

Outbreak Brief #53: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 19 January 2021

93,665,676 cases and 2,023,560 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: Since the last brief (12 January 2021), 4,593,276 new confirmed¹ coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases and 92,340 new deaths have been reported globally. To date, a total of 93,665,676 COVID-19 cases and 2,023,560 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 4,427,450 (5%), European Region 30,488,064 (33%), Region of the Americas 41,680,773 (45%), South-East Asia Region 12,489,866 (13%) and Western Pacific Region 1,279,018 (1%). Among the affected locations, the United States has reported more than one million new cases each week for the last 10 consecutive weeks, while for the last seven days, the United Kingdom 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) 19 January 2021, a total of 3,284,451 COVID-19 cases and 79,633 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 (86%) of Member States continue to report community transmission. Of the countries actively reporting COVID-19 epidemiologic data, 21 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 (6.1%), Egypt (5.5%), Liberia (4.4%), Mali (4%), Chad (3.9%), Niger (3.4%), Gambia (3.3%), Tunisia (3.2%), Democratic Republic of Congo (3%), Eswatini (2.9%), Comoros (2.8%), South Africa (2.8%), Zimbabwe (2.8%), Somalia (2.7%), Algeria (2.7%), Sierra Leone (2.6%), Malawi (2.5%), Mauritania (2.5%), Angola (2.3%) and Senegal (2.3%).

For Epi week 2 (11 January 2021 - 17 January 2021), 206,987 new COVID-19 cases have been reported, which is a 7% decrease in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 1. The majority of new COVID-19 cases being reported for this week are from the Southern region (66%) followed by the Northern (19%), Western (9%), Eastern (3%) and Central (2%) regions. Countries reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 new cases per 100,000 population) this week include South Africa (183), Seychelles (174), Tunisia (166), Eswatini (108), Cape Verde (93), Namibia (81), Botswana (71), Libya (68) and Zambia (55).

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 2. 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. This week, five countries account for about 75% of the new COVID-19 cases reported: South Africa (51%), Tunisia (9%), Nigeria (6%), Zambia (5%) and Morocco (4%).

Table 1. Confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and recoveries³ reported in Africa for Epi week 2 (11 January 2021 - 17 January 2021)

Country	Number of cases (new)	Percent change in new cases since the previous Epi week (1)	Number of deaths (new)	Percent change in new deaths since the previous Epi week (1)	Epidemic phase ⁴
Central Region	82,313 (3,968)	98%	1,550 (39)	129%	
Burundi	1,236 (250)	63%	2 (0)	NA*	3
Cameroon	28,010 (922)	NA*	455 (4)	NA*	3
Central African Republic	4,973 (0)	-100%	63 (0)	NA*	3
Chad	2,919 (330)	-12%	113 (6)	100%	3
Congo	7,709 (492)	NA*	114 (6)	NA*	3
Democratic Republic of Congo	21,060 (1,624)	26%	634 (23)	92%	3
Equatorial Guinea	5,365 (69)	306%	86 (0)	NA*	3
Gabon	9,899 (205)	67%	66 (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.

