

Outbreak Brief #113: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 15 March 2022

Global count: 456,648,579 cases and 6,042,600 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: As of 14 March 2022, a total of 456,648,579 COVID-19 cases and 6,042,600 related deaths (case fatality ratio (CFR): 1.3%) have been reported globally by 227 countries and territories to the World Health Organization (WHO). The distribution of cumulative cases (proportion of global cases) from the WHO regions (excluding Africa) are as follows: **Eastern Mediterranean Region** 18,159,123 (4%), **European Region** 188,233,608 (41%), **Region of the Americas** 148,990,519 (33%), **South-East Asia Region** 56,505,772 (12%) and **Western Pacific Region** 33,129,269 (7%). In the last seven days, the five countries reporting the highest number of new cases are Republic of Korea (2,199,252), Vietnam (1,677,948), Germany (1,364,312), Netherland (460,732) and France (434,726). 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) 14 March 2022, a total of **11,283,362** COVID-19 cases and **250,393** deaths (CFR: **2.2%**) have been reported by the 55 African Union (AU) Member States (MS). This represents 3% of all cases and 4.1% of all deaths reported globally. Thirty-four (62%) AU MS are reporting CFRs higher than the global CFR. Since the detection of COVID-19 on the African continent in February 2020, 53 (96%) AU MS have experienced three COVID-19 waves, 47 (72%) countries have experienced four waves and nine countries have experienced five waves. One country (Mauritius) is currently experiencing a sixth wave. **Figure 1** shows the trend of new COVID-19 cases reported per day by the AU region from 15 February 2020 to 14 March 2022. Despite a test positivity rate of 11.2%, the daily reported number of new cases across the continent is on a downward trend. More information on the COVID-19 situation in Africa is available on the Africa CDC [daily dashboard](#) and [hotspot dashboard](#).

