



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND TOURISM

**NATIONAL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE
MANAGEMENT OF COVID- 19 IN THE TOURISM BUSINESS
OPERATIONS**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the key economic sectors in Tanzania. Over the past few years, the sector's impressive growth has enhanced macro-economic diversification from the traditional reliance on agriculture. Tanzania is endowed with a variety of tourist attractions categorized into nature and non-nature based. The existence of these attractions appeals to significant number of tourists both from within and outside Tanzania, thereby supporting the economy.

In December 2019 the world experienced an unexpected invasion of infectious disease caused by SARS-COV-2 virus (Corona Virus Disease-2019 or COVID-19), the disease was declared by WHO as a pandemic on 11th March 2020. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), through a joint statement issued on 27th February, 2020 asked countries in the world that, their response to the outbreak of COVID-19 be measured consistently and proportionately to the threat posed for public health (put people first).

In recognition of the importance of health, safety and security of tourists and the general public, Tanzania's tourism industry is presenting detailed protocols regarding control measures and procedures towards preventing the spread of COVID-19. The protocols referred to as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have to be adopted and customized by all tourism entities (companies, authorities and other related service providers dealing with tourists) to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Government institutions, tourism business operators and other stakeholders are under instructions to continuously monitor on advisories issued by the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDGEC). Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) form a general guideline and have been based on the WHO and other international guidelines. This is a living document and will be updated periodically as and when more information becomes available on the pandemic.

2.0 STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPS)

2.1 General Standard Operating Procedures

General SOPs refer to a set of step by step instructions to help all tourism operators in tourism business value chain carry out their day to day operations during this time of COVID-19 pandemic. General SOPs aim to achieve efficiency, quality output and uniformity of performance while complying with the directives of MoHCDGEC, WHO and reducing the spread of COVID-19

infection in the country. The following are the general SOPs for the tourism sector.

- (i) Every tourism entity must appoint and adequately train a COVID-19 Liaison Officer who will be the point of contact with the MoHCDGEC. The COVID-19 Liaison Officer should keep abreast of health protocols and preventive measures and be updated on all designated approved hospitals for COVID-19 testing and treatment, medical clinics and mobile clinics stationed across the country;
- (ii) Every tourism entity should ensure that updated COVID-19 precautionary measures are continuously observed and communicated accordingly with international booking agencies;
- (iii) Every entity must ensure that staff and tourists are aware and reminded to adhere to best protective and preventive practices against COVID-19;
- (iv) Every tourism entity should ensure that all contact surfaces are cleaned and sanitized with approved disinfectants on a regular basis;
- (v) Every tourism entity should ensure that all staff use recommended protective gears when attending to guests and servicing guest areas;
- (vi) Every tourism entity must provide hand washing and sanitizing facilities such as soap, sanitizers and running water to both guests and staff;
- (vii) Every tourism entity, place or vehicles must display emergence short code 199 (Free call);
- (viii) Every tourism entity should have in place thermal screening at entrance points;
- (ix) Every tourism entity, mostly guest accommodation facility, must have in place an insurance mechanism for assisting guests to reach a designated hospital as approved by the MoHCDGEC or where possible to enable evacuation arrangements;
- (x) Every tourism entity must create a disposal mechanism for masks, and other protective gears that comply with recommended national health and safety standards and environmental considerations; and
- (xi) Every tourism entity shall ensure provision of user friendly environment for person with disabilities.

2.2 Specific Standard Operating Procedures

The Specific SOPs are guiding instructions to specific tourism business operations aimed at achieving efficiency, quality output and performance while complying with the directives of MoHCDGEC and align with WHO recommendations to reduce the spread of COVID-19 infections in their

respective business premises and the country as a whole. The following are the specific SOPs for the tourism sector.

