

Outbreak Brief #123: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 24 May 2022

Global count: 522,086,589 cases and 6,274,256 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: As of 22 May 2022, a total of 522,086,589 COVID-19 cases and 6,274,256 deaths (case fatality ratio [CFR]: 1.2%) have been reported globally by 227 countries and territories to the World Health Organization (WHO). The distribution of cumulative cases (percentage of global cases) from the WHO regions (excluding Africa) are as follows: **Eastern Mediterranean Region** 18,421,350 (4%), **European Region** 219,542,890 (42%), **Region of the Americas** 155,496,306 (30%), **South-East Asia Region** 58,064,610 (11%) and **Western Pacific Region** 58,505,594 (11%). In the last seven days, the five countries reporting the highest number of new cases are China (554,065), the United States of America (471,167), Australia (268,608), Germany (259,490), and Japan (245,627). As of 22 May 2022, over 4.6 billion people (58% of the global population) have been fully vaccinated. 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) 23 May 2022, a total of **11,607,055** COVID-19 cases and **252,915** deaths (CFR: **2.2%**) have been reported by the 55 African Union (AU) Member States (MS). This represents 2% of all cases and 4% of all deaths reported globally. Thirty-six (65%) 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 distinct COVID-19 waves, 47 (72%) MS have experienced four waves, 14 MS have experienced five waves, and one MS (Mauritius) has experienced a sixth wave.

Fifty-three MS have reported COVID-19 cases infected with the Alpha (49 MS), Beta (45), Delta (50), Gamma (3), Omicron (48) variants of concern (VOC). Additionally, 16 MS have detected the Omicron BA.2 sub-variant and two MS (Botswana and South Africa) have detected the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variants. More information on SARS-COV-2 sequencing and the breakdown of variants reported by AU MS is available on the [Africa Pathogen Genomics Initiative Dashboard](#).

Fifty-four (98%) MS are currently providing COVID-19 vaccination to the general population. Cumulatively, 563.5 million doses have been administered on the continent. Of these doses administered, 307 million people have been partially vaccinated, 236.3 million have been fully vaccinated, and 23.8 million have received a booster dose. Overall, 17.3% of the continental population is fully vaccinated. Eritrea is the only AU MS yet to start COVID-19 vaccination roll out. More information on COVID-19 vaccination can be found on the [Africa CDC COVID-19 vaccine dashboard](#).

