protective equipment.

## 3.3 Traveling and Field Work Planning

**Required:**

* Obtain the necessary clearances (written permission letters) before entering to the study communities for data collection.
* Conduct initial scoping studies to identify additional disruptions and risks for data collection and establish good relationship with community leaders by explaining and discussing the purpose of the study and the field protocol.
* Develop a field plan on how to move fieldwork teams back to their home base should fieldwork halt due to government restrictions.
* Provide all participants with hand sanitizer/alcohol gel and mouth masks.
* Hire and provide a safe and spacious road transport service for survey teams so that they will minimize or avoid using public or mass transport.
* Provide an orientation for the hired car driver and passengers (survey team) to open windows to allow sufficient air circulation in the vehicle, surfaces which individuals come into contact with should be disinfected daily. Staffs does not provide rides to individuals unaffiliated with the project and will take other necessary precautionary measures such as denying service to any survey team member who does not wear a mask.
* All the survey team members will be tested during the enumerator training immediately after the end of the training session and before the team is dispatched to the field for data collection.
* Each survey team visits no more than one study zone. This will limit exposure during travel and also limit the number of different communities each team has contact with, thus reducing the chance for spread if any staff are asymptomatic.
* Staff members who travel back from a suspected field area or who tested COVID-19 positive will be subject to a 14-day self-quarantine. EconInsight will pay staffs per diem, and lodging costs (when applicable) while quarantined.
* Symptomatic enumerator or field supervisors will be also immediately asked to self-quarantine in a safe hotel in the study area or transported home as safely as possible for self-quarantine with compensation.
* Any other staff or enumerators in contact with the symptomatic or COVID-19 positive enumerator /supervisors are also immediately asked to self-quarantine with compensation.
* Contact should be made with respondents visited by the symptomatic enumerator or field supervisors over the last 5 days
* EconInsight will report any events that lead to staff being self - quarantined to the Ministry of Health, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute or the nearest health institution.

**Recommended:**

* Enumerator /field supervisors may resume working with field teams 14 days after symptoms disappear.
* Contact hotels in advance to understand what precautions they are taking to prevent the risk of contracting COVID-19. EconInsight will recommend to its survey team that they stay at the hotel with the strictest precautions.

## 3.4 Data collection

### 3.4.1 Focus Group Discussions

**Required:**

* The total number focus group discussion participants should not be more than 8, not including 1 note takers and 1 facilitator
* Digital recorders will be wiped down with disinfectant at the start and end of each focus group discussions session.
* Face masks that cover the nose and mouth and disinfectants must be made available to focus group discussions participants. When possible, the data collectors will bring bright color masks.
* The venue for the focus group discussions must be large enough such that (up to) 8 participants, in addition to the facilitator and note takers, can sit in maintain 2 meters distance between everyone in the room.
* Researchers should not share any materials (pens, pencils, paper, and devices) with participants.
* When providing refreshments, ensure that disposable cups and plates are used, and refreshments are distributed by the research staff member.
* The temperature of the focus group discussions participants should be taken without body contact.

**Recommended:**

* The data collectors will sit at the head of the group and the digital recorder will be placed in the center of the group to best record sounds.
* If privacy and confidentiality can be maintained, focus group discussions will take place outside.
* Limit refreshment provision to the focus group participants unless the aforementioned conditions for providing refreshment are in place. Alternatively, we can provide air time reward or cash to compensate their time.

### 3.4.2 Key informant Interviews

**Required:**

* EconInsight will provide face masks and disinfectants to key informants.
* Digital records, android tablets, laptops, and other information collecting tools to be cleaned with disinfectant at the beginning and end of each of the key informant interviews (kebele/community authority interviews).
* The key informant (expert) interviews should be conducted in a space that is large enough to stay 2 meters apart and the qualitative survey specialist is able to ensure privacy and confidentiality for the research participant.
* Qualitative survey specialist should not share any materials (pens, pencils, paper, and devices) with participants.
* Face masks and disinfectants to all key informants must be made available during interviews.

