

Outbreak Brief #35: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 15 September 2020

28,925,950 cases and 922,407 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: Since the last brief (8 September 2020), 1,887,020 new confirmed¹ coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases and 40,762 new deaths have been reported globally. To date, a total of 28,925,950 COVID-19 cases and 922,407 (case fatality rate (CFR): 3.2%) related deaths have been reported from 217 countries and territories. The distribution of cumulative cases (proportion of global cases) from the World Health Organization (WHO) reporting regions (excluding Africa) are as follows: Eastern Mediterranean Region 1,876,977 (7%), European Region 4,840,830 (17%), Region of the Americas 14,815,178 (51%), South-East Asia Region 5,475,657 (19%) and Western Pacific Region 551,405 (2%). For more detailed information on cases and deaths being reported outside of Africa, refer to the WHO daily situation reports.²

As of 9am East African Time (EAT) 15 September 2020, a total of 1,359,724 COVID-19 cases and 32,795 deaths (CFR: 2.4%) have been reported in 55 African countries. This is 5% of all cases reported globally. Since the last brief, 53,567 new COVID-19 cases have been reported, which is no change from the number of new cases reported in the 8 September 2020 brief. The proportion of new COVID-19 cases reported by region is as follows: Northern region 46% (24,863; 20% increase change from previous week), Southern region 30% (15,815 cases; 7% decrease), Eastern region 15% (8,169; 22% decrease), Western region 7% (3,958; 10% decrease), and Central region 1% (762; 27% decrease).

Six countries account for over 70% of the new COVID-19 cases reported since the last brief: Morocco (27%), South Africa (21%), Ethiopia (10%), Libya (9%), Tunisia (4%), and Algeria (4%). Cabo Verde (80), Libya (71), Morocco (39), Namibia (39), South Africa (19), Botswana (19), Eswatini (16), and Tunisia (14) are reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population) over the past seven days in Africa. Of the countries actively reporting COVID-19 epidemiologic data, eleven countries are reporting case fatality rates higher than the global case fatality rate of 3.2%: Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (8%), Chad (7.5%), Liberia (6.2%),

¹ WHO COVID-19 surveillance guidance and case definition: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/surveillance-and-case-definitions>

² WHO coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation reports: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>

Sudan (6.2%), Niger (5.8%), Egypt (5.6%), Mali (4.4%), Angola (4%), Sierra Leone (3.4%), Algeria (3.3%), and Burkina Faso (3.3%).

Table 1 highlights the reported cases and deaths from COVID-19 in all countries in Africa. In addition, the table reports the current phase of the epidemic for each country. Figure 1 shows the trend of new COVID-19 cases reported by day and region from 15 February to date.

Table 1. Confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and recoveries reported in Africa³ as of 15 September 2020, 9am East Africa Time

Country	Number of cases (new)	Percent change in new cases since previous brief	Number of deaths (new)	Percent change in new deaths since previous brief	Epidemic phase ⁴
Central Region	56,216 (762)	-27%	1,062 (12)	-186%	
Burundi	472 (6)	-71%	1 (0)	NA*	2
Cameroon	20,009 (405)	-12%	415 (1)	-67%	3
Central African Republic	4,772 (43)	139%	62 (0)	NA*	3
Chad	1,085 (45)	67%	81 (2)	No change	3
Congo	4,928 (37)	-86%	88 (5)	-126%	3
Democratic Republic of Congo	10,390 (157)	15%	264 (4)	NA*	3
Equatorial Guinea	5,000 (15)	-66%	83 (0)	NA*	3
Gabon	8,654 (46)	-39%	53 (0)	NA*	3
Sao Tome and Principe	906 (8)	300%	15 (0)	NA*	2
Eastern Region	153,075 (8,169)	-22%	3,019 (145)	-21%	

³ New numbers reported since last weekly report (8 September 2020, 9am EAT)