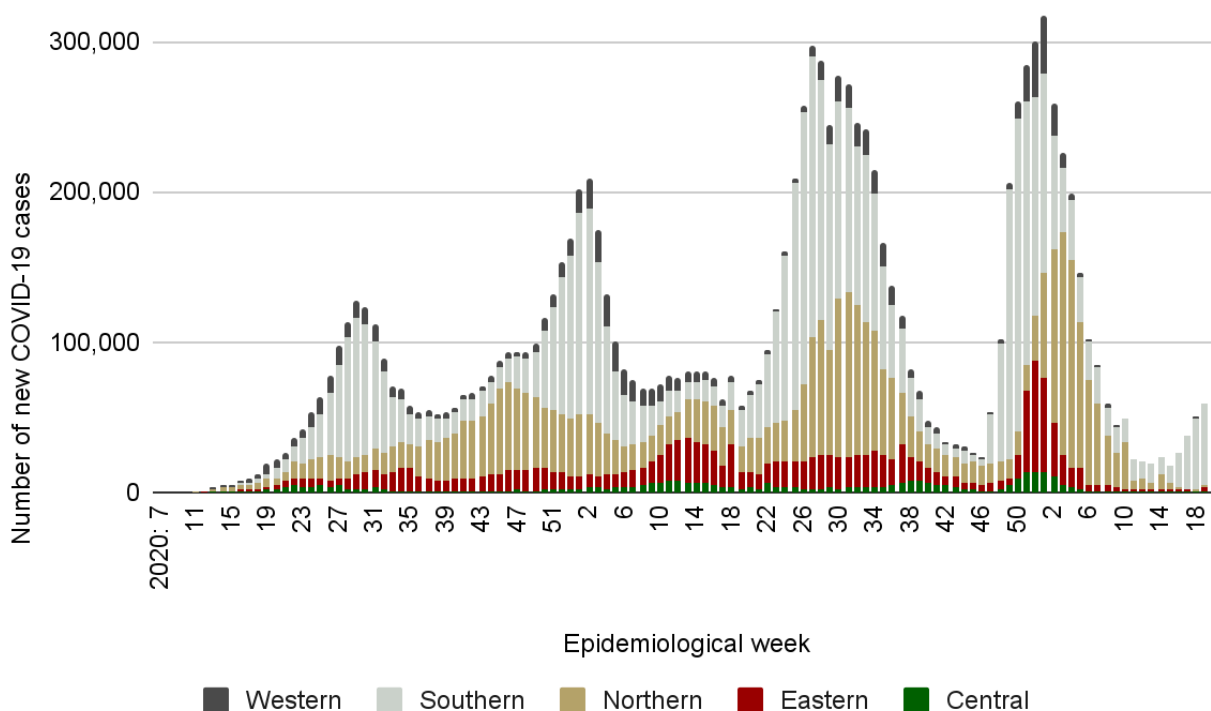


Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported in Africa by African Union region and epidemiological week, 15 February 2020 - 22 May 2022.

For Epi week 20 (16 - 22 May 2022), 45,835 new COVID-19 cases were reported, which is a 23% decrease in the number of new cases reported compared to the previous week (19) (Figure 1). The Southern region accounted for 94% of the new COVID-19 cases reported this week, followed by the Northern (2%), Eastern (2%), Western (1%) and Central (1%) regions. The increase in the number of new cases reported weekly was primarily driven by an increase in cases in South Africa. Namibia (105) had the highest number of new daily COVID-19 cases per 1 million population among all MS, followed by South Africa (89) and Eswatini (54).

Last week, 212 new COVID-19 deaths were reported in Africa, which is a 31% decrease in the number of new deaths reported compared to the previous week. Approximately 94% of these deaths were reported from the Southern region. The remaining deaths were reported from the Eastern (2%), Northern (2%) and Western (2%) regions. There were no deaths reported from the Central region. Cumulative COVID-19 case and death totals and new COVID-19 cases and deaths reported during week 20 by AU Member State are summarized in Table 1.

More than 1.5 million tests were conducted during the past week, reflecting a 213% increase¹ in the number of tests compared to the previous week. The weekly % test positivity has decreased from 12.2% to 2.9%. Since February 2020, over 108 million COVID-19 tests have been conducted in

¹ Mauritius reported over 900,000 new tests on 18 May 2022.

Africa. For more information on the COVID-19 situation in Africa, please see the Africa CDC [daily dashboard](#) and [hotspot dashboard](#).

Table 1: Number and percentage change of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths reported in Africa since February 2020 and for Epidemiological Week 20 (16 - 22 May 2022) by African Union Member States.

| Country by AU Region | Cumulative number of cases (new cases) | % change in new cases since week 19 | Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths) | % change in new deaths since week 19 |
|------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Central Region | 365,154 (272) | -88% | 4,534 (0) | -100% |
| Burundi | 41,606 (0) | NA* | 15 (0) | NA* |
| Cameroon | 119,924 (0) | -100% | 1,930 (0) | -100% |
| Central African Republic | 14,369 (0) | NA* | 113 (0) | NA* |
| Chad | 7,415 (0) | -100% | 193 (0) | NA* |
| Congo | 24,052 (11) | -98% | 385 (0) | NA* |
| Democratic Republic of Congo | 88,283 (247) | 24600% | 1,338 (0) | NA* |
| Equatorial Guinea | 15,910 (0) | -100% | 183 (0) | NA* |
| Gabon | 47,622 (14) | NA* | 304 (0) | NA* |
| Sao Tome and Principe | 5,973 (0) | -100% | 73 (0) | -100% |
| Eastern Region | 1,405,563 (1,020) | -28% | 27,344 (4) | -93% |
| Comoros | 8,108 (0) | NA* | 160 (0) | NA* |
| Djibouti | 15,655 (24) | -27% | 189 (0) | -100% |
| Eritrea | 9,754 (9) | 200% | 103 (0) | NA* |
| Ethiopia | 471,373 (424) | NA* | 7,512 (2) | NA* |
| Kenya | 324,242 (216) | NA* | 5,651 (2) | NA* |
| Madagascar | 64,196 (0) | -100% | 1,393 (0) | NA* |
| Mauritius | 37,955 (69) | NA* | 904 (0) | NA* |
| Rwanda | 125,207 (70) | -82% | 1,459 (0) | -100% |

