

Outbreak Brief #52: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 12 January 2021

89,072,400 cases and 1,931,220 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: Since the last brief (5 January 2021), 5,208,671 new confirmed¹ coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases and 90,820 new deaths have been reported globally. To date, a total of 89,072,400 COVID-19 cases and 1,931,220 related deaths (case fatality rate (CFR): 2.2%) have been reported from 221 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 4,272,956 (5%), European Region 28,976,854 (33%), Region of the Americas 39,242,554 (44%), South-East Asia Region 12,286,156 (14%) and Western Pacific Region 1,196,385 (1%). Among the affected locations, the United States has reported more than one million new cases each week for the last nine consecutive weeks. For the last seven days, the United Kingdom (UK) and Brazil reported over 200,000 new cases. 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) 12 January 2021, a total of 3,081,881 COVID-19 cases and 73,423 deaths (CFR: 2.4%) have been reported in 55 African Union (AU) Member States. This is 3.5% of all cases reported globally. The majority (82%) of Member States continue to report community transmission. Of the countries actively reporting COVID-19 epidemiologic data, nineteen countries are reporting case fatality rates higher than the global case fatality rate of 2.2%. These include Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (11.8%), Sudan (6%), Egypt (5.5%), Liberia (4.6%), Chad (4.1%), Mali (3.9%), Tunisia (3.3%), Niger (3.3%), Gambia (3.2%), Democratic Republic of Congo (3.1%), Somalia (2.8%), Sierra Leone (2.7%), Algeria (2.7%), South Africa (2.7%), Malawi (2.6%), Mauritania (2.5%), Eswatini (2.5%), Zimbabwe (2.4%), and Angola (2.3%).

For Epi week 1 (4 January 2021 - 10 January 2021), 222,177 new COVID-19 cases have been reported, which is a 31% increase in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 53 of 2020. The majority of new COVID-19 cases being reported for this week are from the Southern region (71%) followed by the Northern (18%), Western (7%), Eastern (4%) and Central (1%) regions. Countries reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 new cases per 100,000 population) this week include Seychelles (234), South Africa (225), Tunisia (149), Namibia (121), Lesotho (108), Eswatini (107), Cape Verde (86) and Libya (52).

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 1. 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. A second wave of the pandemic is now affecting Africa as cases have continued to increase over the last two months. To date, 39 (71%) Member States are currently or have experienced a second wave of cases. This week, four countries account for about 78% of the new COVID-19 cases reported: South Africa (59%), Tunisia (8%), Morocco (4%), Nigeria (4%) and Egypt (3%).

In the face of both the second wave and presence of the new SARS-COV-2 501Y.V2 variant now being reported from three Member States (Botswana, South Africa and Zambia), adherence to public health and social measures will be paramount in preventing the further spread of COVID-19.

Table 1. Confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and recoveries³ reported in Africa for Epi week 1 (4 January 2021 - 10 January 2021)

Country	Number of cases (new)	Percent change in new cases since the previous Epi week (53)	Number of deaths (new)	Percent change in new deaths since the previous Epi week (53)	Epidemic phase ⁴
Central Region	78,345 (2,005)	-28%	1,511 (17)	-45%	
Burundi	986 (153)	428%	2 (0)	NA*	3
Cameroon	27,088 (0)	-100%	451 (0)	-100%	3
Central African Republic	4,973 (10)	400%	63 (0)	NA*	3
Chad	2,589 (376)	90%	107 (3)	NA*	3
Congo	7,217 (0)	-100%	108 (0)	-100%	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.

Democratic Republic of Congo	19,436 (1,284)	32%	611 (12)	-40%	3
Equatorial Guinea	5,296 (17)	-45%	86 (0)	NA*	3
Gabon	9,694 (123)	66%	66 (2)	NA*	3
Sao Tome and Principe	1,066 (42)	320%	17 (0)	NA*	3
Eastern Region	335,363 (7,757)	-7%	6,191 (127)	-19%	
Comoros	1,150 (286)	92%	18 (5)	-17%	3
Djibouti	5,871 (29)	No change	61 (0)	NA*	3
Eritrea	1,556 (236)	-16%	6 (3)	50%	3
Ethiopia	128,316 (2,694)	-2%	1,994 (46)	18%	3
Kenya	98,271 (1,469)	67%	1,710 (25)	-7%	3
Madagascar	17,767 (0)	-100%	262 (0)	-100%	3
Mauritius	539 (12)	NA*	10 (0)	NA*	3
Rwanda	9,630 (954)	35%	120 (19)	-30%	3
Seychelles	531 (234)	172%	1 (1)	NA*	3
Somalia	4,726 (12)	-50%	130 (0)	-100%	3
South Sudan	3,662 (73)	-26%	63 (0)	-100%	3
Sudan	25,027 (0)	-100%	1,493 (0)	-100%	3
Tanzania ⁵	509 (0)	NA*	21 (0)	NA*	3
Uganda	37,808 (1,758)	-15%	302 (28)	8%	3
Northern Region	987,742 (40,402)	4%	26,008 (1,197)	4%	
Algeria	102,144 (1,736)	-20%	2,807 (35)	-20%	3
Egypt	149,792 (7,605)	-21%	8,197 (392)	-2%	3
Libya	105,378 (3,403)	11%	1,589 (63)	-27%	3
Mauritania	15,512 (718)	-38%	384 (26)	-24%	3