2.2.1 Standard Operating Procedures for Staff in Tourism Entities

- (i) All employees should be trained, exercise and adhere to COVID-19 preventive and control measures as advised by MoHCDGEC including;
 - a) Maintaining a distance of at least one (1) meter from one person to another whilst interacting with each other;
 - b) Hand washing with running water and soap or use hand sanitizer;
 - c) Wearing mask as appropriate.
- (ii) Contact COVID-19 liaison officer while on duty if having any respiratory symptoms associated with COVID-19. If at home, call emergency short code 199 (free call) for further health care assistance.

2.2.2 Standard Operating Procedures for Airports

- (i) All arriving flights must be Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) compliant so as to allow Airport Authorities to receive and interrogate the flight manifest for possible high-risk passengers and crews. Non-APIS compliant flights or airlines should be notified that their passengers and crews will be either subjected to MoHCDGEC (port health) pre-screening or may ultimately have their entry denied. However, passengers and crews showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19 will be directed to medical team upon arrival for consultation.
- (ii) Airlines should ensure that all passengers and crews are screened for Corona virus prior to boarding the flight as they may be subjected to testing by the MoHCDGEC officials on arrival if need arises;
- (iii) Ensure that all airports have required equipment approved by the MoHCDGEC to assess passenger's physical condition. Equipment such as non-contact thermometers shall be put in proper places in all terminals;
- (iv) Ensure that posters with information about COVID-19 preventive measures are placed in the visible part of the passenger's check-in area;
- (v) Ensure that enough disinfectant is placed at the Check-in counters and passengers' waiting areas for passengers to disinfect their hands and that check in areas are clean and regularly disinfected;
- (vi) High touch areas such as armrests, seats/chairs, rails, wheel chairs, trolley should be frequently disinfected;

- (vii) Ensure that all staff working in the areas such as security, check-in counter, boarding, immigration, restaurants, shops, health care, ground cleaning etc., use proper protective gears;
- (viii) Airports should as much as possible practice “physical distancing” during passenger check-in, transfer and gate handling. This includes:-
- (ix) Using portable boarding scanners for passengers where possible to avoid the need for personnel to handle boarding cards;
- (x) Marking signs should be indicated in congestion prone areas and
- (xi) Arrangement of chairs in the waiting lounges as per requirements of MoHCDGEC;

- (xii) Airport ventilation should be enhanced. Air-conditioning systems and natural ventilation in public areas such as terminals must be enhanced while observing local climate, terminal layout and structure of the airport so as to improve air circulation within the building;
- (xiii) Security inspection in key areas such as document verification counters, baggage packing areas, baggage plates, hand-held metal detectors and security screening facilities should be disinfected regularly, and hand sanitizers should be provided in screening isles; and
- (xiv) Service providers at airports to ensure compliance with Aeronautical Information Circulars (AICs) and Notice to Airmen (NOTAMs) as may be published and updated from time to time by Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority.

2.2.3 Standard Operating Procedures for Lake and Sea Ports

- (i) All arriving vessels must be Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) compliant so as to allow Port Authorities to receive and interrogate the maritime manifest for possible high-risk passengers and crews. Non-APIS compliant maritime vessels should be notified that their passengers and crews will be either subjected to MoHCDGEC (port health) pre-screening or may ultimately have their entry denied. However, passengers and crews showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19 will be directed to medical team upon arrival for consultation.
- (ii) Port authorities should ensure that all passengers and crews are screened for Corona virus prior to disembarking or boarding the vessel as they may be subjected to testing by the MoHCDGEC officials on arrival if need arises;
- (iii) Ensure that all ports have required noncontact thermal scanners in all terminals as approved by the MoHCDGEC;