| Country by AU Region | Cumulative number of cases (new cases) | % change in new cases since week 19 | Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths) | % change in new deaths since week 19 |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Seychelles | 43,235 (0) | -100% | 167 (0) | NA* |
| Somalia | 26,485 (0) | -100% | 1,361 (0) | NA* |
| South Sudan | 17,573 (48) | 500% | 138 (0) | NA* |
| Sudan | 62,211 (94) | NA* | 3,909 (0) | NA* |
| Tanzania | 35,354 (0) | NA* | 800 (0) | NA* |
| Uganda | 164,215 (66) | NA* | 3,598 (0) | NA* |
| Northern Region | 3,552,859 (916) | -98% | 83,704 (4) | -98% |
| Algeria | 265,847 (31) | 82% | 6,875 (0) | NA* |
| Egypt | 515,663 (0) | -100% | 24,622 (0) | NA* |
| Libya | 501,987 (0) | -100% | 6,485 (0) | -100% |
| Mauritania | 59,003 (150) | -75% | 982 (0) | -100% |
| Morocco | 1,166,530 (735) | -30% | 16,075 (4) | 100% |
| Tunisia | 1,041,789 (0) | -100% | 28,575 (0) | -100% |
| Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic | 2,040 (0) | -100% | 90 (0) | NA* |
| Southern Region | 5,434,554 (33,032) | 1967% | 125,959 (179) | 4375% |
| Angola | 99,527 (333) | 185% | 1,900 (0) | NA* |
| Botswana | 263,950 (0) | -100% | 2,692 (0) | NA* |
| Eswatini | 72,125 (420) | -16% | 1,404 (1) | No change |
| Lesotho | 33,399 (67) | -7% | 698 (0) | NA* |
| Malawi | 85,929 (41) | 356% | 2,638 (2) | NA* |
| Mozambique | 225,563 (65) | -16% | 2,201 (0) | -100% |
| Namibia | 160,640 (367) | -33% | 4,031 (2) | 100% |
| South Africa | 3,921,633 (29,840) | NA* | 100,916 (161) | NA* |

| Country by AU Region | Cumulative number of cases (new cases) | % change in new cases since week 19 | Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths) | % change in new deaths since week 19 |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Zambia | 321,146 (519) | 2783% | 3,985 (2) | NA* |
| Zimbabwe | 250,642 (1,380) | 560% | 5,494 (11) | NA* |
| Western Region | 838,634 (406) | -28% | 11,353 (4) | 300% |
| Benin | 26,952 (0) | NA* | 163 (0) | NA* |
| Burkina Faso | 20,899 (41) | -67% | 384 (3) | NA* |
| Cape Verde | 56,167 (45) | -33% | 401 (0) | NA* |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 82,057 (65) | 20% | 799 (0) | NA* |
| Gambia | 11,999 (0) | -100% | 365 (0) | -100% |
| Ghana | 161,351 (26) | 53% | 1,445 (0) | NA* |
| Guinea | 36,687 (0) | -100% | 780 (0) | NA* |
| Guinea-Bissau | 8,246 (24) | -11% | 171 (0) | NA* |
| Liberia | 7,455 (4) | NA* | 294 (0) | NA* |
| Mali | 31,054 (50) | NA* | 734 (1) | NA* |
| Niger | 9,031 (18) | -68% | 310 (0) | NA* |
| Nigeria | 255,937 (78) | 22% | 3,143 (0) | NA* |
| Senegal | 86,073 (34) | -61% | 1,966 (0) | NA* |
| Sierra Leone | 7,682 (0) | -100% | 125 (0) | NA* |
| Togo | 37,044 (21) | NA* | 273 (0) | NA* |
| Total | 11,596,764 (35,646) | -40% | 252,894 (191) | -38% |

