

Outbreak Brief #56: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 9 February 2021

105,825,060 cases and 2,312,719 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: Since the last brief (2 February 2021), 3,221,234 new confirmed¹ coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases and 89,503 new deaths have been reported globally. To date, a total of 105,825,060 COVID-19 cases and 2,312,719 related deaths (case fatality rate (CFR): 2.2%) have been reported from 225 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 4,833,090 (5%), European Region 35,543,066 (31%), Region of the Americas 47,072,257 (45%), South-East Asia Region 13,187,514 (13%) and Western Pacific Region 1,489,368 (1%). Over the last seven days, the United States, Brazil, France, the United Kingdom, and Russia have reported more than 100k 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) 9 February 2021, a total of 3,678,523 COVID-19 cases and 95,529 deaths (CFR: 2.6%) have been reported in 55 African Union (AU) Member States. This is 3.5% of all cases reported globally. The majority (84%) of Member States continue to report community transmission. Five Member States reported the presence of the 501Y.V1 variant: Ghana, Morocco, Gambia, Nigeria and Senegal. Seven Member States have reported the presence of the 501Y.V2 variant: Botswana, Comoros, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zambia. Of the countries actively reporting COVID-19 epidemiologic data, 20 are reporting case fatality rates higher than the global case fatality rate of 2.2%: Sahrawi Republic (17.1%), Sudan (6.6%), Egypt (5.7%), Liberia (4.3%), Mali (4.1%), Zimbabwe (3.9%), Eswatini (3.7%), Chad (3.6%), Niger (3.6%), Comoros (3.6%), Tunisia (3.3%), The Gambia (3.2%), Malawi (3.2%), South Africa (3.1%), DR Congo (2.9%), Somalia (2.8%), Algeria (2.7%), Mauritania (2.5%), Senegal (2.4%), and Angola (2.4%).

For Epi week 5 (1 February 2021 - 7 February 2021), 98,378 new COVID-19 cases have been reported, which is a 26% decrease in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 4. The decrease is largely due to the decrease in new cases being reported from South Africa over the last four weeks. The majority of new COVID-19 cases being reported for this week are from the Southern region (46%) followed by the Northern (23%), Western (18%), Eastern (10%) and Central (3%) regions. The countries reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 new cases per 100,000

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/>

population) this week include Seychelles (308), Libya (83), Tunisia (65), Botswana (65), and Cape Verde (59).

Table 1 highlights the reported cases and deaths from COVID-19 in all countries in Africa for epi week 5. 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 from 15 February 2020 to 9 February 2021. The curve continues to trend downward as more countries are recovering from their second wave of cases. Currently, six countries (Gabon, Libya, Mauritius, Somalia, South Sudan, and The Gambia) have experienced an increase in the number of new cases being reported over the last three weeks. . This week, seven countries account for about 66% of the new COVID-19 cases reported: South Africa (23%), Nigeria (9%), Zambia (9%), Tunisia (8%), Mozambique (6%), Libya (6%), and Ethiopia (5%).

Table 1. Confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths³ reported in Africa for epi week 5 (1 February 2021 - 7 February 2021)

Country	Number of cases (new)	Percent change in new cases since the previous Epi week (4)	Number of deaths (new)	Percent change in new deaths since the previous Epi week (4)	Epidemic phase ⁴
Central Region	91,773 (3,196)	20%	1,641 (22)	-21%	
Burundi	1,723 (91)	-43%	2 (0)	NA*	3
Cameroon	31,394 (1,081)	55%	474 (0)	-100%	3
Central African Republic	4,995 (6)	20%	63 (0)	NA*	3
Chad	3,508 (132)	-32%	125 (7)	250%	3
Congo Republic	8,060 (173)	86%	122 (4)	300%	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.

D R Congo	23,671 (830)	-6%	681 (8)	-33%	3
Equatorial Guinea	5,614 (80)	No change	86 (0)	NA*	3
Gabon	11,457 (709)	51%	71 (3)	200%	3
Sao Tome and Principe	1,351 (94)	36%	17 (0)	NA*	3
Eastern Region	370,983 (9,523)	2%	7,013 (151)	-14%	
Comoros	3,088 (362)	-21%	112 (19)	-14%	3
Djibouti	5,947 (15)	15%	63 (0)	-100%	3
Eritrea	2,326 (191)	-2%	7 (0)	-100%	3
Ethiopia	142,338 (4,688)	18%	2,148 (55)	104%	3
Kenya	101,819 (1,046)	32%	1,779 (16)	-16%	2
Madagascar	19,360 (295)	NA*	285 (4)	NA*	3
Mauritius	584 (15)	15%	10 (0)	NA*	2
Rwanda	16,451 (1,147)	-51%	220 (24)	9%	3
Seychelles	1,513 (308)	32%	6 (2)	100%	1
Somalia	4,862 (78)	160%	134 (4)	NA*	3
South Sudan	4,609 (680)	382%	66 (2)	NA*	3
Sudan	27,717 (444)	-41%	1,835 (23)	-69%	3
Tanzania ⁵	509 (0)	NA*	21 (0)	NA*	3
Uganda	39,860 (254)	-39%	327 (2)	-71%	3
Northern Region	1,113,474 (22,997)	-16%	30,625 (1,028)	-9%	
Algeria	108,996 (1,749)	0%	2,916 (23)	-23%	3
Egypt	169,640 (3,689)	-14%	9,651 (335)	-6%	3
Libya	124,882 (5,480)	10%	1,974 (91)	-10%	3
Mauritania	16,807 (172)	-28%	426 (4)	-33%	3

