

Outbreak Brief #154: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 27 December 2022

Global count: 651,918,402 cases and 6,656,601 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: As of 23 December 2022, a total of 651,918,402 COVID-19 cases and 6,656,601 deaths (case fatality ratio [CFR]: 1%) have been reported globally by 232 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** 19,668,572 (3%), **European Region** 268,999,461 (41%), **Region of the Americas** 185,198,746 (28%), **South-East Asia Region** 60,724,442 (10%) and **Western Pacific Region** 104,340,401 (16%). In the last seven days, the five countries reporting the highest number of new cases are Japan (943,929), the United States of America (501,758), the Republic of Korea (471,879), France (327,753) and Brazil (293,030). As of 21 December 2022, over 5 billion people (63% 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) 25 December 2022, a total of **12,212,131** COVID-19 cases and **256,529** deaths (CFR: **2.1%**) 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. Forty-three (78%) 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, 48 (87%) MS have experienced four waves, 28 MS have experienced five waves, 6 MS have experienced a sixth wave and one MS (Kenya) has experienced a seventh wave.

Fifty-three MS have reported COVID-19 cases infected with the Alpha (50 MS), Beta (45), Delta (52), Gamma (3) and Omicron (51) variants of concern (VOC). Additionally, 32 MS have detected the Omicron BA.2 sub-variant, while 23 MS detected the Omicron BA.4, 20 MS detected the Omicron BA.5, 9 MS detected the Omicron BA.2.75, 9 MS detected the Omicron BF.7 and 6 MS detected the Omicron XBB 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, 854.6 million doses have been administered on the continent. Of these doses

administered, 425.1 million people have been partially vaccinated, 386 million have been fully vaccinated, and 42%¹ of the target population on the continent is fully vaccinated. Eritrea is the only AU MS yet to start the COVID-19 vaccination rollout. More information on COVID-19 vaccination can be found on the [Africa CDC COVID-19 vaccine dashboard](#).

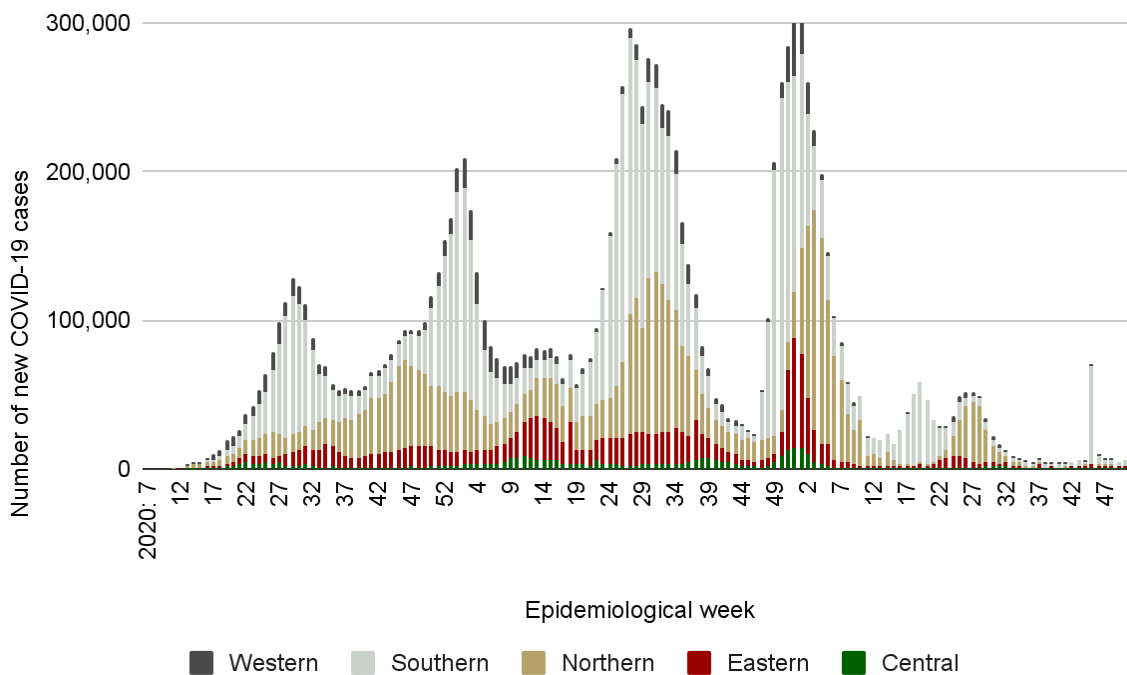


Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported in Africa by African Union region and epidemiological week, 15 February 2020 - 25 December 2022.