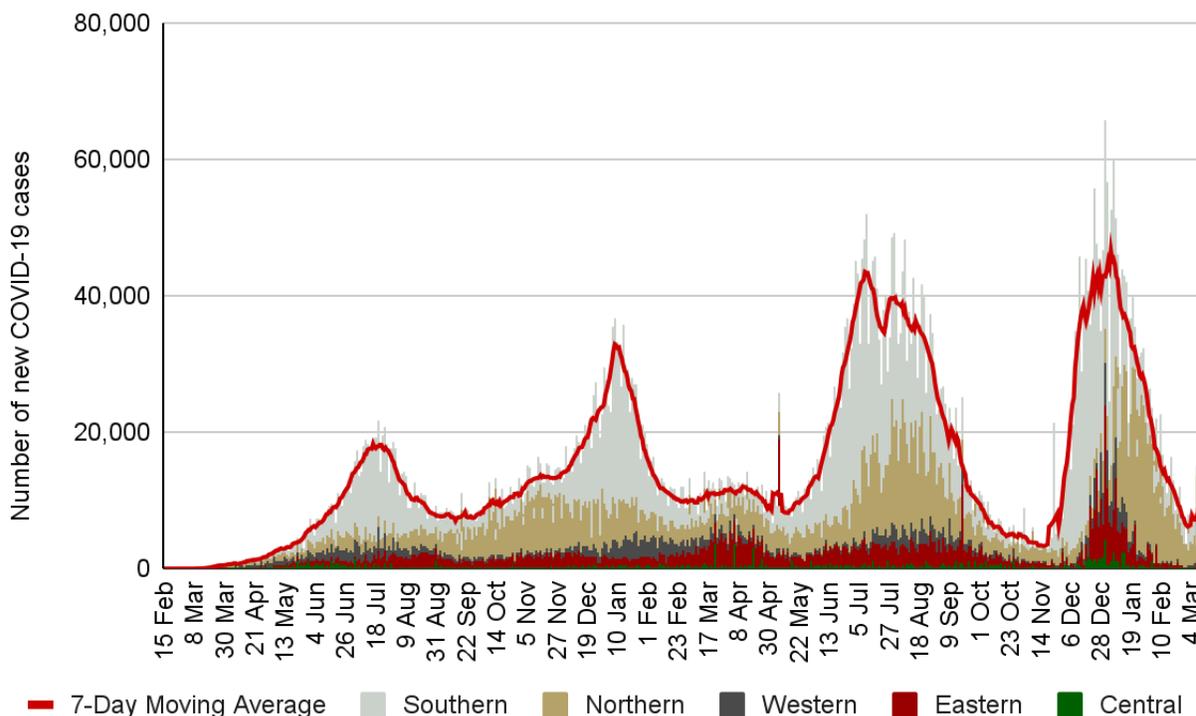


Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported by day in Africa by African Union region, 15 February 2020 - 14 March 2022¹.

As of 10 March 2022, 53 AU MS have reported the presence of the Alpha (48 MS), Beta (45), Delta (50), Gamma (6), and/or Omicron (44) Variants of Concern (VOC).

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

For Epi week 10 (7 - 13 March 2022), 49,925 new COVID-19 cases were reported, which is an 11% increase in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 9. The Northern Region accounted for 61% of the new COVID-19 cases reported this week, followed by the Southern (31%), Eastern (6%), Western (1%) and Central (1%) regions. The highest number of new daily COVID-19 cases per 1 million population was reported from Seychelles (289), Tunisia (288), Mauritius (144) and Libya (38). This week, 523 new deaths were reported, which is a 27% decrease in the number of new deaths reported compared to the previous week. Approximately 52% of these deaths were reported from the Northern Region, followed by the Southern (41%), Eastern (5%) and Western (2%) regions. No COVID-19 deaths were reported from the Central Region during Epi week 10.

¹ The dates are at a two-week interval; the last date is 14 March 2022.

Table 1 summarizes the cumulative COVID-19 cases and deaths reported by MS and AU geographic region in Africa, and the new COVID-19 cases and deaths reported during Epi week 10.

Table 1: Confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths² reported in Africa for epidemiological week 10 (7 - 13 March 2022).

Country by AU Region	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 9	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 9
Central Region	359,084 (252)	-41%	4,515 (0)	-100%
Burundi	38,279 (70)	-7%	15 (0)	NA*
Cameroon	119,322 (0)	-100%	1,926 (0)	-100%
Central African Republic	14,320 (0)	NA*	113 (0)	NA*
Chad	7,260 (3)	-67%	190 (0)	NA*
Congo	24,049 (29)	-45%	378 (0)	-100%
Democratic Republic of Congo	86,460 (146)	-17%	1,335 (0)	NA*
Equatorial Guinea	15,895 (1)	-90%	183 (0)	-100%
Gabon	47,564 (2)	-89%	303 (0)	NA*
Sao Tome and Principe	5,935 (1)	No change	72 (0)	NA*
Eastern Region	1,391,432 (3,062)	-12%	27,284 (27)	-50%
Comoros	8,069 (21)	40%	160 (0)	NA*
Djibouti	15,565 (15)	400%	189 (0)	NA*
Eritrea	9,721 (6)	-60%	103 (0)	NA*
Ethiopia	469,170 (204)	-30%	7,485 (9)	-44%
Kenya	323,183 (89)	-46%	5,645 (4)	100%
Madagascar	63,870 (79)	-40%	1,377 (4)	-43%
Mauritius	34,356 (1,311)	-40%	904 (0)	-100%
Rwanda	125,555 (736)	1127%	1,459 (0)	-100%
Seychelles	39,605 (202)	-9%	163 (0)	-100%
Somalia	26,400 (0)	-100%	1,359 (6)	100%

² Data is continuously verified for accuracy and reliability, thus may change based on retrospective updates from Member States.

