



FOR RELEASE

Kenya Association of Manufacturers in Partnership with Equity Group Foundation and the Kenya COVID-19 Fund Support Manufacturers in Kenya to produce World Class PPEs

Manufacturing of PPEs locally has taken off. The PPEs meet national and international quality standards

Nairobi, Kenya (June 24, 2020) – The Kenya COVID-19 Fund Board, in partnership with Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) and Equity Group Foundation (EGF) have taken a strategic long-term view on how to mitigate issues of supply chain disruption through capacity building of local manufacturers to enhance the quality of and to increase the production of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) in the country.

Over 95 local manufacturers have been trained on quality development of PPEs by McKinsey & Company, with funding support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), as part of a partnership with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development (MoITED). The manufacturers were educated on how to meet national standards (MOH and Kenya Bureau of Standards) and international quality standards (British Standards, European Standards) in production of PPEs and in the creation of efficient supply chains.

The COVID-19 Fund Board has been making post training field tours to assess the capacity and quality of PPEs currently in production by local manufacturers. So far, the Board has visited seven manufacturers. Dr James Mwangi, Chair of the Health Committee of the COVID-19 Fund Board, led a team of health professionals representing various medical associations including Dr. Elizabeth Gitau - Kenya Medical Association (KMA), Albert Taitu -Kenya Clinical Officers' Association (KCOA), Alfred Obengo - National Nurses Association of Kenya (NNAK), Dr Louis Litswa - Kenya Society of Anesthesiologists (KSA), Dr. David Kariuki - Ministry of Health (MoH), Dr Miskellah - the Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union (KMPDU), and Dr. Joanne Korir - Equity Afia Health Network. They were led by Prof Isaac Macharia, a renowned ENT specialist who is the Chair of the COVID-19 Board Health Technical Committee. The delegation was accompanied by the CEO of KAM, Mrs. Phylis Wakiaga who is also a member of the COVID-19 Fund Board.

Dr. Mwangi said during the tour, “We have witnessed the improvement that local manufacturers have made in the quality of locally manufactured PPEs. The manufacturers are also taking specializations such as production of raw materials while others are focusing on finished PPEs such as surgical gowns, gloves, surgical masks, head covers, gumboots medical scrubs and shoe covers. The creation of local medical supply chains is already starting to crystalize, and this will be a big development for our health sector. In addition, the supply chains have already demonstrated economic benefits of job retention and creation. A majority of PPE manufacturers have recalled their staff and others are increasing their workforce.”

He added, “By creating a strong local manufacturing capacity in the country, we will be guaranteeing a steady supply of PPEs and hedge against global supply chain disruptions while also supporting the national economy.” Dr. Mwangi is the Managing Director and CEO of Equity Group Holdings and Executive Chairman of Equity Group Foundation (EGF).



Phylis Wakiaga, who chairs the Procurement Committee of the COVID-19 Fund Board said, “We are very delighted with the quick turnaround by the COVID -19 Fund Board resolution to mobilize local manufacturers and support them with training and technical assistance in the production of PPEs. Today at least seven local manufacturers have acquired the capacity to produce PPEs to meet local and regional needs.” She added, “We see a great opportunity for Kenya to develop into a regional manufacturing hub for medical grade PPEs that meet international standards at affordable costs.”

Prof Isaac Macharia applauded local manufacturers for their quick turnaround time for producing PPEs that meet local and international standards for health care workers. “The medical fraternity appreciates the opportunity to engage with local manufacturers in meeting the required specifications and standards of PPEs. This has never happened before. We believe the engagement will lead to continuous improvement of the quality of PPEs,” he said.

Dr. Mwangi expressed appreciation to the Ministry of Health for frontloading the importation of PPEs worth Kshs 400Million which are currently being used by the medical health workers. This gave the COVID-19 Fund Board the time to engage with local manufacturers and support them to start local production. The first PPEs from local manufacturers is now ready for distribution to the public hospitals in Kenya. Dr Mwangi added, “The production of PPEs locally and the creation of local supply chains is in line with the President’s Big Four agenda of building local manufacturing capacity. The local manufacturing of PPEs will trigger the awakening of our textile industry as well as our cotton farming sector. This initiative holds great promise for enterprise development in our country.”

The local production for PPEs was initiated when EGF in partnership with Equity Bank, the family of Dr James Mwangi and Mastercard Foundation mobilized Kshs 1.1 billion towards the provision of PPEs for frontline healthcare workers dealing with COVID-19 patients. Working in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the COVID-19 Fund Board the initiative sought to achieve the national objective of protecting medical personnel while promoting the creation of a local medical supply ecosystem that would mitigate the disruption of the global supply chain. Equity has committed to work with KAM Members by extending financing and entrepreneurship training in order to meet the demand for medical supplies as well as build their businesses.

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