**Recommended:**

* Whenever possible, interviews should be conducted outdoors, where the researcher is able to ensure privacy and confidentiality while maintaining a distance of 6 feet (2 meters).
* In kind time compensations or gifts or refreshment will not be provided to the key informant.
* Conduct each interview in an outdoor or open-air space, whenever possible.
* Disinfect personal items (such as glasses, cell phones and keys) with alcohol before and after each interview.

### 3.4.3 Household Surveys

**Required:**

* EconInsight will make sure all enumerators and survey participants use a mask during household interviews.
* EconInsight will strictly instruct the survey team to conducted the interviews outside the respondent house.
* Enumerators conducting interviews should at all-time stay at a safe distance from the interviewee and other associated members (at least 2 m), where the researcher is able to ensure privacy and confidentiality.
* EconInsight will instruct enumerators to disinfect and clean their hands with an alcohol gel (containing more than 70 percent alcohol) for 20 seconds and wear masks at all times when entering and leaving the household house or compound.
* Enumerators should not share any materials (pens, pencils, paper, devices) with the household members.
* Self-administered paper surveys are prohibited. The enumerator should ask questions and mark responses given by respondent.
* Face masks and disinfectants to all participants in the household surveys and the enumerators during the household surveys. When possible, bright color masks will be used.

**Recommended:**

* Enumerators should call out when approaching a household rather than knocking doors, or wear latex gloves or use hand sanitizer when knocking on doors.
* Enumerators will wear a new pair of gloves and mouth masks for every household visit.
* Some supervision of field staff may be performed remotely via phone depending on the COVID-19 situation in order to limit unnecessary exposure.

## Enumerator and Study Participant Replacement protocol

1. **COVID-19 Replacement Protocol for Enumerators and field Supervisors**

* All survey team members will be quarantined with no compensation and will be replaced in the training by reserve survey team members following the established protocol, if they test COVID -19 positive or show severe COVID-19 symptoms during staff training.
* If survey team members test COVID-19 positive during fieldwork, he/she will be quarantined with compensation and might be replaced with reserve team members depending up on the number of remaining interviews to be conducted by the respondent. EconInsight will train more staff than are necessary to ensure pools of qualified field staff are available, if any replacements are necessary.

1. **COVID-19 Replacement Protocol for Study Subjects**

The replacement protocol for the study participant(s) of household survey, key informant interview and focus groups discussions is quite different. It is not possible to replace individuals that participate in the quantitative household survey. Because all of the quantitative survey respondents should be those households that were previously surveyed (in the 2007/8 baseline and 2015 data collections). These respondents are all rural land users from the highlands regions who received second-level land certification (‘treatment’) or previously surveyed households that have not yet received certifications (‘control’). I t should be noted that Sidama Zone was part of SNNPR during the first survey. In 2019, the people of Sidama voted for statehood and became a autonomous region. Sample respondents for the household survey will be either revisited after 14 days if they recovered or test COVID negative or interviewed over the phone by splitting the phone survey into two thru three sets of independent interviews that take place at different points in time conditional on the willingness of the respondent or will even be dropped if both of these options cannot be practical from the sample under the following circumstances.

* If the household reports one of its members has been sick or showing signs of sickness or test COVID-19 negative within the past two weeks
* If the respondent refused to provide in person interview fearing exposure to COVID-19
* If the respondent refuses to maintain social distancing (at least 2m) for the duration of the survey
* If the household refuse to wear face mask
* If respondents imprisoned or transferred to elder care centers, or rehabilitation centers or unable to understand the questions due to disability or some other factors during this survey round.