For Epi week 51 (19 - 25 December 2022),² 7,217 new COVID-19 cases were reported, which is a 29% increase in the number of new cases reported compared to the previous week (week 50) (Figure 1). The Eastern region accounted for 42% of the new COVID-19 cases reported this week, followed by the Southern (40%), Western (8%), Northern (8%), and Central (2%) regions. Seychelles (411) had the highest number of new daily COVID-19 cases per 1 million population among all MS.

Last week (week 51), 64 new COVID-19 deaths were reported in Africa, which is a 7% increase in the number of new deaths reported compared to the previous week. Approximately 84% of these deaths were reported from the Southern region. The remaining deaths were reported from the Eastern (8%) and Northern (8%) regions. No new deaths were reported from the Central and

¹ From 21 December 2022, the % fully vaccinated in Africa is now being calculated using the population 12 years old and above as the denominator for each country. The population was gotten from the latest UN population estimates and from the member states.

² The number of new cases and deaths are updated as Africa CDC receives this information and may not be reflective of the total new cases and deaths as per the date of the outbreak brief report.

Western regions. Cumulative COVID-19 case and death totals and new COVID-19 cases and deaths reported during week 51 by AU Member States are summarized in Table 1.

More than 361,000 tests were conducted during the past week, reflecting a 28% increase in the number of tests compared to the previous week. The weekly % test positivity is 2%, similar to last week. Since February 2020, over 124.8 million COVID-19 tests have been conducted in 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 51 (19 - 25 December 2022) by African Union Member States.

Country by AU Region	Cumulative number of cases (New cases)	% Change in new cases since week 50	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% Change in new deaths since week 50
Central Region	391,492 (103)	-73%	4,699 (0)	NA*
Burundi	51,722 (0)	-100%	15 (0)	NA*
Cameroon	124,179 (0)	-100%	1,965 (0)	NA*
Central African Republic	15,353 (0)	-100%	113 (0)	NA*
Chad	7,649 (1)	No change	194 (0)	NA*
Congo	25,074 (0)	NA*	386 (0)	NA*
Democratic Republic of Congo	95,174 (102)	1%	1,460 (0)	NA*
Equatorial Guinea	17,089 (0)	-100%	183 (0)	NA*
Gabon	48,973 (0)	NA*	306 (0)	NA*
Sao Tome and Principe	6,279 (0)	NA*	77 (0)	NA*
Eastern Region	1,488,274 (3,047)	104%	27,675 (5)	-58%
Comoros	8,979 (0)	-100%	160 (0)	NA*
Djibouti	15,960 (0)	NA*	189 (0)	NA*
Eritrea	10,189 (0)	NA*	103 (0)	NA*
Ethiopia	497,312 (1,152)	20%	7,572 (0)	NA*

Country by AU Region	Cumulative number of cases (New cases)	% Change in new cases since week 50	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% Change in new deaths since week 50
Kenya	342,475 (128)	-50%	5,688 (4)	-33%
Madagascar	67,684 (63)	-53%	1,414 (0)	-100%
Mauritius	41,220 (0)	-100%	1,027 (0)	-100%
Rwanda	132,920 (109)	NA*	1,467 (0)	NA*
Seychelles	50,355 (287)	NA*	172 (1)	NA*
Somalia	27,300 (0)	-100%	1,361 (0)	NA*
South Sudan	18,368 (0)	-100%	138 (0)	NA*
Sudan	63,686 (23)	667%	3,909 (0)	NA*
Tanzania	42,111 (1,285)	NA*	845 (0)	NA*
Uganda	169,715 (0)	NA*	3,630 (0)	NA*
Northern Region	3,778,414 (576)	-35%	84,607 (5)	-62%
Algeria	271,201 (21)	-22%	6,881 (0)	NA*
Egypt	515,667 (0)	NA*	24,624 (0)	NA*
Libya	507,142 (21)	133%	6,437 (0)	NA*
Mauritania	63,425 (0)	NA*	997 (0)	NA*
Morocco	1,271,260 (440)	-33%	16,294 (0)	-100%
Tunisia	1,147,571 (94)	-52%	29,284 (5)	-29%
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	2,148 (0)	NA*	90 (0)	NA*
Southern Region	5,670,113 (2,898)	6%	128,057 (54)	59%
Angola	104,973 (116)	NA*	1,928 (2)	NA*
Botswana	327,471 (0)	-100%	2,786 (47)	NA*
Eswatini	74,021 (29)	-3%	1,422 (0)	NA*
Lesotho	35,147 (0)	NA*	709 (0)	NA*
Malawi	88,164 (0)	-100%	2,685 (0)	NA*