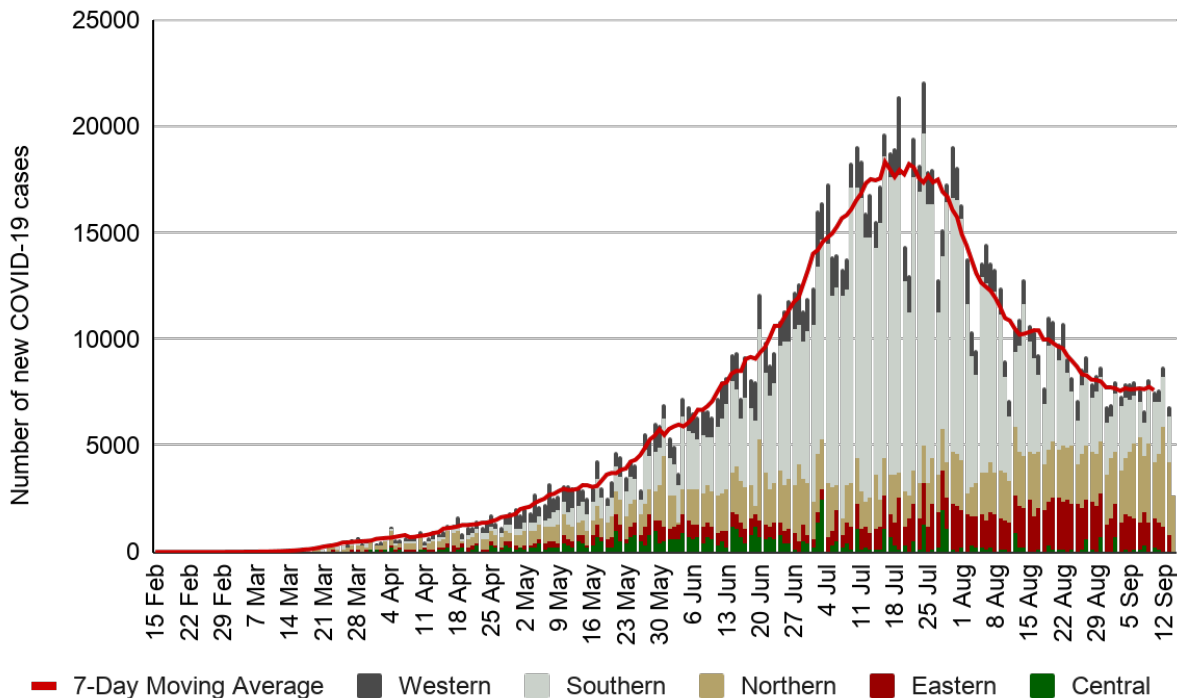
⁴ Phases defined according to Africa CDC's Recommendations for a stepwise COVID-19 response - <https://africacdc.org/download/recommendations-for-stepwise-response-to-covid-19/>: **Phase 0 (No COVID-19 case)**: no reported case in-country; **Phase 1 (Early stage outbreak)**: one or more imported cases, limited local transmission related to imported cases; **Phase 2 (Expanding outbreak)**: increasing number of imported cases, increased local spread but all cases linked to known transmission chains, outbreak clusters with a known common exposure; **Phase 3 (Advancing outbreak)**: localized outbreaks start to merge, one or more cases or deaths occur outside known transmission, multiple generations in transmission chains, cases are detected among severe acute respiratory illness (SARI) case with no known exposure; **Phase 4 (Large outbreak with nationwide transmission)**: widespread sustained community transmission, multiple generation transmission chains can be identified but most cases occurring outside of chains, community-wide transmission throughout all or nearly all of the country

