

Outbreak Brief #100: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 14 December 2021

Global case count: 269,368,868 cases and 5,304,329 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: Since the last brief (7 December 2021), **4,272,039** new confirmed¹ coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases, including 50,100 new deaths, have been reported globally. To date, a global total of 269,368,868 COVID-19 cases and 5,304,329 related deaths (case fatality ratio (CFR): 2%) have been reported by 226 countries and territories to the World Health Organization (WHO). The distribution of cumulative cases (proportion of global cases) from the WHO reporting regions (excluding Africa) are as follows: **Eastern Mediterranean Region** 14,447,987 (5%), **European Region** 91,903,122 (34%), **Region of the Americas** 98,690,724 (37%), **South-East Asia Region** 44,748,558 (17%) and **Western Pacific Region** 10,613,265 (4%). In the last seven days, the five countries reporting the highest number of new cases globally are the United States (781,320), the United Kingdom (355,126), Germany (345,645), France (337,598) and the Russian Federation (212,705). For more detailed information on cases and deaths reported outside of Africa, refer to the [WHO COVID-19 dashboard](#).

As of 6 p.m. East African Time (EAT) 13 December 2021, a total of **8,944,124** COVID-19 cases and 224,920 deaths (**CFR: 2.5%**) have been reported in 55 African Union (AU) Member States (MS). This represents 3.3% of all cases and 4.2% of all deaths reported globally. Twenty-seven (49%) AU MS are reporting CFRs higher than the global CFR. Since the beginning of the pandemic, 46 (84%) AU MS have experienced a third wave, sixteen (29%) countries (Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, DR Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Somalia, South Africa, Tunisia and Zimbabwe) have experienced a fourth wave and one country (Mauritius) is experiencing a fifth wave of COVID-19 cases. Figure 1 shows the trend of new COVID-19 cases reported per day by the AU region from 15 February 2020 to 13 December 2021. The overall daily number of new cases being reported across the continent is on an upward trend. More information on COVID-19 situation in Africa is available on the Africa CDC [daily dashboard](#) and [hotspot dashboard](#).

¹ WHO COVID-19 surveillance guidance and case definition: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-2019-nCoV-surveillanceguidance-2020.7>