On the other hand, Key informants and focus group discussions participants will be replaced under the following circumstances (as noted above) as EconInsight will organize only some focus group discussions with women heads of households, first wives, second wives, youth (18 – 29 yrs.) and older men. EconInsight will survey only eight key informants at the district and village levels to include elders, land management authorities, religious leaders and other informal authorities in the villages. The focus groups discussion participants and key informants will be therefore replaced with another participant or key informant under the following circumstances:

* If he/she cannot or is unwilling to wear a mask for the duration of the focus group discussion
* If the respondent refuses to maintain social distancing for the duration of the key informant interviews and focus group discussions.
* If the respondent refuses to have their temperature taken before the focus group discussions.

## Conditions for Pausing Field Work

Fieldwork will be paused in a given study communities, Woredas or regions if any of the following disruptions are occurred during data collection.

* If the country or the study region experienced a COVID-19 outbreak
* If the national or local government declared again a state of emergency or a strict COVID-19 restriction on movement and business that involve human interaction
* If security concerns related to ethnic conflict or political instability make data collection unsafe.
* If other disruptions or events such as flooding prevent access to study sites or safe travel, such as natural disasters, road collapses, demonstrations, or social mobilizations.
* If the survey period coincides with the election period. However, this will not lead us to suspend or pause field activities for more than three weeks.

## EconInsight Policy to Restart In-Person Data Collection

To restart face to face data collection in the presence of highly contagious diseases like COVID-19, EconInsight will monitor a COVID-19 metrics throughout the data collection period and assess the type and level of risks in the survey sites to determine how the proposed research adds to existing risk and how to minimize and mitigate those risks and manage uncertainty. As soon as the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability or any other disruptions abate or restrictions on movement and business restrictions are lifted, the EconInsight team in consultation with the Landesa teams will need to make decisions about resuming face-to-face data collection under the ICRW guidance for resuming field work. To make evidence-based decision EconInsight will conduct another round of community assessment of all relevant policies and statutes remotely on all relevant contemporary policies and health regulations related to COVID-19 safety requirements. EconInsight will resume in person data collection if and only if only if the issue has been addressed and a written formal re-approval is granted by Landesa/USAID.

# 4. Initial Scoping Study

To be done after the ICRW/USAID IRB approval for in person field visit and the current war conflict in Tigray fully settles down (and all the important infrastructures in Tigray regional states reinstalled including the internet, road, air transport and telecom infrastructure and access)

# Annex 1

**Short Phone Survey Questionnaire for the community assessment study**

1. Control section

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| B1. | Full name of the respondent |  |
| B2.1 | Phone number |  |
| B2.2 | Position of respondent |  |
| B2.3 | Age(in completed years) |  |
| B2.4 | Gender | 1. Female 2. Male |
| B2.4 | Highest level of completed education | 1. Primary Incomplete 2. Primary complete 3. High School complete 4. Vocational 5. University degree and above 6. No formal Education |
| B3. | Name of the community /village |  |
| B4. | Kebele |  |
| B5. | Woreda |  |
| B6. | Zone |  |
| B7. | region | 1. Tigray 2. SNNP 3. Amhara 4. Oromia 5. Sidama |

1. **Main Module**
2. What types of disruptions/restrictions on movement , any business or practice was occurred related to the outbreak of COVID-19 and its containment measures, Political Instability/conflict or State of emergency in Ethiopia, in your region/ zone/Woredas and/or community since the outbreak of COVID -19 in March13, 2020?

*Probe: The federal level officer at EPHI, MOH and MoANR will be asked about relevant regional and /or national policies, statutes and health regulations. Region, zone, Woreda and community level leaders will be asked about restriction in their respective region, zone, Woreda and community respectively.*

1. Are there any other causes of the disruptions/ restrictions? 1=Yes 2= No
   1. If yes, list out the major reasons for the occurrence of such restrictions in your region/zone/Woreda /community?
2. Did these restrictions/disruptions mean for research activities that involves individual face-to-face individual interview and Focus Group Discussion (6 to 8 person)?