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

New Africa CDC Response Activities

General:

1. Dr. Ahmed E. Ogwel Ouma, Acting Director of Africa CDC, hosted the Africa CDC weekly press briefing on Thursday 19 May 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 held its Kofi Annan Fellowship in Global Health Leadership Program (KAGHLP) graduation ceremony on Thursday 19 May 2022. The KAGHLP is supporting aspirational public health leaders from Africa in acquiring advanced skills and competencies to strategize and lead public health programmes that will transform public health in Africa. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Twitter page](#).
3. Dr. Ahmed E. Ogwel Ouma, Acting Director of Africa CDC, delivered a keynote address on the evolving COVID-19 pandemic and full operationalization of Africa CDC on behalf of H.E. Amb Minata Samaté, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development of the AU Commission during the Ministerial meeting organized by WHO-AFRO on 21 May 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland.
4. On the sidelines of the 75th WHA, Dr. Ahmed Ogwel Ouma, Acting Director of Africa CDC had a meeting with H.E. Abderrahmane Benbouzid Minister of Health of Algeria on 23 May 2022. They discussed vaccine manufacturing and market access.
5. Africa CDC's Acting Director, Dr. Ahmed E. Ogwel Ouma paid a courtesy call to Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the Director General of the World Trade Organization on 24 May 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland. They discussed advancing Africa's vaccine manufacturing capacity.

Sciences, Standards and Regulations:

1. Subscribe [here](#) to receive the 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 organize and implement COVID-19 vaccination campaigns, with a focus on increasing [eligibility](#)² and demand needed to achieve 70% vaccine coverage. Member States should also address vaccine misinformation with effective community-based risk communication and vaccine promotion activities.
2. AU Member States are encouraged to implement a tiered public health and social measures (PHSM) approach. This approach will ensure that measures are targeted and informed by the current COVID-19 situation.

² [Vaccination Advocacy Infographics – Africa CDC](#)

3. AU Member States should continue to **enhance COVID-19³ surveillance** efforts to include:
 - a. [Community-based surveillance](#)⁴ to detect symptomatic cases early and minimize viral transmission. Where feasible, [rapid antigen tests](#)⁵ and [self-testing](#)⁶ can be used to enhance diagnostic screening efforts.
 - b. [Rapid mortality surveillance](#)⁷ that focuses on collection, analysis and use of all-cause mortality data captured from facility and/or community-based surveillance activities to improve knowledge of COVID-19 related outcomes.
 - c. [Genomic surveillance](#)⁸ to monitor the presence of variants and the spread and continuous evolution of the virus.
 - d. [Syndromic surveillance](#) for influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI)⁹ to monitor COVID-19 trends in comparison to other respiratory pathogens.
4. AU Member States are encouraged to:
 - a. Continue contact tracing activities where feasible based on the current epidemiological situation and country capacity.
 - b. Inform the general public about the importance of seeking immediate medical care for individuals who develop severe symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. difficulty breathing).
 - c. Engage social scientists to help inform and enhance vaccination campaigns and PHSM implementation.
5. All AU Member States should notify and routinely share data with Africa CDC and WHO on confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths, recoveries, and tests conducted and infected healthcare workers to support data for action. Notify Africa CDC by emailing: AfricaCDCEBS@africa-union.org.

³ [WHO COVID-19 Case definition](#)

⁴ [Enhanced COVID-19 Surveillance at the Community Level in Africa](#)

⁵ [Interim Guidance on the Use of Rapid Antigen tests for COVID-19 Response – Africa CDC](#)

⁶ [Interim guidance on COVID-19 Rapid Antigen self-testing to African Union Member States – Africa CDC](#)

⁷ [Revealing the toll of COVID-19: A technical package for AU Member States – Africa CDC](#)

⁸ [Interim operational guidance on SARS-CoV-2 genomic surveillance in Africa: An updated guide](#)

⁹ [Protocol for Enhanced Severe Acute Respiratory Illness and Influenza-Like Illness Surveillance for COVID-19 in Africa – Africa CDC](#)

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>