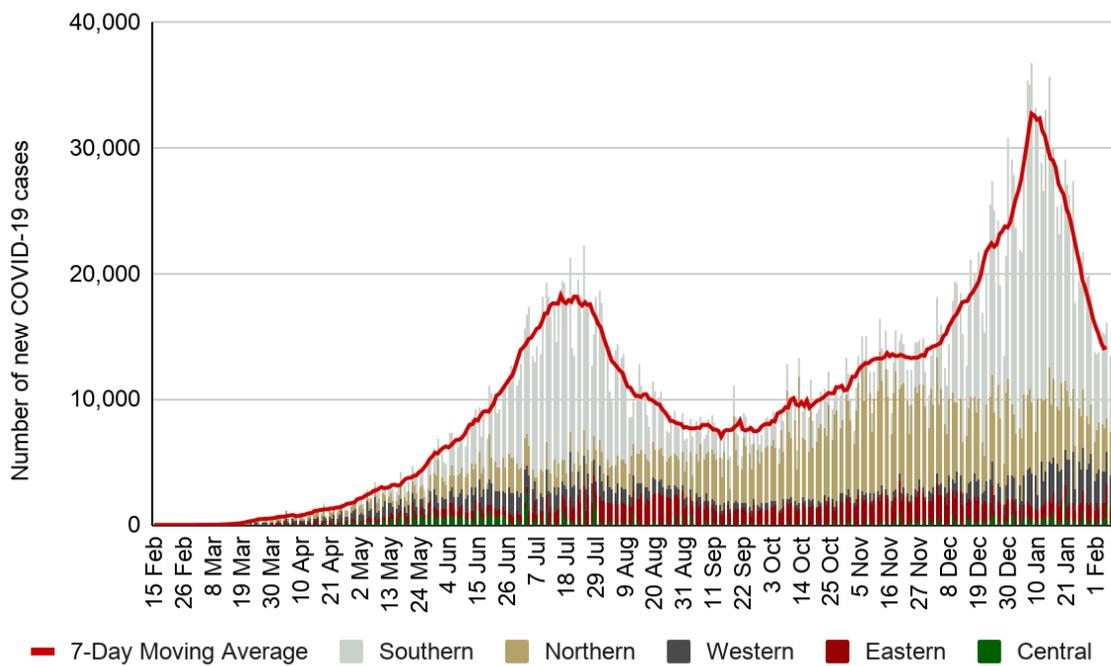
⁵ Last report received 7-May-2020.

Morocco	475,355 (4,198)	-14%	8,394 (119)	-5%	3
Tunisia	217,753 (7,708)	-32%	7,257 (455)	-12%	3
Sahrawi Republic	41 (1)	No change	7 (1)	NA*	3
Southern Region	1,749,873 (45,037)	-36%	51,582 (2,666)	-35%	
Angola	20,086 (290)	-27%	475 (9)	29%	3
Botswana	24,435 (1,697)	-60%	179 (31)	29%	3
Eswatini	16,204 (493)	-60%	604 (39)	-55%	3
Lesotho	9,380 (716)	-29%	183 (11)	-78%	2
Malawi	26,875 (2,912)	-36%	837 (135)	-30%	2
Mozambique	44,600 (5,946)	-5%	460 (93)	50%	3
Namibia	34,973 (1,029)	-32%	375 (23)	-30%	3
South Africa	1,476,135 (22,374)	-45%	46,290 (2,126)	-35%	3
Zambia	62,633 (8,416)	-5%	853 (90)	-27%	3
Zimbabwe	34,552 (1,164)	-44%	1,326 (109)	-49%	2
Western Region	345,483 (17,625)	-19%	4,309 (218)	-11%	
Benin	4,193 (300)	20%	55 (3)	-25%	1
Burkina Faso	11,285 (603)	-6%	134 (14)	75%	3
Cabo Verde	14,423 (353)	-39%	135 (1)	-86%	3
Côte d'Ivoire	29,825 (1,426)	-8%	162 (8)	No change	1
The Gambia	4,237 (147)	25%	134 (6)	NA*	3
Ghana	71,533 (2,974)	-49%	464 (31)	-45%	1
Guinea	14,687 (141)	-16%	84 (2)	NA*	3
Guinea-Bissau	2,780 (145)	41%	46 (1)	NA*	3
Liberia	1,956 (12)	-60%	84 (0)	NA*	3
Mali	8,176 (85)	-21%	338 (8)	14%	3
Niger	4,612 (95)	-42%	165 (6)	-25%	3
Nigeria	139,748 (8,506)	-12%	1,667 (81)	-9%	3