Comoros	457 (5)	-83%	7 (0)	NA*	3
Djibouti	5,396 (8)	700%	61 (0)	-100%	2
Eritrea	361 (31)	158%	(0)	NA*	1
Ethiopia	64,786 (5,138)	-32%	1,022 (89)	-28%	3
Kenya	36,205 (1,000)	0%	624 (25)	14%	3
Madagascar	15,769 (417)	-15%	213 (11)	10%	3
Mauritius	361 (5)	-50%	10 (0)	NA*	1
Rwanda	4,602 (193)	-44%	22 (3)	No change	2
Seychelles	140 (3)	200%	(0)	NA*	1
Somalia	3,389 (27)	-48%	98 (1)	NA*	1
South Sudan	2,587 (42)	62%	49 (1)	No change	3
Sudan	13,535 (98)	-60%	836 (3)	-70%	3
Tanzania	509 (0)	NA*	21 (0)	NA*	3
Uganda	4,978 (1,202)	50%	56 (12)	No change	2
Northern Region	276,096 (24,863)	20%	9,543 (501)	0%	
Algeria	48,499 (2,135)	14%	1,620 (64)	39%	3
Egypt	101,177 (1,136)	3%	5,661 (120)	No change	2
Libya	23,515 (4,682)	-10%	368 (72)	13%	2
Mauritania	7,295 (146)	45%	161 (1)	No change	3
Morocco	88,203 (14,423)	29%	1,614 (220)	-13%	2
Tunisia	7,382 (2,341)	89%	117 (24)	50%	2
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	25 (0)	NA*	2 (0)	NA*	1
Southern Region	705,330 (15,815)	-7%	16,640 (584)	-36%	
Angola	3,439 (458)	28%	136 (16)	23%	2
Botswana	2,463 (461)	25%	11 (3)	50%	2
Eswatini	5,104 (220)	-28%	101 (7)	133%	3
Lesotho	1,327 (163)	106%	33 (2)	NA*	2
Malawi	5,697 (76)	38%	178 (2)	100%	3
Mozambique	5,482 (925)	44%	35 (8)	100%	3

Namibia	9,818 (1,008)	-20%	103 (12)	-25%	3
South Africa	650,749 (11,387)	-8%	15,499 (495)	-42%	3
Zambia	13,720 (884)	20%	320 (25)	257%	3
Zimbabwe	7,531 (233)	-71%	224 (14)	75%	3
Western Region	169,007 (3,958)	-10%	2,531 (59)	-29%	
Benin	2,267 (73)	49%	40 (0)	NA*	3
Burkina Faso	1,717 (254)	173%	56 (0)	-100%	3
Cape Verde	4,839 (481)	1%	45 (3)	50%	2
Côte d'Ivoire	19,066 (365)	-42%	120 (1)	-50%	3
Gambia	3,405 (208)	-11%	103 (4)	33%	3
Ghana	45,601 (589)	-18%	294 (11)	57%	3
Guinea	10,020 (222)	-43%	63 (2)	No change	3
Guinea-Bissau	2,275 (30)	-25%	39 (1)	-75%	3
Liberia	1,321 (10)	43%	82 (0)	NA*	3
Mali	2,935 (65)	-31%	128 (1)	No change	3
Niger	1,180 (2)	No change	69 (0)	NA*	2
Nigeria	56,388 (1,228)	7%	1,083 (22)	-54%	3
Senegal	14,306 (292)	-28%	297 (6)	-14%	3
Sierra Leone	2,109 (54)	64%	72 (1)	No change	3
Togo	1,578 (85)	-9%	40 (7)	40%	3
Total	1,359,724 (53,567)	0%	32,795 (1,301)	-22%	

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

Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported by day and AU region, 15 February - 15 September 2020



NEW Africa CDC Response Activities:

General:

1. Africa CDC held its regular weekly press briefing on the COVID-19 pandemic on Thursday, 10 September 2020 at 11am EAT. The speaker for the week was Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC. Link: <https://zoom.us/j/91878045029?pwd=aC9YSTZYM1VVK1BvL0JEbFiR3MwZz09>

Healthcare Preparedness and Medical Countermeasures:

Infection and Prevention Control (IPC)

1. This week the Africa CDC IPC TWG will hold a webinar titled "IPC for Safe Surgery, Safe Delivery and specialized units such as ICU" on Wednesday 16 September 2020 at 1pm EAT for English and Friday 18 September 2020 at 2pm EAT for French. Links: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_97hF6iqdQHOP3ieF7xQT4Q and French https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_r4KmA2bKRrmBsV11aH2Dwg
2. The Africa CDC IPC TWG published a comprehensive FAQs "COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control: Your Questions Answered" <https://africacdc.org/download/covid-19-infection-prevention-and-control-your-questions-answered/>