- (iv) Ensure that posters with information about the COVID-19 preventive measures are placed in visible parts of the passenger's lounges, ticketing offices and check-in areas;
- (v) Ensure that enough disinfectant is placed at the Check-in counters and passengers' waiting areas for passengers to disinfect their hands and that check in areas are clean and regularly disinfected;
- (vi) Ensure that all staff working in the areas such as security, check-in counter, boarding, immigration, restaurants, shops, health care, ground cleaning etc., use proper protective gears;
- (vii) High touch areas such as armrests, seats/chairs, rails, wheel chairs, trolley should be frequently disinfected;
- (viii) Ports and their public areas should as much as possible practice "physical distancing" during passenger check-in, transfer and gate handling. This includes:-
 - a) Using portable boarding scanners for passengers where possible to avoid the need for personnel to handle boarding cards;
 - b) Marking signs should be indicated in congestion prone areas and
 - c) Arrangement of chairs in the waiting lounges as per requirements of MoHCDGEC;
- (ix) Air ventilation should be enhanced in the lounge area and in the vessels. Air-conditioning systems and natural ventilation in public areas must be enhanced while observing local climate, terminal layout and structure of the areas so as to improve air circulation within the building and vessel; and
- (x) Security inspection in key areas such as document verification counters, baggage packing areas, baggage plates, hand-held metal detectors and security screening facilities should be disinfected, and hand sanitizers should be provided in screening isles.
- (xi) In case a crew on board ship test positive for the virus while the vessel is in port, the port state authorities in collaboration with MoHCDEC will decide on appropriate actions in consultation with the ship-owner.

2.2.4 Standard Operating Procedures for Ground Crossing Tourists

- (i) Tourists will be checked their temperature at Point of Entry (PoE) before they are allowed to enter the country and other tourist destinations in the country;
- (ii) Tourists should adhere to COVID-19 preventive and control measures as advised by MoHCDGEC including;
 - a) Maintaining a distance of at least one (1) meter from one person to another whilst interacting with each other,

- b) Hand washing with running water and soap or use hand sanitizer,
 - c) Wearing mask as appropriate.
- (iii) All travelers are supposed to provide trustworthy information for their destination including phone numbers and hotel for ease follow up.

2.2.5 Standard Operating Procedures for Accommodation Facilities

- (i) Screening for guests/staff for temperature at hotel facilities should be done at entry;
- (ii) All accommodation facilities should frequently clean and disinfect surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, light switches and doorknobs;
- (iii) Dining and breakfast facilities should limit the number of guests to adhere to the safety physical distance required;
- (iv) All accommodation facilities should avoid buffet style meal services instead opt for plate service or English service;
- (v) While serving guests social distancing as recommended by the MoHCDGEC should be observed;
- (vi) Items which guests handle regularly must be sanitized regularly; and
- (vii) In all places possible, clean with a set of disposable cleaning equipment.

2.2.6 Standard Operating Procedures for Tour Operators

- (i) All effort must be made by all tourism operators who are required to interface with guests, to protect themselves by using sanitizers, gloves and face masks or any other item(s) required for personal safety.
- (ii) All tourism operators should maintain a safe physical distance with guests whom they interact with.
- (iii) All vehicles should be sanitized with recommended solutions between each transfer. Surfaces and objects such as car door handles, seats, binoculars or guide books used by guests during and after the tour are sanitized with a recommended disinfectant;
- (iv) Immediately contact designated authorities of any suspicious cases.

2.2.7 Standard Operating Procedures for Protected Areas (e.g. National Parks, Game Reserves, Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Forest Reserves and Museum)

- (i) Screening for guests/staff for temperature in the protected areas should be done at entry.

