

Outbreak Brief #47: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 8 December 2020

66,451,512 cases and 1,532,973 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: Since the last brief (1 December 2020), 4,079,785 new confirmed¹ coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases and 92,430 new deaths have been reported globally. To date, a total of 66,451,512 COVID-19 cases and 1,532,973 related deaths (case fatality rate (CFR): 2.3%) have been reported from 221 countries and territories. This week, no new country or territory reported its first case. 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 3,619,902 (5%), European Region 20,154,730 (30%), Region of the Americas 28,355,791 (43%), South-East Asia Region 11,114,545 (17%) and Western Pacific Region 921,354 (1%). Among the affected locations, the United States has reported more than one million new cases each week for the last three consecutive weeks. For the last week, India and Brazil have reported over 200,000 new cases each. For more detailed information on cases and deaths being reported outside of Africa, refer to the WHO daily situation reports.²

As of 9 am East African Time (EAT) 8 December 2020, a total of 2,271,809 COVID-19 cases and 54,101 deaths (CFR: 2.4%) have been reported in 55 African Union (AU) Member States. This is 3.4% of all cases reported globally. Majority (84%) of Member States continue to report community transmission. Of the countries actively reporting COVID-19 epidemiologic data, sixteen countries are reporting case fatality rates higher than the global case fatality rate of 2.3%. These include Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (7.1%), Sudan (6.6%), Chad (5.9%), Egypt (5.7%), Liberia (5%), Niger (4.1%), Tunisia (3.4%), Zimbabwe (3.4%), Gambia (3.3%), Mali (3.3%), Malawi (3.1%), Sierra Leone (3.1%), Algeria (2.8%), South Africa (2.7%), Somalia (2.6%) and Democratic Republic of Congo (2.5%).

For Epi week 49 (30 November - 6 December), 99,574 new COVID-19 cases have been reported, which is a 7% increase in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 48. The majority of new COVID-19 cases being reported for this week are from the Northern region (49%) followed by the Southern (30%), Eastern (14%), Western (5%) and Central (2%) regions. Countries reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 new cases per 100,000 population) this week include Morocco (71), Tunisia (69), Libya (65), Cabo Verde (61) and South Africa (46).

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

² WHO coronavirus disease (COVID-19) dashboard: <https://covid19.who.int/>

Table 1 highlights the reported cases and deaths from COVID-19 in all countries in Africa for Epi week 49. 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. Cases have steadily continued to increase through the month of October and November. However, over the past one month, the number of new cases reported each week does appear to be leveling off. This week, seven countries account for about 81% of the new COVID-19 cases reported: South Africa (27%), Morocco (26%), Tunisia (8%), Algeria (7%), Kenya (5%), Libya (4%) and Ethiopia (4%).

Table 1. Confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and recoveries³ reported in Africa for Epi week 49 (30 November- 6 December 2020)

Country	Number of cases (new)	Percent change in new cases since Epi week 49	Number of deaths (new)	Percent change in new deaths since Epi week 49	Epidemic phase ⁴
Central Region	66,874 (1,588)	15%	1,209 (19)	138%	
Burundi	694 (13)	-32%	1 (0)	NA*	3
Cameroon	24,752 (635)	8%	443 (6)	200%	3
Central African Republic	4,922 (4)	-43%	63 (0)	NA*	3
Chad	1,725 (37)	-8%	102 (1)	NA*	3
Congo	5,774 (0)	-100%	94 (0)	-100%	3
Democratic Republic of Congo	13,595 (823)	67%	344 (11)	175%	3
Equatorial Guinea	5,159 (3)	-84%	85 (0)	NA*	3
Gabon	9,254 (63)	5%	60 (1)	NA*	3

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

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.