1. Yes, Face to Face 2. Yes, FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS 3. No

1. Which of the restrictions are still in placing in your region/ Woreda/Community?
2. If some of the restrictions are removed, when and why these restrictions were lifted or removed by the national or local government?
3. Do you think it was reasonable to remove these restrictions on movement and /or business? If yes, Why? 1. Yes 2. No
4. What national, regional and/or local restrictions and public health regulations are currently in place in Ethiopia or your region/Zone/Woreda/Kebeles/community to conduct face to face interview or FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS? If yes, List out?
5. Which of the restrictions or regulation to conduct face to face interview and FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS in your region/ Woreda/Community will not persist in the future (March 2021 to October 2021)?
6. In your opinion, what types of additional disruptions or restrictions to conduct face to face interview and FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS may occur in the near future (example from March to October 2021) in Ethiopia and your region/Woreda/community?
7. How likely do you think the people in your communities will collaborate with data collectors who may not be part of the community? (1.very likely, 2.likely, 3.unlikely, 4.very unlikely, 5. I don’t know)
8. If they speak the local language and are from the region?
9. If they don’t speak the local language but from the same region?
10. If they speak the local language and but not from the same region?
11. Considering all things, how do you evaluate the current climate to conduct face to face survey and/or FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS in your Woreda/community? 1. Very bad 2. Bad 3. Good 4. Very good
12. If they select 1 or 2, why?
13. In your opinion, what steps will assist us in getting the collaboration of the local communities in participating in our study?
14. Do we seek written permission to enter in your region/zone/Woreda/ communities for data collection purposes now and in the near future (March to October 2021)? If yes, from which office?
15. In your opinion, what procedure and strategy should the survey team follow to protect themselves and respondents from COVID-19 and other disruptions during the data collection period in the near future?
16. How many individuals in your Woreda / community tested COVID-19 positive. How many active cases? How many of them recovered? Passed away? Still in sever case?
17. Do households in your Woreda/ community have access to COVID-laboratory testing center in your Woreda/zone/Region or nearby town?
18. Has your Woreda /community ever categorized as a COVID-19 risky Woreda/community? If yes, duration? From …… month/year ……..month/year
19. Which of the following measures is mostly practiced in your Woreda/ community currently? Select all that applies( Yes/No)
20. No person can make deliberate physical contact with each other;
21. No person can be found without a mask anywhere outside his residence or move from one place to another
22. No public or private organization can provide service without maintaining a distance of two adult strides(metered) and without wearing masks;
23. It is allowed to have a meeting of up to 50 individuals without an additional permit
24. Schools are open
25. Restaurants, Hotels and Bars are operate implementing precautionary measures
26. Public transport operate at their full capacity
27. Is the rate of household migration in your community higher or lower or the same after the outbreak of COVID -19? 1. Lower, 2.same 3. higher
28. What do you think are the major reasons for households in your communities to move/migrate to the other Woreda/zone/region? 1. COVID-19 2. Conflict/political instability 3. Other(specify)

# Information Sources and Links

1. Federal Ministry of Health: <http://www.moh.gov.et/ejcc/en>
2. Ethiopian Public Health Institute: <https://www.ephi.gov.et/>
3. Ethiopian Airlines COVID-19 Page: [https://www.ethiopianairlines.com/aa/travel-updates/updates-on-COVID-19(coronavirus)](https://www.ethiopianairlines.com/aa/travel-updates/updates-on-covid-19(coronavirus))
4. <http://www.moh.gov.et/ejcc/am/node/196>
5. <https://twitter.com/pmethiopia?lang=en>
6. [COVID-19 crisis page on travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/covid-19-information.html)
7. [CDC page on COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html)
8. [Ethiopia: Travel.state.gov Country Information and Travel Advisory](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Ethiopia.html)
9. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
10. ICRW implementation guide line for research that involves human interaction as COVID-19 restrictions lift/ease
11. FDRI Directive 30/2020 for controlling and preventing COVID-19 issued on October 5,2020
12. The state of emergency proclamation No/30/2020 issued on April 10
13. Weekly updates of EPHI on COVID-19 situation