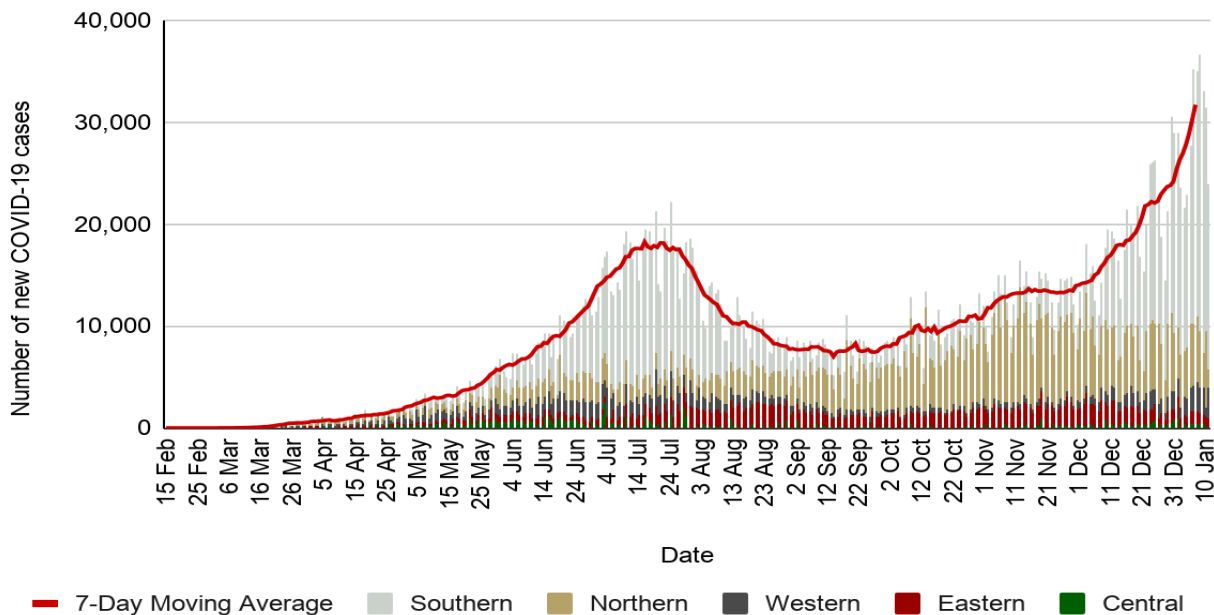
⁵ Last report received 7-May-2020.

Morocco	452,532 (9,386)	-15%	7,743 (258)	5%	3
Tunisia	162,350 (17,554)	51%	5,284 (422)	23%	3
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	34 (0)	-100%	4 (1)	NA*	3
Southern Region	1,391,907 (156,570)	43%	35,665 (3,988)	32%	
Angola	18,193 (551)	37%	416 (8)	-11%	3
Botswana	16,768 (1,328)	-27%	59 (14)	100%	3
Eswatini	11,435 (1,492)	2%	295 (64)	-3%	3
Lesotho	5,937 (2,489)	244%	85 (20)	43%	3
Malawi	8,575 (1,731)	253%	225 (30)	329%	3
Mozambique	21,939 (2,630)	152%	192 (23)	188%	3
Namibia	28,259 (3,143)	-2%	254 (39)	63%	3
South Africa	1,231,596 (130,848)	36%	33,163 (3,586)	26%	3
Zambia	27,728 (6,146)	252%	469 (77)	756%	3
Zimbabwe	21,477 (6,212)	184%	507 (127)	310%	3
Western Region	264,490 (15,443)	51%	3,447 (134)	-7%	
Benin	3,304 (53)	15%	44 (0)	NA*	3
Burkina Faso	8,082 (1,031)	46%	89 (3)	-63%	3
Cape Verde	12,433 (513)	149%	115 (2)	100%	3
Côte d'Ivoire	23,750 (1,102)	122%	139 (1)	-67%	3
Gambia	3,857 (57)	714%	125 (1)	No change	3
Ghana	56,230 (769)	11%	338 (2)	100%	3
Guinea	13,980 (181)	59%	81 (0)	-100%	2
Guinea-Bissau	2,478 (31)	NA*	45 (1)	NA*	2
Liberia	1,800 (0)	NA*	83 (0)	NA*	2
Mali	7,600 (347)	-44%	298 (20)	-20%	2
Niger	3,877 (412)	16%	126 (16)	14%	2
Nigeria	99,063 (8,983)	59%	1,350 (39)	-32%	1