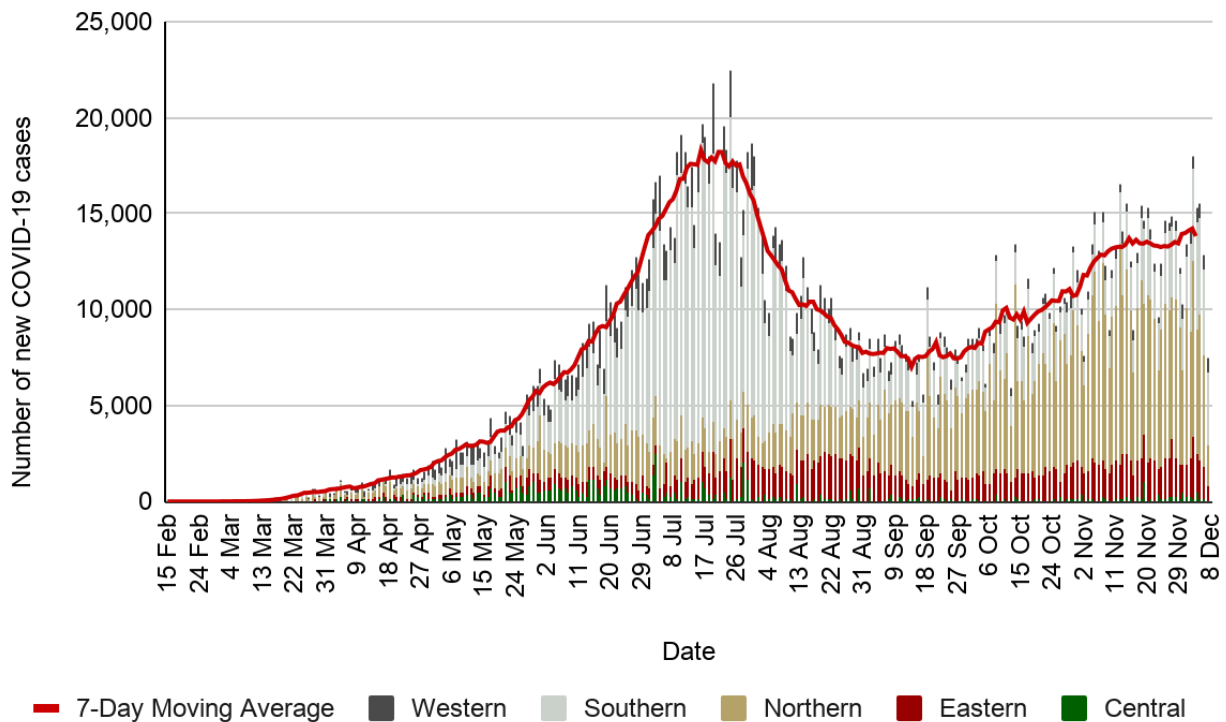
Sao Tome and Principe	999 (10)	No change	17 (0)	NA*	3
Eastern Region	284,077 (14,169)	2%	5,369 (189)	-11%	
Comoros	616 (5)	-67%	7 (0)	NA*	3
Djibouti	5,701 (24)	167%	61 (0)	NA*	2
Eritrea	632 (55)	112%	(0)	NA*	1
Ethiopia	113,295 (3,761)	0%	1,747 (47)	-11%	3
Kenya	88,380 (5,064)	-15%	1,526 (74)	3%	3
Madagascar	17,473 (132)	NA*	255 (4)	NA*	3
Mauritius	505 (4)	-43%	10 (0)	NA*	2
Rwanda	6,129 (210)	-17%	51 (3)	200%	2
Seychelles	184 (11)	57%	(0)	NA*	1
Somalia	4,525 (74)	1133%	121 (8)	167%	1
South Sudan	3,181 (72)	60%	62 (1)	No change	3
Sudan	19,747 (1,702)	5%	1,301 (46)	-13%	3
Tanzania ⁵	509 (0)	NA*	21 (0)	NA*	3
Uganda	23,200 (3,055)	40%	207 (6)	-79%	3
Northern Region	788,064 (48,862)	-4%	20,555 (1,158)	-2%	
Algeria	89,005 (6,784)	-8%	2,510 (117)	-14%	3
Egypt	118,432 (2,891)	15%	6,771 (135)	53%	2
Libya	87,097 (4,288)	-2%	1,243 (60)	-26%	3
Mauritania	9,516 (967)	131%	188 (13)	117%	3
Morocco	379,657 (25,854)	-10%	6,245 (456)	-4%	2
Tunisia	104,329 (8,078)	7%	3,596 (377)	-5%	3
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	28 (0)	NA*	2 (0)	NA*	1

⁵ Last report received 7-May-2020.

