**NEW INSTITUTE FOR A NEW ERA: LEADING OUR PROFESSION GLOBALLY**

**Q1: How has the COVID-19 crisis hit the transport and logistics industry in your country and what are the key challenges?**

**Introduction**

As coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to extend its reach in Ghana, the impact is being absorbed in every corner of the economy, and the logistics and transport sector is no exception. Even though not fully assessed, the economic impact of COVID 19 in the logistics and transport sector is most likely severely hurt. Among key challenges are:

1. **Factories coming to a halt**

The majority of industries and factories in Ghana heavily rely on the importation of raw materials. Evidently, the blockade of geographical borders imposed by many countries to limit the impact of COVID 19 have deny many of these local factories their raw materials, grinding them to a halt.

1. **Operators facing hard-hitting impacts**

Many Logistics and Transport operators such as our domestic airlines, haulage fleet operators and passenger transport operators are experiencing huge shortfalls in their revenues and faces severe threats of collapse to their businesses.

1. **Jobs Loss**

Like a chain reaction, it has triggered looming staff redundancy and lay-offs in the coming months for many of these companies.

1. **Increase in Freight Delivery and Passengers Fares**

While the lockdown of the two regions (Greater Accra and Ashanti) measures are necessary, it has triggered price hikes of delivery of essential logistics and transport services, especially freight, courier and passenger transportation across the country.

**Q2. What are the lockdown effects on business relationships and business models?**

Ghana has not experienced total lockdown yet and we hope we won’t.

However, the two lockdown regions (Greater Accra and Ashanti) constitutes the two volume-regions in the country. These regions command major logistics and transport activities (haulage, warehousing, distribution, inventory, money, information etc.) in the country.

Evidently, 80% of volumes of both international and domestic air travels are by these two regions. Further, greater percentage of freight and passenger distribution occurs also between these regions. Indeed, their lockdown-effect has resultantly affected the other 14 regions even though they are not experiencing lockdown.

Further, business models and approaches of many organisations are fast-changing:

1. Traditional bricks and mortar offices are given way to virtual platforms and online e-transactional models.
2. Flexible working hours as well as Work-At-Home models are replacing old fashioned long hours culture by many firms.
3. Many local companies with strong grounds on physical movement of cash has birthed online payments systems.
4. Firms with Clients and Staff Personal Safety measures as their top-most priority seem to now have competitive advantage over others.
5. Electronic commerce and door-to-door services are gradually becoming the new normal for many organisations especially those in the service industry.

**Q3. To what extent have businesses and organisations been able to change their operational response already to manage through the Covid-19 period?**

As part of curbing COVID 19 pandemics, businesses have been working in close coordination with government and State Agencies’ strict directives and guidelines. The anchor statement has been ‘We are all in together’. Given the magnitude of COVID 19 crisis facing our country, many organisations have implemented changes in its operations to maintain essential functions and services, although the changes have been slow in implementing by some firms.

Additionally, in an effort to safeguard the lives of employees and members of the community, efforts instituted by the government including compliance to social distancing and public gathering, avoiding handshake, face masking, etc. has been re-echoed and upheld by all companies to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

**Q4. What help and support is being given in your country by government, CILT or other trade bodies? How can B2B and CILT play a role in overcoming the Covid-19 challenges?**

COVID 19 has undoubtedly impacted the country. The Government of Ghana has instituted lot of measures to help prevent, detect, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic through the Ghana Emergency Preparedness and Response Project (EPRP). Among key intervention programmes by government are:

1. National Trust Fund Bill, 2020 under a certificate of urgency has been passed by Parliament.
2. Additionally, the government has set up COVID 19 Fund to receive contributions and donations from the public to assist in the welfare of the needy and the vulnerable.
3. Further, Coronavirus Alleviation Programme has been set up by government to cushion the impact of COVID 19 on SME’s and various industries in Ghana as well as households.
4. Ghana Private Sector COVID-19 Fund has also been launched by some private businesses as part of efforts to financially assist government fight the coronavirus outbreak in the country.

Key roles and supports by other trade bodies are yet to be seen. With our Humanitarian Logistics expertise, CILT Ghana stand tall to play the key role in COVID 19 Humanitarian Logistics Support Programme at all National, Regional and District instituted Committees to assist businesses and individuals.

**Conclusion**

As an essential sector as logistics, supply chain and transport operators must continue to function throughout the COVID-19 crisis to provide essential services. However, it won’t be and shouldn’t be business as usual. Leaders and Operators must brace themselves for new regulatory constraints as well fast-changing consumer demands.

Submitted by **CILT GHANA**