Sao Tome and Principe	1,142 (76)	81%	17 (0)	NA*	3
Eastern Region	343,603 (6,970)	-10%	6,421 (120)	-6%	
Comoros	1,592 (442)	55%	45 (27)	440%	3
Djibouti	5,905 (34)	17%	61 (0)	NA*	3
Eritrea	1,877 (321)	36%	6 (0)	-100%	3
Ethiopia	131,195 (2,879)	7%	2,030 (36)	-22%	3
Kenya	99,162 (891)	-39%	1,731 (21)	-16%	3
Madagascar	18,301 (534)	NA*	273 (11)	NA*	3
Mauritius	547 (8)	-33%	10 (0)	NA*	3
Rwanda	11,032 (1,402)	47%	142 (22)	16%	3
Seychelles	705 (174)	-26%	2 (1)	No change	3
Somalia	4,744 (0)	-100%	130 (0)	NA*	3
South Sudan	3,670 (8)	-89%	63 (0)	NA*	3
Sudan	26,279 (0)	NA*	1,603 (0)	NA*	3
Tanzania ⁵	509 (0)	NA*	21 (0)	NA*	3
Uganda	38,085 (277)	-84%	304 (2)	-93%	3
Northern Region	1,027,728 (39,986)	-1%	27,215 (1,207)	1%	
Algeria	103,833 (1,689)	-3%	2,836 (29)	-17%	3
Egypt	156,397 (6,605)	-13%	8,583 (386)	-2%	3
Libya	109,869 (4,491)	32%	1,698 (109)	73%	3
Mauritania	16,039 (527)	-27%	402 (18)	-31%	3
Morocco	459,671 (7,139)	-24%	7,942 (199)	-23%	3
Tunisia	181,885 (19,535)	NA*	5,750 (466)	46500%	3

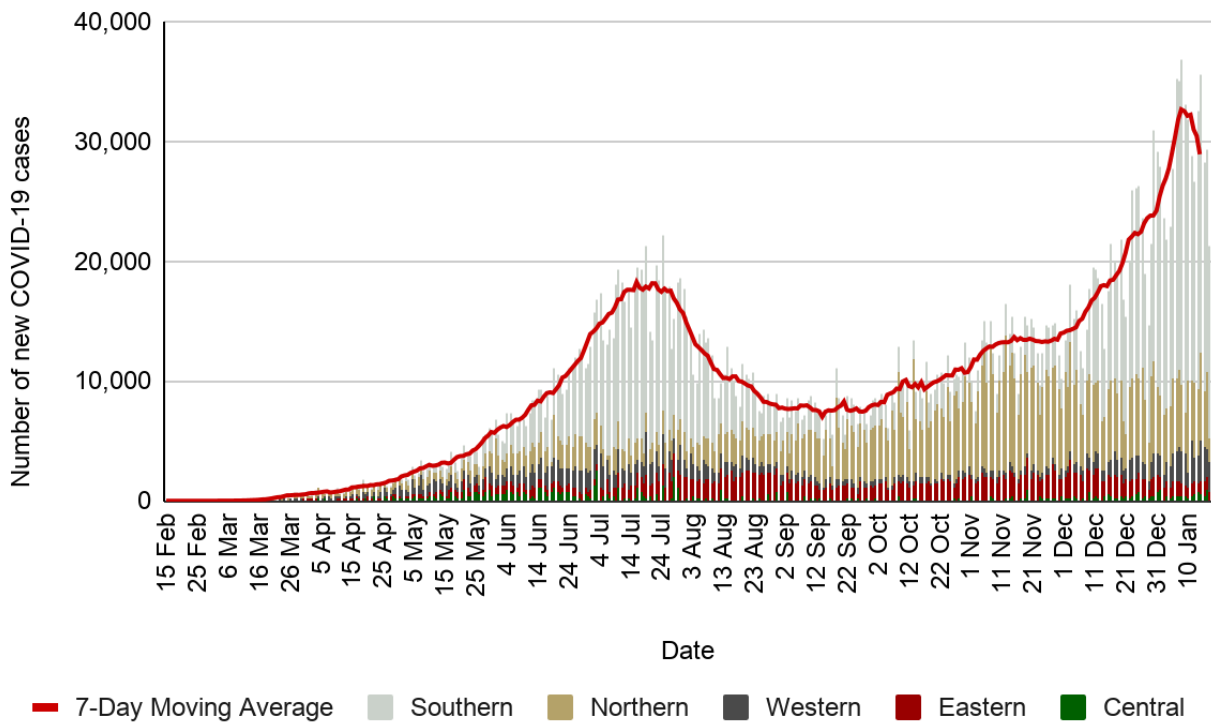
⁵ Last report received 7-May-2020.

Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	34 (0)	-100%	4 (0)	-100%	3
Southern Region	1,528,938 (137,031)	-12%	40,197 (4,532)	14%	
Angola	18,875 (682)	24%	436 (20)	150%	3
Botswana	18,630 (1,862)	40%	88 (29)	107%	3
Eswatini	12,944 (1,509)	1%	376 (81)	27%	3
Lesotho	6,371 (434)	-83%	93 (8)	-60%	3
Malawi	12,470 (3,895)	125%	314 (89)	197%	3
Mozambique	26,551 (4,612)	75%	241 (49)	113%	3
Namibia	30,363 (2,104)	-33%	285 (31)	-21%	3
South Africa	1,337,926 (106,330)	-19%	37,105 (3,942)	10%	3
Zambia	37,605 (9,877)	61%	546 (77)	No change	3
Zimbabwe	27,203 (5,726)	-8%	713 (206)	62%	3
Western Region	284,098 (19,032)	19%	3,647 (198)	47%	
Benin	3,413 (109)	106%	46 (2)	NA*	3
Burkina Faso	9,188 (1,106)	7%	102 (13)	333%	3
Cape Verde	12,993 (560)	9%	119 (4)	100%	3
Côte d'Ivoire	25,241 (1,491)	35%	141 (2)	100%	3
Gambia	3,910 (53)	-7%	127 (2)	100%	3
Ghana	58,065 (1,259)	-6%	352 (12)	200%	3
Guinea	14,165 (185)	2%	81 (0)	NA*	2
Guinea-Bissau	2,509 (31)	No change	45 (0)	NA*	2
Liberia	1,896 (96)	NA*	84 (1)	NA*	2
Mali	7,839 (239)	-31%	310 (12)	-40%	2
Niger	4,156 (279)	-32%	140 (14)	-13%	2
Nigeria	110,387 (11,324)	26%	1,435 (85)	118%	1
Senegal	23,028 (1,783)	15%	515 (50)	14%	1
Sierra Leone	3,006 (172)	7%	77 (0)	-100%	1
Togo	4,302 (345)	35%	73 (1)	-75%	1

Total	3,266,680 (206,987)	-7%	79,030 (6,096)	12%	
--------------	--------------------------------------	------------	---------------------------------	------------	--

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

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



NEW Africa CDC Response Activities:

General:

1. Last week, the African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT) and Africa CDC through the African Union secured the first tranche of 270 million COVID-19 vaccines for the continent.
2. Africa CDC held its weekly press briefings on Thursday, 14 January 2021 at 11 am EAT. The speaker for the week was Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC. The recording for this press brief session is available on the Africa CDC Facebook page. Link: <https://web.facebook.com/watch/?v=757691255074767&extid=gyiQO5GcQdC8XNaY>
3. 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 - Capturing Lessons: COVID-19 Intra-action Review in Focus' on Thursday, 21 January 2021 at 3 pm EAT. Registration link: bit.ly/3jxGzv9

Laboratory:

1. To date, over 29.2 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted across the continent with a positivity rate of 11% and test per case ratio of 8.9, which is an increase of 4.1% from last week.

Healthcare Preparedness and Medical Countermeasures:

Case Management

1. Last week, Africa CDC's Case Management TWG held the 38th clinical webinar titled "COVID-19 vaccine access and distribution in Africa" on Thursday, 14 January 2021 at 2 pm EAT. There were 100+ participants on the webinar and IWD Facebook page. The recording can be accessed here: <https://www.africacdc.training/courses/ccop>

Surveillance

1. Africa CDC continues to support 17 Member States with the implementation of serosurveys. Two countries are actively implementing (Zimbabwe and Zambia are finalising data collection). These are five countries (Uganda, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Zambia and Malawi) that plan to implement.
2. Africa CDC continues to support two AU Member States (Uganda and South Africa) with mortality surveillance implementation. This week training continues in Uganda for community health workers from 10 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. Subscribe [here](#) to receive the weekly Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC) report and all other products or visit the [PERC](#) and [Africa CDC website](#).

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/>

Other 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/>

- 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/>