South Sudan	17,064 (49)	17%	137 (0)	NA*
Sudan	61,631 (143)	28%	3,909 (0)	-100%
Tanzania	33,726 (106)	NA*	800 (2)	NA*
Uganda	163,517 (101)	-28%	3,594 (2)	-50%
Northern Region	3,513,497 (30,673)	40%	82,663 (273)	-37%
Algeria	265,430 (167)	-59%	6,864 (9)	-63%
Egypt	495,373 (4,404)	-50%	24,277 (80)	-49%
Libya	500,304 (1,851)	-54%	6,350 (42)	-11%
Mauritania	58,658 (9)	-47%	981 (1)	No change
Morocco	1,162,096 (450)	-33%	16,039 (22)	-24%
Tunisia	1,029,596 (23,792)	196%	28,062 (119)	-30%
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	2,040 (0)	-100%	90 (0)	-100%
Southern Region	5,185,424 (15,386)	-11%	124,606 (215)	1%
Angola	98,927 (121)	86%	1,900 (0)	NA*
Botswana	263,950 (0)	NA*	2,673 (0)	-100%
Eswatini	69,435 (137)	-21%	1,392 (1)	No change
Lesotho	32,775 (59)	293%	697 (0)	NA*
Malawi	85,499 (70)	-39%	2,623 (4)	No change
Mozambique	225,179 (39)	-62%	2,198 (2)	-50%
Namibia	157,438 (88)	-37%	4,014 (0)	-100%
South Africa	3,694,504 (10,185)	-17%	99,725 (182)	39%
Zambia	315,202 (1,381)	24%	3,960 (1)	-86%
Zimbabwe	242,515 (3,306)	2%	5,424 (25)	525%
Western Region	833,925 (552)	-68%	11,325 (8)	No change
Benin	26,575 (0)	-100%	163 (0)	NA*
Burkina Faso	20,804 (0)	-100%	378 (0)	NA*
Cape Verde	55,906 (8)	-33%	401 (0)	NA*
Côte d'Ivoire	81,605 (49)	-37%	796 (1)	-50%
Gambia	11,963 (7)	-59%	365 (0)	NA*
Ghana	160,693 (26)	-96%	1,445 (1)	-50%
Guinea	36,450 (21)	40%	778 (0)	NA*

Guinea-Bissau	8,050 (17)	-47%	168 (1)	NA*
Liberia	7,392 (8)	-99%	294 (0)	NA*
Mali	30,420 (22)	10%	726 (1)	-67%
Niger	8,781 (15)	No change	308 (1)	NA*
Nigeria	254,953 (296)	124%	3,142 (0)	NA*
Senegal	85,806 (49)	-40%	1,964 (3)	200%
Sierra Leone	7,667 (1)	No change	125 (0)	NA*
Togo	36,860 (33)	14%	272 (0)	NA*
Total	11,283,362 (49,925)	11%	250,393 (523)	-27%

*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 10 March 2022 at 12 p.m. EAT. He provided an update on the COVID-19 situation across the continent, including response efforts and progress on increasing COVID-19 vaccination coverage. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Twitter page](#).
2. Africa CDC and the African Union Commission (AUC) Women, Gender and Youth Directorate through its youth division will hold a partners' forum for the "AU COVID-19 Vaccination Bingwa Initiative" on 17 March 2022 at 3pm EAT. Register [here](#).
3. As of 14 March 2022, 54 (98%) of the 55 AU MS have started COVID-19 vaccination campaigns targeting priority populations. Cumulatively, 438.7 million doses have been administered. Of the doses administered, 248.4 million people have been partially vaccinated, 175.4 million have been fully vaccinated, and 14.8 million have received a booster dose. Overall, 13.1% 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 101.1 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted in Africa since February 2020. The cumulative positivity rate³ and test per case ratio⁴ are 11.2% and 9, respectively. For Epi week 10, a total of 673,669 new tests were conducted, a decrease of 35% compared to Epi week 9 when 1,034,631 tests were conducted.
2. As part of its PGI webinar series, Africa CDC will hold a webinar on Pathogen Genomics in Africa titled "Genomic Surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 in Kenya: March 2020 to February 2022." on 16 March 2022 at 2 p.m. EAT. Register [here](#).

³ [Public health criteria to adjust public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19](#)

⁴ WHO set 10-30 tests per every confirmed case as a general benchmark of adequate testing.