Senegal	21,245 (1,548)	42%	465 (44)	33%	1
Sierra Leone	2,834 (161)	42%	77 (1)	NA*	1
Togo	3,957 (255)	73%	72 (4)	NA*	1
Total	3,057,847 (222,177)	31%	72,822 (5,463)	21%	

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

Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported by day and AU region, 15 February 2020 - 12 January 2021



NEW Africa CDC Response Activities:

General:

1. Last week, Dr Nkengasong emerged as one of the winners in the African Leadership Magazine, Persons Of The Year 2020 Awards as "African Public Health Champion of the Year 2020". Link: <https://twitter.com/JNkengasong/status/1348502701563375618?s=19>
2. The weekly Public Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHEOCs) and COVID-19 Management webinar series will hold this week addressing 'Learning Lessons from Public Health Emergencies - An introduction to learning from emergencies' on Thursday, 14 January 2021 at 3 pm EAT. Registration link: bit.ly/3jxGzv9

3. This week's AFTCOR meeting focussed on an update from Professor Tulio de Oliveira, Director of the Kwazulu-Natal Research Innovation and Sequencing Platform (KRISP) regarding the SARS-CoV-2 501Y.V2 variant being reported from South Africa, Zambia, Botswana and other parts of the world. Africa CDC will be sharing additional materials regarding this meeting later this week.

Laboratory:

1. This week, over 27.6 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted to date with a positivity rate of 11% and test per case ratio of 9.1.
2. This week, Africa CDC is shipping test kits to Uganda, Malawi, Nigeria and Gambia to support the seroprevalence survey.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

1. Next week, Africa CDC's Infection Prevention and Control TWG in collaboration with Infection Control Africa Network (ICAN), Resolve to Save Lives and WHO-AFRO IPC will hold it's webinar series for Health Care Workers and Healthcare Facility Managers. The first session titled "Introduction to Administrative Controls" in English on Wednesday 20 January 2021 at 1 pm EAT. Register here: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MBkd1OsrTegVGkgaC6SdKA
2. Africa CDC's Infection Prevention and Control TWG will hold it's webinar training on "Introduction to Administrative Controls" in French Friday, 22 January 2021, at 1 pm EAT. Register: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_cht9r9OFSDusNGy0X-HC4Q
3. Africa CDC's Infection Prevention and Control has published a blogpost on IPC reflections on COVID-19. Link: <https://africacdc.org/news-item/ipc-reflections-on-covid-19/>

Surveillance

1. Africa CDC continues to support 17 Member States with the implementation of serosurveys. As of 28 Dec 2020, Zimbabwe's survey was 80% complete and Zambia's was 30% complete with only 1 and 7 districts left to be completed, respectively.
2. Africa CDC continues to support two AU Member States (Uganda and South Africa) with mortality surveillance implementation. This week training began in Uganda for community health workers from 5 districts.

Sciences, Standards and Regulations:

1. Access the biweekly COVID-19 Scientific and Public Health Policy Update which is published every other week on Tuesdays at <https://africacdc.org/resources/> or the WHO AFRO link: https://afrolib.afro.who.int/pmb/opac_css/doc_num.php?explnum_id=7728
2. Access the biweekly report and all other Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC) products on both the [PERC](#) and [Africa CDC website](#). Link:

<https://africacdc.org/download/perc-biweekly-report-22-december-04-january-2020/>

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 guide 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.
5. Member states should put in place or strengthen existing public health and social measures as cases start to rise especially through the holiday.

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/>

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/>

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>
- Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC)
<https://preventepidemics.org/covid19/perc/>