Senegal	28,760 (2,237)	25%	682 (54)	2%	3
Sierra Leone	3,785 (192)	-58%	79 (0)	-100%	3
Togo	5,483 (409)	-1%	80 (3)	50%	3
Total	3,671,586 (98,378)	-26%	95,170 (4,085)	-28%	

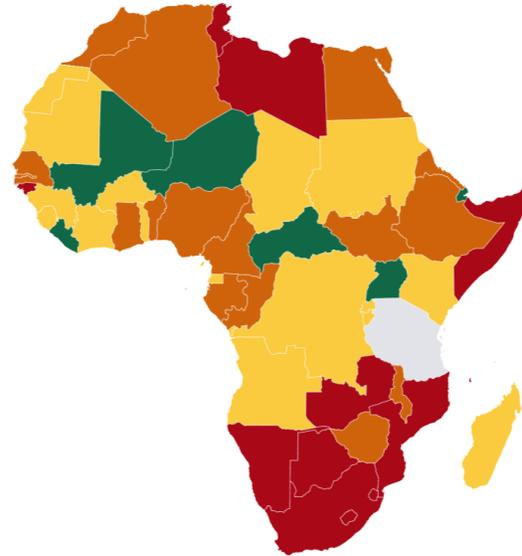
*No new cases/deaths reported in the previous week.

Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported by day in Africa by African Union region, 15 February 2020 - 9 February 2021.



Public Health and Social Measure (PHSM) Highlights

Figure 3. Map of AU Member States by hotspot level⁶ on the PERC [dashboard](#). This system is intended to highlight AU Member States in need of attention due to an increasing or widespread outbreak. For specifics on calculations, refer to the dashboard [methodology](#).



The table below highlights changes in PHSMs by PERC hotspot warning level based on data from [Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker](#). An up arrow indicates new PHSMs announced. The horizontal arrow indicates PHSMs extended. The down arrow indicates PHSMs loosened/expired.

Country	PHSM Trend	PHSM Change
Warning Level 4: Red - A very widespread or fast-growing outbreak.		
Cabo Verde	↓	Cabo Verde maintained a state of calamity on the island of São Vicente until 15 February. The nation's other islands were downgraded to a state of contingency.
Comoros	↑	Comoros instituted new restrictions on the islands of Grande-Comore and Anjouan, including a ban on religious services and the closure of all schools. A nightly curfew also remains in place.
Mozambique	↑	Mozambique imposed a nighttime curfew from 21:00-4:00 in capital city Maputo and the surrounding areas. Additional restrictions include a ban on all religious services, school closures, suspension of sports, and a ban on all private gatherings except for weddings. These will be in effect until 7 March.
Namibia	→	Namibia extended existing restrictions, which include a ban on gatherings of 50 or more people and limits on the sale of alcohol, until 24 February. Namibia also adjusted the nightly curfew to begin at 22:00 and end at 5:00, a slight shift from the previous curfew of 21:00-4:00.

⁶ The delineation of the international and other boundaries used on this map don't imply official endorsement or acceptance by the African Union or Africa CDC.