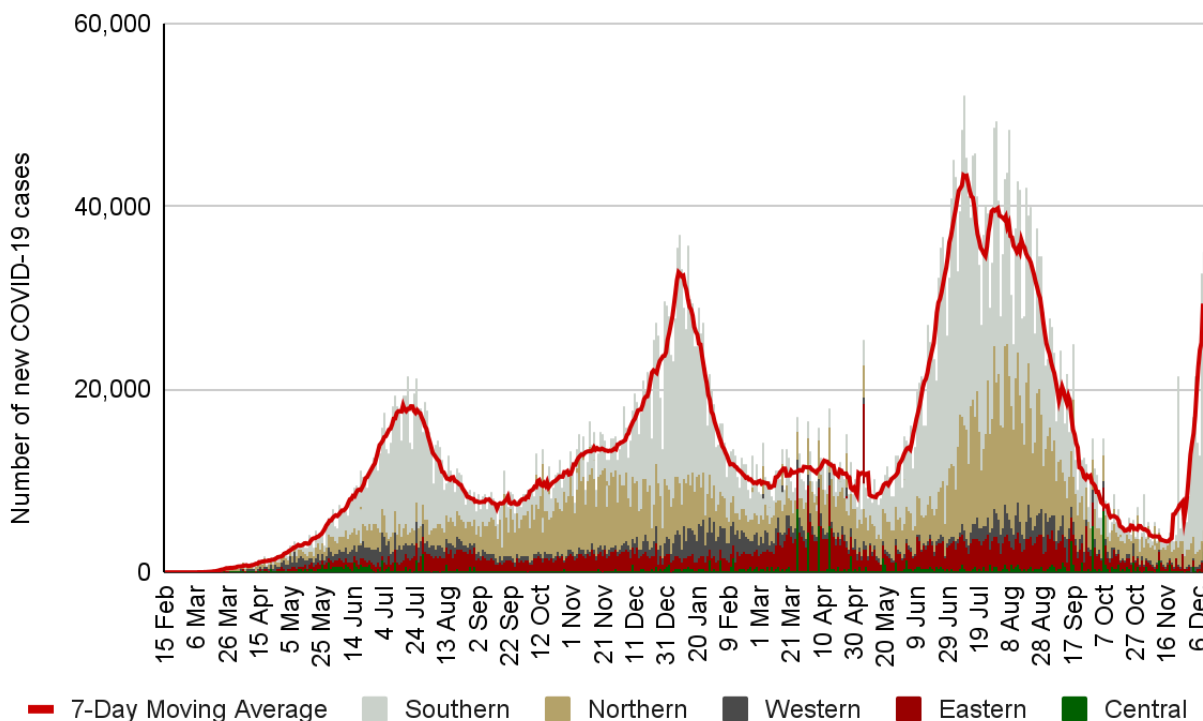


Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported by day in Africa by African Union region, 15 February 2020 - 13 December 2021².

As of 9 December 2021, 51 AU MS have reported the presence of the Alpha (45 MS), Beta (41), Delta (43), and/or Gamma (2) Variants of Concern (VOC). As of 13 December 2021, 14 MS (Botswana, DR Congo, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) have reported the presence of the Omicron VOC.

The Pathogen Genomics Dashboard provides a breakdown of variant types reported by Member State. More information on SARS-COV-2 sequencing in Africa is available on the [Africa Pathogen Genomics Initiative Dashboard](#).

For Epi week 49 (6 - 12 December 2021), 205,695 new COVID-19 cases were reported, which is a 108% increase in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 48. The Southern Region accounted for 86% of the new COVID-19 cases reported for this week, followed by the Northern (6%), Eastern (4%), Central (2%) and Western (2%) regions. This week, five countries accounted for 86% of the new COVID-19 cases reported: South Africa (66%), Zimbabwe (14%), Egypt (3%), Eswatini (2%) and Namibia (1%). The countries reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 new cases per 1 million population per day) this week are Eswatini (612), Seychelles (486), South Africa (327), Zimbabwe (269) and Namibia (174). Table 1 summarises the cumulative COVID-

² The dates are at a two-week interval; the last date is 13 December 2021.

19 cases and deaths reported by MS and Region in Africa, and the new COVID-19 cases and deaths reported during Epi week 48.

Table 1: Confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths³ reported in Africa for epidemiological week 49 (6 - 12 December 2021).

Country by AU Region	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 48	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 48
Central Region	282,345 (4,547)	148%	4,110 (44)	175%
Burundi	20,666 (193)	122%	14 (0)	NA*
Cameroon	107,549 (755)	NA*	1,823 (32)	NA*
Central African Republic	11,960 (169)	NA*	101 (0)	NA*
Chad	5,701 (0)	-100%	182 (1)	-83%
Congo	19,066 (50)	-55%	359 (1)	-75%
Democratic Republic of Congo	62,427 (3,253)	280%	1,117 (7)	133%
Equatorial Guinea	13,612 (13)	18%	175 (0)	-100%
Gabon	37,591 (114)	-16%	282 (2)	100%
Sao Tome and Principe	3,773 (0)	-100%	57 (1)	NA*
Eastern Region	1,079,797 (7,011)	158%	24,111 (158)	-43%
Comoros	4,569 (21)	-58%	151 (2)	NA*
Djibouti	13,514 (6)	50%	189 (2)	100%
Eritrea	7,646 (168)	5%	63 (2)	100%
Ethiopia	373,115 (900)	-6%	6,829 (29)	-52%
Kenya	256,335 (898)	85%	5,348 (13)	550%
Madagascar	44,800 (728)	NA*	972 (5)	NA*
Mauritius	22,651 (561)	-27%	422 (0)	-100%
Rwanda	98,679 (140)	169%	1,346 (1)	NA*

³ Data is continuously verified for accuracy and reliability, thus may change based on retrospective updates from Member States.