- (ii) COVID-19 Rapid Response Team and ambulance at different hot spots in the protected areas should be established;
- (iii) Selected Health Centers in the protected areas should be enhanced to provide emergency services for COVID-19 cases;
- (iv) All high touch surfaces should be decontaminated with recommended disinfectant.
- (v) Bathrooms, toilet bowls and basins must be cleaned regularly with approved disinfectant solutions and regularly sanitized. Where applicable paper towels/disposable towels and sanitary bins for safe disposal shall be made available for guests and staff;
- (vi) All staff should use recommended protective gears when attending guests and servicing guest areas;
- (vii) Hand washing and sanitizing facilities such as soap, sanitizers, and running water should be made available and accessible to both guests and staff;
- (viii) All employees should be trained on COVID-19 preventive and control measures as directed by MoHCDGEC including;
 - a) Maintain a distance of at least one (1) meter from one person to another whilst interacting with each other,
 - b) Hand washing with running water and soap or use hand sanitizer,
 - c) Wear mask as appropriate.
- (ix) Where applicable in public campsites, all tourists and camp crew should pitch their tents at a reasonable distance of not less than three meters apart;
- (x) Ensure that all cultural practices are performed while observing preventive measures such as avoiding shaking hands, hugging and touching of objects;
- (xi) Ensure preventive measures are taken during exchange of artifacts and visiting designated cultural tourism enterprises.
- (xii) Work closely with accommodation service providers and other operators of tourism facilities to ensure that safety procedures and protocols are observed as guided by MoHCDGEC.
- (xiii) Each camping site should not exceed the number of visitors and crews recommended.
- (xiv) Dining facilities provided in the camps should limit the number of guests to adhere to the safety distance recommended.
- (xv) Ensure that visitor registration system for signing in and out observes social distancing;
- (xvi) Ensure that Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials about COVID-19 preventive measures are placed in the visible part of the entry point;

- (xvii) Ensure mountain climbing equipment are disinfected before climbing and all crew handling mountain climbing equipment perform hand washing with running water and soap or hand sanitizers; and
- (xviii) Weighing scales used for mountain climbing activities, should be disinfected with recommended disinfectants.

2.2.8 Standard Operating Procedures for Mountain Climbing Operators

- (i) All operators should ensure mountain climbing equipment are sanitized or disinfected before climbing;
- (ii) All operators should ensure that, crew handling mountain climbing equipment perform hand washing with running water and soap or hand sanitizers before climbing;
- (iii) All mountain crew should be trained and exercise COVID-19 preventive and control measures as directed by MoHCDGEC;
- (iv) All food packing facilities and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected with an approved disinfectants to avoid COVID-19 contamination;
- (v) All fresh food should be cleaned and packed under hygienic conditions.
- (vi) All mountain crew should maintain at least 1 meter physical distance with guests whom they interact with;
- (vii) All mountain crew should be screened for temperature and where it exceeds normal body temperature (37.5 °C) should get medical advice prior to entering the park;
- (viii) Weighing scales should be frequently disinfected with approved disinfectant to prevent contaminations;
- (ix) All mountain crew should ensure bathrooms; toilet bowls and basins are cleaned regularly with approved disinfectant solutions; and
- (x) Where applicable paper towels and sanitary bins for safe disposal shall be made available for guests and staff.

2.2.9 Standard Operating Procedures for Organized Events

- (i) Attendees must sanitize upon entering the event venue and before any activity undertaken during the event;
- (ii) Participants and staff should adhere to safe physical distance of at least one meter from each other during interactions;
- (iii) Registration areas should avoid congestions and observe recommended number in each group per unit area; and
- (iv) For indoor events, it is recommended that designated personnel open and close doors or automatic doors installed in order to prevent contamination of COVID-19.

2.2.10 Standard Operating Procedures for Public Areas and Transport

- (i) The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania assures guests, that the general public has been made aware of all precautions to be taken against COVID-19 and advises on the general public transport vehicles to adhere to the safety and hygiene standards as directed by MoHCDGEC; and
- (ii) All guests are encouraged and advised to ensure that, they utilize public areas and public transport that adhere to the general standard operating procedures as outlined in this document.

3.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- (i) All tourism entities are required to create customized SOPs out of these general SOPs with contact details of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism and MoHCDGEC & PORALG. These contacts details must be displayed in public areas and visible to all;
- (ii) All tourism entities and activities related to COVID – 19 will be monitored by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, MoHCDGEC & PORALG;
- (iii) Guests and residents are encouraged to contact the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism at any occasion should they feel that a person, facility, or entity is not adhering to published SOPs;
- (iv) All tourism entities will work closely with MoHCDGEC to keep track of new development and guidance regarding to COVID-19;
- (v) A user friendly feedback mechanism has been established to receive feedback and suggestions from guests and other tour operators; and
- (vi) The Government may undertake inspections to enforce compliance with National guidelines on COVID – 19.