3. On 12 March 2022, Africa CDC in collaboration with WHO-AFRO and the African Centre of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Diseases (ACEGID) handed over sequencing equipment and reagents to the National Public Health Laboratory, Seychelles, to support genomic surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 and other pathogens.
4. Africa CDC's laboratory technical working group (TWG) conducted a workshop on the "Development of the Africa CDC certificate training curriculum for sample referral" in Kampala, Uganda, from 7 - 18 March 2022.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

1. The fifth session of the 11th IPC webinar series titled "IPC programme in Schools and Non-Healthcare Settings: Strengthening IPC in Communities" was held on Wednesday 9 March 2022 at 1 p.m. EAT for 498 participants in English and on Thursday 10 March 2022 at 2 p.m. for 196 participants in French.
 - a. English session recording:
https://zoom.us/rec/share/cmFnrEEO64S8_4SL5_31Eh4g9vUhdsGU88YpKIUUoC9aqXiu9T85OUeqkbN5i4Zf.cxK_6xtTeJPCKeO2
 - b. French session recording:
<https://zoom.us/rec/share/6Q1JUqcsOKHbkXk98P0p-cw-ABnEGhx6Y5dGeSV8Rpgb6jOBQvPC1IM2ExkFBNJ9.efCP8gixTiTeIQZO>
2. The sixth session of the 11th IPC webinar series titled "Importance of Ventilation for IPC in the context of COVID-19" will be held on Wednesday 16 March 2022 at 1 p.m. EAT for the English session and on Thursday 17 March 2022 at 2 p.m. for the French session.
 - a. English webinar link:
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0goayBUjT06Cl14Jui-u7w
 - b. French webinar link:
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_05T4ZY9rQviu9o4T5b1heQ

Surveillance

1. Africa CDC conducted a 3-day mortality surveillance regional TWG workshop from 9 to 11 March 2022 in Nairobi, Kenya. The objective was to develop a roadmap for guiding the regional TWGs.
2. Africa CDC conducted a 2-day workshop on "Resource Mobilization for Mortality Surveillance" from 7 - 8 March 2022, in Nairobi, Kenya. The objectives of the workshop were to review & amend planned mortality surveillance proposals for the participating MS and increase awareness on the importance of resource mobilization for mortality surveillance.
3. Africa CDC will host a webinar titled "Integration of Community Healthcare Workers (CHW) into the broader health systems" on 23 March 2022 at 4 p.m. EAT. The session will focus on the role of CHW in pandemic preparedness and response. Register [here](#).

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](#).
2. Access the latest PERC report on “Responding to COVID-19 in Africa: Finding the Balance (Part IV) and Calls to Action” [here](#).

Recommendations for the Member States

1. AU Member States should continue to enhance their COVID-19⁵ surveillance efforts to include:
 - a. Syndromic surveillance for influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI).⁶
 - b. Rapid mortality surveillance that focuses on collection, analysis and use of all-cause mortality data captured from facility and/or community-based surveillance activities.⁷
 - c. Genomic surveillance⁸ to monitor the presence of variants and the spread and continuous evolution of the virus.
 - d. Community-based surveillance⁹ to detect symptomatic cases early for treatment and to minimize viral transmission.
2. AU Member States should continue to perform contact tracing of confirmed cases based on country capacity. When possible, enhance diagnostic screening efforts using the rapid antigen tests¹⁰.
3. All AU Member States should notify and routinely share data with Africa CDC and WHO on confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths, recoveries, tests conducted and infected healthcare workers to support data 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 continue to organize and implement COVID-19 vaccination campaigns, with a focus on increasing demand and addressing misinformation and false rumors.
6. AU Member States should implement and/or enhance 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/>

⁵ [WHO COVID-19 Case definition](#)

⁶ 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](#)

⁷ Revealing the toll of COVID-19: A technical package for AU Member States – Africa CDC

⁸ Genomic sequencing of SARS-CoV-2: a guide to implementation for maximum impact on public health

⁹ [Enhanced COVID-19 Surveillance at the Community Level in Africa](#)

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

- 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>