Country by AU Region	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 48	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 48
Seychelles	23,537 (340)	NA*	127 (2)	NA*
Somalia	23,537 (521)	1009%	1,331 (4)	33%
South Sudan	12,873 (115)	3733%	133 (0)	NA*
Sudan	44,247 (2,288)	NA*	3,201 (87)	NA*
Tanzania	26,261 (0)	NA*	730 (0)	NA*
Uganda	128,033 (325)	66%	3,269 (11)	83%
Northern Region	2,673,491 (13,135)	-4%	73,912 (486)	-11%
Algeria	212,848 (1,379)	5%	6,145 (42)	-7%
Egypt	369,198 (6,036)	-6%	21,060 (333)	-12%
Libya	378,816 (3,348)	3%	5,561 (62)	15%
Mauritania	39,806 (248)	-35%	849 (9)	No change
Morocco	951,482 (981)	28%	14,796 (9)	-31%
Tunisia	719,586 (1,143)	-28%	25,432 (31)	-30%
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	1,755 (0)	NA*	69 (0)	NA*
Southern Region	4,231,732 (176,669)	125%	112,445 (213)	16%
Angola	65,404 (145)	26%	1,737 (2)	No change
Botswana	196,090 (538)	11%	2,421 (1)	-50%
Eswatini	52,643 (5,139)	432%	1,250 (2)	NA*
Lesotho	23,128 (1,133)	425%	664 (0)	-100%
Malawi	62,230 (249)	196%	2,307 (0)	-100%
Mozambique	153,674 (1,750)	338%	1,944 (3)	200%
Namibia	132,849 (3,053)	401%	3,577 (3)	200%
South Africa	3,167,497	93%	90,137 (171)	1%

Country by AU Region	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 48	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 48
	(135,803)			
Zambia	211,077 (765)	353%	3,670 (3)	NA*
Zimbabwe	167,140 (28,094)	456%	4,738 (28)	460%
Western Region	676,462 (4,333)	93%	10,341 (37)	-33%
Benin	24,897 (34)	162%	161 (0)	NA*
Burkina Faso	16,334 (0)	-100%	290 (0)	-100%
Cape Verde	38,503 (53)	-40%	351 (0)	-100%
Côte d'Ivoire	61,905 (81)	-30%	706 (0)	-100%
Gambia	10,034 (42)	1300%	342 (0)	NA*
Ghana	131,547 (301)	-8%	1,243 (15)	-21%
Guinea	30,813 (15)	-46%	684 (3)	NA*
Guinea-Bissau	6,448 (4)	No change	149 (0)	-100%
Liberia	5,835 (11)	267%	287 (0)	NA*
Mali	18,591 (676)	17%	629 (11)	-15%
Niger	7,161 (81)	-34%	268 (7)	No change
Nigeria	217,481 (2,859)	439%	2,981 (1)	-75%
Senegal	74,092 (61)	39%	1,886 (0)	-100%
Sierra Leone	6,421 (19)	850%	121 (0)	NA*
Togo	26,400 (96)	78%	243 (0)	NA*
Total	8,943,827 (205,695)	108%	224,919 (938)	-13%

*No new cases/deaths reported in the previous week.

NEW Africa CDC Response Activities

General:

1. Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC hosted the Africa CDC weekly press briefing on Thursday 9 December 2021, at 12 p.m. EAT. He provided an update on the COVID-19 situation across the continent, including response efforts and updates on the progress of

vaccinations across the continent. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Twitter page](#).

2. Africa CDC is holding its inaugural International Conference on Public Health in Africa virtually from 14 - 16 December 2021. The conference will provide a platform for African researchers, policymakers and stakeholders to share scientific findings and public health perspectives and collaborate on research, innovation and public health across the continent. Register [here](#).
3. The African Union Commission and Africa CDC will hold a High-Level Ministerial Meeting to discuss the AU Adapted Continental COVID-19 Response Strategy - Enhance Prevention, Monitoring and Treatment on 20 December 2021 at 3 p.m. EAT. The discussion will focus on the COVID-19 vaccination situation in Africa, scaling up testing for SARS-CoV-2 as part of community surveillance and the state of monitoring COVID-19 variants and policy implications. Register [here](#).
4. As of 13 December 2021, 54 (98%) out of 55 AU MS have started COVID-19 vaccination campaigns targeting priority populations. Cumulatively, 261.1 million doses have been administered, and of the doses administered, 156 million have received the first dose and 105 million have received the second dose. Overall, 7.8% of the continental population is fully vaccinated. Eritrea is the only AU MS yet to start COVID-19 vaccine roll out. More information on COVID-19 vaccination can be found on the [Africa CDC COVID-19 vaccine dashboard](#).

