

EQUITY GROUP FOUNDATION PARTNERS WITH MASTERCARD FOUNDATION ON COVID-19 RESPONSE IN KENYA

- *Equity Group Foundation, with support from Equity Bank, Mastercard Foundation, and the family of Dr. James Mwangi is committing Ksh 1.1 billion to support COVID-19 Response in Kenya.*
- *The commitment includes a Ksh 300 million contribution from Equity Bank, a Ksh 500 million from the Mastercard Foundation, and a Ksh 300 million contribution from the family of Dr. James Mwangi, Equity Group Holdings Managing Director and CEO.*
- *The funds will go towards the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for frontline medical personnel dealing with COVID-19 patients in public hospitals in Kenya.*

Equity Centre, Nairobi (29th April 2020) – Equity Group Foundation (EGF), with support from the Mastercard Foundation, today announced a commitment of Ksh 1.1 billion to provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to frontline medical staff dealing with COVID-19 patients in public hospitals in Kenya.

The commitment has been provided by Equity Bank (Ksh 300million) and the Mastercard Foundation (Ksh 500million) – a long-time trusted partner of EGF who are providing support as part of their *Mastercard Foundation COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Program*. The funding also includes a donation of Ksh 300million from the family of Dr. James Mwangi, the Founding Chairman of EGF and Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Equity Group Holdings Plc.

EGF will work in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund in this endeavour. This will ensure a coordinated effort on the national priorities of combating the pandemic, reap the benefits of economies of scale, maximise resource allocation and avoid duplication of efforts in the provision of PPEs.

Speaking while announcing the initiative, Dr. Mwangi said, “It started when my attention was drawn to a group of students and doctors who were raising funds for PPE’s for young post graduate students especially in Kenyatta National and Referral Hospital (KNH).” He added, “When I shared the need with my family, a robust discussion revealed the urgency to holistically address the issue as it was not prudent to provide the PPE’s to students without also focusing on the plight of the doctors, nurses, clinical officers, and medical staff.” Dr. Mwangi is a member of Kenya’s COVID-19 Emergency Fund Board.

“We invited the CEO of the Kenya Medical Association and a group of doctors from KNH and University of Nairobi where we established the need for PPE’s for medical staff handling COVID-19 patients in the country. A team of seven was formed to help structure this initiative,” Dr. Mwangi said. He expressed gratitude to the following medical professionals who subsequently formed a steering committee to organize the immense task of coordinating and actualizing this initiative:

1. Prof. Isaac Macharia	ENT, Specialist	Chairman
2. Dr. Louis Litswa	Specialist Anesthetist and Critical Care Specialist	Member
3. Dr. Elizabeth Gitau	Kenya Medical Association	Member
4. Dr. Chibanzi Mwachonda	Secretary General, Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Union (KMPDU)	Member
5. Dr. David Kariuki	Senior Deputy Director General, Ministry of Health	Member
6. Mr. Alfred Obengo	Secretary General-National Nurses Association of Kenya	Member
7. Dr. Joanne Korir	Quality Assurance–Equity Afia	Secretary



The committee will coordinate the implementation of the initiative to ensure availability of PPEs across the country and will help to scale up a mental wellness support system for medical staff initiated by the Kenya Medical Association (KMA).

Equity Bank (Kenya) Ltd. Chairman Professor Isaac Macharia said, "The Board of Equity recognizes the vital role of health care workers on the frontline and is proud to partner with universities and public hospitals in ensuring the safety of our health care workers."

Dr. Mwangi has thanked the Board of Equity Group Holdings, Equity Bank (Kenya) Limited, and the Board of Equity Group Foundation for their contribution and support of the investment.

President and CEO of the Mastercard Foundation Reeta Roy said, "Health care workers are at the frontlines of caring for all of us, safeguarding community health. We must keep them safe. We are grateful that this partnership meets the immediate needs precipitated by COVID-19, which the Foundation is prioritizing through our Mastercard Foundation COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Program."

Expressing appreciation to the Mastercard Foundation for their many years of true partnership and trust, Dr. Mwangi said that their generous contribution has made it possible to scale up the investment to the national level to provide PPE's to medical staff attending and caring for COVID-19 patients.

"As we execute this initiative, my trust and gratitude go to our medical staff who risk everything to serve on oath of their profession," said Dr. Mwangi. He added, "To my fellow Kenyans, we can only overcome this global pandemic as a nation, only in partnership with our Government, and by committing to our social contract where the Government and the Ministry of Health design the best medical policies and protocols, and we as citizens adhere to them faithfully. As a people, let us set the bar of compliance high and hold each other to account."

Dr. Mwangi appealed to Kenyans to observe the following recommendations from the Ministry of Health on social distancing, washing hands and sanitizing regularly, limitation of movement, self-quarantining when in doubt, and wearing face masks when in public. "By observing these recommendations, we shall collectively as a community and society become the first line of defense to avoid paying the price of an exponential community spread of the pandemic. We owe ourselves a duty of ensuring that we don't add to the growing list of infected or contacts. Let us leave our medical staff and our health infrastructure to be our second line of defense for those who unfortunately become infected," Dr. Mwangi said.

Dr Mwangi concluded by saying, "We recognize that none of us can be safe as long as one of us is unsafe. We will endeavor to continue with our engagement and mobilization of our partners to extend our partnership towards procurement of diagnostic kits. We believe that there is a chance for every Kenyan to get the support they require to overcome the COVID-19 infection."

He expressed the commitment of EGF to continue championing the social work of Equity Group Holdings alongside its partners. During this difficult time, our Equity Afia doctors, who are alumni of the Equity Leaders Program, are running a growing network of Equity Afia medical centres in the country and are working tirelessly to make their contributions towards the fight against COVID-19. In addition, all Equity Afia locations will remain open throughout Kenya to attend to other ailments and thereby relieve public hospitals to prepare and respond to any COVID-19 cases that may arise in their regions.

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Equity Group Foundation's (EGF) mission is to champion the transformation of lives and livelihoods for 100m people in Africa by 2024 through the design and implementation of innovative programs that leverage Equity Group's infrastructure and partnerships to create shared value. Established in 2008 as the Group's social engine, the Foundation delivers economic opportunities, capacity, tools and technologies that enable individuals and businesses to increase productivity, resilience and share in socio-economic growth. EGF responds to the continuum of issues that challenge the socio-economic advancement of the people of Africa, especially low-income individuals and families.

EGF's Creating Shared Value [CSV] strategy provides social development initiatives in Education and Leadership Development, Food and Agriculture, Health, Financial Inclusion and Entrepreneurship Development, Energy and Environment and Social Protections for the most vulnerable citizens. Our programs are underpinned by technology, innovation and synergy as a central means to launch, nurture, and scale up Africa's next generation of successful leaders and entrepreneurs delivered to all communities in which Equity has operations.

Equity Group Holdings: <https://equitygroup Holdings.com>

Equity Group Foundation: <https://equitygroupfoundation.com>

About Mastercard Foundation

Mastercard Foundation seeks a world where everyone has the opportunity to learn and prosper. Through its Young Africa Works strategy, Canadian EleV program, and the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, the Foundation works with partners to ensure that millions of young people, especially young women, access quality education, financial services, and dignified work. Mastercard Foundation was established in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company. The Foundation is independent with its own Board of Directors and CEO.

For more information and to sign up for the Foundation's newsletter, please visit <http://www.mastercardfdn.org/>. Follow the Foundation on Twitter at [@MastercardFdn](https://twitter.com/MastercardFdn).

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