South Africa	↓	South Africa eased multiple lockdown restrictions. Public places, including beaches and swimming pools, will reopen as well as religious institutions, which have a 50 person capacity limitation on indoor services. Hours of curfew have also been reduced, and restrictions on the sale of alcohol have largely been lifted. Schools will reopen on 15 February, a two-week delay from the original reopening date of 27 January.
Zambia	↓	Schools in Zambia reopened on 1 February after multiple delays.
Warning Level 3: Orange - A widespread or growing outbreak.		
Algeria	↓	Algeria shortened the nightly curfew in Algiers Province, which is now from 22:00 until 5:00 (previously 20:00-5:00). This will remain in effect until 15 February.
Ghana	↑	Ghana reimposed a ban on public gatherings, including weddings, concerts, theatre, and parties. Funerals with fewer than 25 guests are permitted as long as social distancing and mask wearing is in effect.
Malawi	→	Malawi delayed school reopening until 22 February as transmission continues to rise.
Morocco	→	Morocco extended the state of emergency until 10 March, which entails maintaining a nightly curfew and bans on public and private gatherings.
Nigeria	↓	Some states in Nigeria reopened primary and secondary schools on 1 February, including Kaduna, Akwa Ibom , and Edo. However, a strike among teachers in Edo state complicated reopening efforts.
South Sudan	↑	South Sudan imposed a partial lockdown for at least one month. New restrictions include a ban on all social and religious gatherings, closure of schools, and mandatory mask wearing in public.
Warning Level 2: Yellow - A moderate outbreak or the possible start of a growing outbreak.		
Angola	↓	In Angola, primary schools are expected to reopen on 10 February after multiple delays.
Rwanda	→	Rwanda extended a lockdown in the capital city Kigali until 8 February and announced that new measures, including a nightly curfew, will be imposed once the lockdown expires.

Warning Level 1: Green - Relatively low spread and no evidence of a growing outbreak.

Uganda	↓	In Uganda , President Museveni announced that schools and higher education institutes will begin phased reopening as of 1 March, however, nursery schools for children ages 3-6 will remain closed.
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NEW Africa CDC Response Activities

General:

1. Last week, Africa CDC celebrated its 4th anniversary - supporting and strengthening public health capacity in AU Member States and on the Africa continent.
2. Last week, Dr. Nkengasong hosted Africa CDC’s weekly press briefing on Thursday, 4 February 2021 at 11 am EAT. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Facebook page](#).
3. This week, the Public Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHEOCs) and COVID-19 Management webinar series addressed 'Incident Management System - Implementing Incident Management System'. The webinar will hold on Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 3 pm EAT. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Facebook page](#).

Laboratory:

1. To date, over 32 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted across the continent with a positivity rate of 11.4% and test per case ratio of 8.8. For epi week 5 631,120 new tests were conducted, which is a 2% decrease when compared to the previous week (1,006,475 tests).

Healthcare Preparedness and Medical Countermeasures:

Case Management

1. Last week, Africa CDC’s Case Management TWG held the 41st clinical webinar titled “Contextualized implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for children and young people in Africa” on Thursday, 4 February 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>

Infection and Prevention Control (IPC)

1. Last week, the IPC TWG had its sixth webinar session titled “Prevention of airborne pathogens in the context of COVID-19” for 583 participants in the English session and 155 participants for the French.
2. This week, the IPC TWG will hold the 4th session on “Recommendations for Healthcare Facility Leadership and Management in the context of COVID-19” in English on Wednesday 10 February 2021 at 1 pm EAT and in French on Friday, 12 February 2021 at 2 pm EAT. For the English session, register [here](#) and for the French session, register [here](#).

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](#).
2. Subscribe [here](#) to receive the weekly Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC) update and all other products or visit the [PERC](#) and [Africa CDC website](#).

Recommendations for the Member States

1. Member States should continue to enhance their COVID-19⁷ surveillance efforts to include:
 - a. Syndromic surveillance like influenza like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI).⁸
 - b. Rapid mortality surveillance that includes the collection, analysis and use of all-cause mortality data collected through the facility- or community-based surveillance.⁹
 - c. Genomic surveillance¹⁰ to monitor variant presence and spread as well as the continued evolution of the virus.
2. Member States should continue to perform contact tracing¹¹ of confirmed cases based on transmission type and country capacity and enhance diagnostic screening efforts with the use of rapid antigen tests¹².
3. All Member States should notify and routinely share data regarding confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths, recoveries, tests conducted and healthcare workers infected with WHO and Africa CDC 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 for those who develop severe symptoms (i.e. difficulty breathing).
5. Member States should put in place or strengthen existing public health and social measures as cases start to rise.

Resources for more information

- Africa CDC COVID-19 updates: <https://africacdc.org/covid-19/>

⁷ [WHO COVID-19 Case definition](#)

⁸ Africa CDC Protocol for enhanced surveillance for COVID-19 in Africa: [Protocol for Enhanced Severe Acute Respiratory Illness and Influenza-Like Illness Surveillance for COVID-19 in Africa – Africa CDC](#)

⁹ Revealing the toll of COVID-19: A technical package for Member States – Africa CDC

¹⁰ Genomic sequencing of SARS-CoV-2: a guide to implementation for maximum impact on public health

¹¹ Africa CDC Guidance on Contact Tracing for COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://africacdc.org/download/guidance-on-contact-tracing-for-covid-19-pandemic/>

¹² [Interim Guidance on the Use of Rapid Antigen tests for COVID-19 Response – Africa CDC](#)

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