Laboratory:

1. Over 84.5 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted in Africa since February 2020. The cumulative positivity rate⁴ and test per case ratio⁵ are 15.9% and 6.3, respectively. For Epi week 49, a total of 1,295,567 new tests were conducted, an increase of 30% compared to Epi week 48 when 998,135 tests were conducted.
2. Africa CDC held its Pathogen Genomic Institute (PGI) webinar series on Pathogen Genomic Surveillance in Africa titled “Omicron Variant in South Africa and Botswana” on Friday 10 December 2021 at 2 p.m. EAT.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

1. Africa CDC held the fifth session of the tenth IPC webinar series titled “The Use of Data for Surveillance and IPC Improvement during Outbreaks” on 8 December 2021 for 618 participants in English and 9 December 2021 for 153 participants in French. Recordings are available here:

⁴ [Public health criteria to adjust public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19](#)

⁵ WHO set 10-30 tests per every confirmed case as a general benchmark of adequate testing.

- a. English session: https://zoom.us/rec/share/7UsaqRgMTiN7s7BanqGfS-yx7i9PlKQTokgB_ifS7t4MknmvXvEzyYiSG2iRhXPa.dzWZ2sRrIHfN9IJ
 - b. French session: https://zoom.us/rec/share/ORBKeFyjDcgTZvu-dwgd4AK4OkBBQHDBLWA1HFC916uiO1LvAyqHJLr3qJqub3_o.sAINeNLRdfbXtyhs
2. The sixth session of the tenth IPC webinar series titled “Impact of Pandemic on Health and Safety, Physical and Mental Health of HCWs” will be held on Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 1 p.m. EAT for the English session and on Thursday 16 December 2021 at 2 p.m. for the French session.
 - a. English webinar link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jlSdAr8EQEeXMpq06fpNoA
 - b. French webinar link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NUV6-yEcSlulOEzckwnQQ

Sciences, Standards and Regulations:

1. Subscribe [here](#) to receive the weekly Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC) update and all other products, or visit the [PERC](#) and [Africa CDC websites](#).

Recommendations for the Member States

1. AU Member States should continue to enhance their COVID-19⁶ surveillance efforts to include:
 - a. Syndromic surveillance for influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI).⁷
 - b. Rapid mortality surveillance includes collection, analysis and the use of all-cause mortality data collected through the facility and/or community-based surveillance.⁸
 - c. Genomic surveillance⁹ to monitor the presence of variants, the spread and the continuous evolution of the virus.
2. AU Member States should continue to perform contact tracing of confirmed cases based on transmission type and country capacity as well as enhance diagnostic screening efforts using the rapid antigen tests¹⁰.
3. All AU Member States should notify and routinely share data with WHO and Africa CDC regarding confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths, recoveries, tests conducted and

⁶ [WHO COVID-19 Case definition](#)

⁷ Africa CDC Protocol for enhanced surveillance for COVID-19 in Africa: [Protocol for Enhanced Severe Acute Respiratory Illness and Influenza-Like Illness Surveillance for COVID-19 in Africa – Africa CDC](#)

⁸ Revealing the toll of COVID-19: A technical package for AU Member States – Africa CDC

⁹ Genomic sequencing of SARS-CoV-2: a guide to implementation for maximum impact on public health

¹⁰ [Interim Guidance on the Use of Rapid Antigen tests for COVID-19 Response – Africa CDC](#)

infected healthcare workers for updated information for action. Notify Africa CDC by emailing: AfricaCDCEBS@africa-union.org.

4. AU Member States should continue to guide the general public about seeking immediate medical care for those who develop severe symptoms (e.g. difficulty breathing).
5. AU Member States should put in place or strengthen existing public health and social measures if COVID-19 incidence starts to rise.

Resources for more information

- Africa CDC COVID-19 updates: <https://africacdc.org/covid-19/>
- Adapted Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://africacdc.org/download/adapted-africa-joint-continental-strategy-for-covid-19-pandemic/>
- Africa CDC Resources, policy guidelines, and infographics: <https://africacdc.org/covid-19/covid-19-resources/>
- Africa CDC Hotspot and PHSM Tiers dashboards: <https://africadccovid.org/>
- Africa CDC vaccination dashboard: <https://africacdc.org/covid-19-vaccination/>
- Africa CDC pathogen genomics dashboard: <https://africacdc.org/institutes/africa-pathogen-genomics-initiative/>
- Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC) <https://preventepidemics.org/covid19/perc/>
- WHO Technical Guidance. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>