Laboratory:

1. Africa CDC partnered with the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) on 11 September to build diagnostic capacity across Africa with the introduction of new, high-quality antigen rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) for COVID-19 that are anticipated to become available soon. The announcement builds on a long-standing relationship between the two organizations and established links with local partners across the continent which was recently formalized with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to drive access to essential diagnostics in Africa. Link: <https://africacdc.org/news-item/africa-cdc-find-partner-to-build-capacity-for-covid-19-rapid-diagnostic-tests-in-africa/>
2. Over 13.1 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted to date, with a positivity rate of 10.3% and test per reported case ratio of 9.7.
3. The Africa CDC Laboratory TWG will hold a webinar on Wednesday 16 September 2020 titled “SARS-COV2 Genomics Surveillance and Informatics” at 2pm EAT. Link: <https://bit.ly/2Okfoqy>

Surveillance

1. The Africa CDC Surveillance TWG will hold a webinar titled “Public Knowledge, Attitudes, and Preventive Behaviors in Response to COVID-19 Across 18 AU Member States”, which highlights the recent Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC) opinion poll outcomes in 18 countries on Wednesday 16 September 2020 at 4pm EAT. Link: <https://zoom.us/j/97332126178?pwd=SUUpSQ3NHcTc4a2JaK3Z1VWw1ZFbMz09>

Sciences, standards and regulations:

1. Access the weekly COVID-19 Scientific and Public Health Policy Update which is published every other week on Tuesdays at: <https://africacdc.org/resources/> or at the WHO AFRO link: https://afrolib.afro.who.int/pmb/opac_css/doc_num.php?explnum_id=7728

Recommendations for Member States:

1. All Member States should continue to enhance their surveillance⁵ to include COVID-19⁶ and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI)⁷. Examples of enhanced surveillance include:
 - a. Adding questions about travel, contact history, and testing for coronaviruses to existing influenza surveillance systems;

⁵Africa CDC Protocol for enhanced surveillance for COVID-19 in Africa: <https://africacdc.org/download/protocol-for-enhanced-severe-acute-respiratory-illness-and-influenza-like-illness-surveillance-for-covid-19-in-africa/>

⁶WHO COVID-19 surveillance guidance and case definition: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/surveillance-and-case-definitions>

⁷WHO SARI case definition: anyone with an acute respiratory infection with a history of fever (or measured fever of $\geq 38\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$) and cough with symptom onset within the last 10 days that requires hospitalization. https://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/ili_sari_surveillance_case_definition/en/

- b. Notifying healthcare facilities to immediately inform local public health officials about persons who meet the case definition for COVID-19, SARI and/or have recent travel to a country with local transmission or history of contact with a case.
2. Member States should perform contact tracing of confirmed cases based on transmission type and country capacity.⁸
3. Member states should notify and routinely share with WHO and Africa CDC data regarding suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths, recoveries, tests conducted and healthcare workers infected to continually inform these and other updates. Notify Africa CDC by emailing: AfricaCDCEBS@africa-union.org.
4. Member states should continue to provide guidance to the general public about seeking immediate medical care and informing healthcare providers about recent travel or contact history in anyone who develops symptoms of severe respiratory illness.

Resources for more information:

Africa CDC Resources

- Africa CDC COVID-19 updates: <https://africacdc.org/covid-19/>
- Multimedia: <https://africacdc.org/covid-19-multimedia/>
- Resources, policy guidelines, and infographics: <https://africacdc.org/covid-19/covid-19-resources/>

Other Resources

- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china>
- US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>
- WHO. Technical Guidance. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>

⁸Africa CDC Guidance on Contact Tracing for COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://africacdc.org/download/guidance-on-contact-tracing-for-covid-19-pandemic/>