Country by AU Region	Cumulative number of cases (New cases)	% Change in new cases since week 50	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% Change in new deaths since week 50
Mozambique	231,021 (51)	-12%	2,232 (2)	100%
Namibia	166,662 (0)	NA*	4,077 (0)	NA*
South Africa	4,048,960 (2,357)	76%	102,568 (0)	-100%
Zambia	334,066 (345)	NA*	4,022 (3)	NA*
Zimbabwe	259,628 (0)	-100%	5,628 (0)	-100%
Western Region	884,463 (593)	574%	11,496 (0)	-100%
Benin	27,982 (2)	NA*	163 (0)	NA*
Burkina Faso	22,006 (375)	NA*	387 (0)	NA*
Cape Verde	63,190 (17)	-60%	412 (0)	NA*
Côte d'Ivoire	87,937 (25)	39%	830 (0)	NA*
Gambia	12,586 (0)	NA*	372 (0)	NA*
Ghana	171,038 (0)	-100%	1,461 (0)	NA*
Guinea	38,211 (0)	-100%	805 (0)	NA*
Guinea-Bissau	8,848 (17)	NA*	176 (0)	NA*
Liberia	8,043 (21)	NA*	294 (0)	NA*
Mali	32,768 (1)	-67%	743 (0)	-100%
Niger	9,473 (30)	NA*	314 (0)	NA*
Nigeria	266,381 (98)	NA*	3,155 (0)	NA*
Senegal	88,900 (4)	-33%	1,968 (0)	NA*
Sierra Leone	7,760 (2)	NA*	126 (0)	NA*
Togo	39,340 (1)	-50%	290 (0)	NA*
Total	12,212,756 (7,217)	29%	256,534 (64)	7%

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

New Africa CDC Response Activities

General

1. Dr. Ahmed E. Ogwell Ouma, Acting Director of Africa CDC, hosted the Africa CDC weekly press briefing on Thursday 22 December 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 and other public health emergencies on the continent. The recording can be accessed [here](#).

Sciences, Standards and Regulations

1. Access 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](#)³ 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.
3. AU Member States should continue to **enhance COVID-19⁴ surveillance** efforts to include:
 - a. [Community-based surveillance](#)⁵ to detect symptomatic cases early and minimize viral transmission. Where feasible, [rapid antigen tests](#)⁶ and [self-testing](#)⁷ can be used to enhance diagnostic screening efforts.
 - b. [Rapid mortality surveillance](#)⁸ 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](#)⁹ 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)¹⁰ to monitor COVID-19 trends in comparison to other respiratory pathogens.
4. AU Member States are encouraged to:

³ [Vaccination Advocacy Infographics – Africa CDC](#)

⁴ [WHO COVID-19 Case definition](#)

⁵ [Enhanced COVID-19 Surveillance at the Community Level in Africa](#)

⁶ [Interim Guidance on the Use of Rapid Antigen tests for COVID-19 Response – Africa CDC](#)

⁷ [Interim guidance on COVID-19 Rapid Antigen self-testing to African Union Member States – Africa CDC](#)

⁸ [Revealing the toll of COVID-19: A technical package for AU Member States – Africa CDC](#)

⁹ [Interim operational guidance on SARS-CoV-2 genomic surveillance in Africa: An updated guide](#)

¹⁰ [Protocol for Enhanced Severe Acute Respiratory Illness and Influenza-Like Illness Surveillance for COVID-19 in Africa – Africa CDC](#)

- 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, tests conducted and infected healthcare workers to support data for action. Notify Africa CDC by emailing: AfricaCDCEBS@africa-union.org.

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://africacdc.org/covid-19/covid-19-hotspots/>
- 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>