Southern Region	914,769 (29,912)	29%	23,885 (767)	27%	
Angola	15,536 (433)	-29%	354 (8)	-11%	3
Botswana	10,010 (18)	-95%	34 (3)	NA*	3
Eswatini	6,501 (91)	-52%	122 (1)	No change	3
Lesotho	2,150 (41)	78%	44 (0)	NA*	3
Malawi	6,051 (26)	18%	185 (0)	NA*	3
Mozambique	16,244 (631)	10%	133 (3)	-50%	3
Namibia	15,078 (733)	53%	152 (1)	-86%	3
South Africa	814,565 (26,863)	34%	22,206 (729)	27%	3
Zambia	17,916 (308)	67%	364 (7)	NA*	3
Zimbabwe	10,718 (768)	5%	291 (15)	88%	3
Western Region	210,481 (5,043)	45%	2,903 (41)	105%	
Benin	3,073 (99)	71%	44 (1)	NA*	3
Burkina Faso	3,212 (356)	194%	68 (0)	NA*	3
Cape Verde	11,063 (363)	-14%	109 (4)	300%	3
Côte d'Ivoire	21,485 (175)	2%	132 (1)	NA*	3
Gambia	3,767 (33)	313%	123 (0)	NA*	3
Ghana	52,274 (607)	37%	325 (2)	NA*	3
Guinea	13,246 (149)	-42%	77 (1)	No change	3
Guinea-Bissau	2,441 (0)	-100%	44 (0)	-100%	3
Liberia	1,676 (81)	84%	83 (0)	-100%	3
Mali	5,135 (447)	3%	164 (12)	71%	3
Niger	1,856 (340)	130%	77 (7)	NA*	3
Nigeria	69,255 (1,843)	79%	1,180 (7)	17%	3
Senegal	16,477 (402)	108%	338 (5)	67%	3
Sierra Leone	2,426 (15)	150%	74 (0)	NA*	3
Togo	3,095 (133)	12%	65 (1)	NA*	3
Total	2,264,265 (99,574)	7%	53,921 (2,174)	7%	

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

Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported by day and AU region, 15 February - 8 December 2020



NEW Africa CDC Response Activities:

General:

1. Africa CDC will hold a virtual conference titled “Preparing for the Fair, Equitable and Timely Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccines In Africa” on 14 and 15 December, 2020 at 2 pm and 1 pm EAT respectively.
2. Africa CDC in collaboration with European Union (EU) launched the “EU for Health Security in Africa: Africa CDC-European CDC partnership” on Monday 7 December, 2020 at 2 pm EAT. Link to the recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=komCJTprq4>
3. Africa CDC held its weekly press briefings on Thursday 3 December 2020 at 11 am EAT. The speaker for the week was Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC and Prof. Jean-Jacques Muyembe, Director-General, Institut National de la Recherche Biomédicale, Kinshasa. The recording for this press brief session is available on the Africa CDC Facebook page: [Africa CDC - AFRICA CDC WEEKLY COVID-19 BRIEFING](#)
4. Africa CDC Public Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHEOCs) and COVID-19 Management will hold its weekly PHEOC webinar series on Multisectoral Coordination, titled “Role of Law in Emergency Management: Tools to support Multisectoral Coordination and Governance” on Thursday, 10 December 2020 at 3 pm EAT. Registration link: bit.ly/3jxGzv9

Healthcare Preparedness and Medical Countermeasures:

Case Management

1. The Africa CDC Case Management Technical Working Group (TWG) held its 33rd clinical webinar series titled “Outcomes of newborns born from mothers with COVID-19” on Thursday, 3 December 2020 for over 300 participants. The recording can be accessed here: [CCOP | Africa CDC Institute](#)
2. The Africa CDC Case Management TWG held its seventh Mental Health Aspects of COVID-19 session titled “Practical considerations for families, children and adolescents during COVID-19” on Thursday, 3 December 2020 for over 90 participants. The recording can be accessed here: [Webinar Series on Mental Health Aspects of COVID-19](#)
3. The Africa CDC Case Management TWG has facilitated the distribution of dexamethasone tablets to 40 Member States. This week five countries Burundi, Chad, Eritrea, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Somalia and South Sudan will receive mechanical ventilators and oxygen concentrators donated by the Wellcome Foundation.

Laboratory:

1. Over 22.8 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted to date with a positivity rate of 9.9% and test per case ratio of 10.1, which is a 3.6% increase from last week.

Surveillance

1. Africa CDC is currently supporting and implementing COVID-19 sero-prevalence survey studies in 18 Member States. Five countries are at the implementation stage, seven countries at advanced planning stage and six countries at planning stage.

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 the Member States:

1. All Member States should continue to enhance their surveillance⁶ to include COVID-19⁷ and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI)⁸. Examples of enhanced surveillance include:
 - a. Adding questions about travel, contact history, and testing for coronaviruses to existing influenza surveillance systems;
 - 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.⁹
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>

⁶Africa 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/>

⁷WHO COVID-19 surveillance guidance and case definition: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-2019-nCoV-surveillanceguidance-2020.7>

⁸WHO 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/

⁹Africa CDC Guidance on Contact Tracing for COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://africacdc.org/download/guidance-on-contact-tracing-for-covid-19-pandemic/>

- WHO. Technical Guidance. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>