

Outbreak Brief #81: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 3 August 2021

Global case count: 198,271,475 cases and 4,228,086 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: Since the last brief (27 July 2021), **4,154,289** new confirmed¹ coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases, including **64,860** new deaths, have been reported globally. To date, a global total of **198,271,475** COVID-19 cases and **4,228,086** related deaths (case fatality ratio (CFR): 2.1%) have been reported from 225 countries and territories to the World Health Organization (WHO). The distribution of cumulative cases (proportion of global cases) from the WHO reporting regions (excluding Africa) are as follows: **Eastern Mediterranean Region** 10,835,737 (5%), **European Region** 60,225,802 (30%), **Region of the Americas** 77,317,150 (39%), **South-East Asia Region** 38,480,764 (19%) and **Western Pacific Region** 4,574,460 (2%). In the last seven days, the five countries reporting the highest number of new cases globally are the United States (522,332), India (284,696), Indonesia (268,067), Brazil (247,321) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (212,087). For more detailed information on cases and deaths reported outside of Africa, refer to the [WHO COVID-19 dashboard](#).

As of 9 a.m. East African Time (EAT) 3 August 2021, a total of 6,780,837 COVID-19 cases and 171,752 deaths (CFR: **2.5%**) have been reported in 55 African Union (AU) Member States. This represents 3% of all cases and 4% of all deaths reported globally. Twenty-four (44%) AU Member States are reporting CFRs higher than the global CFR. Fifty-four (98%) AU Member States have experienced at least a second wave, 32 (58%) have experienced a third wave, and three countries (Algeria, Tunisia and Kenya) have experienced a fourth wave of COVID-19 cases since the beginning of the pandemic. Figure 1 shows the trend of new COVID-19 cases reported per day by AU region from 15 February 2020 to 3 August 2021. The trend is showing fluctuations in the last two weeks with a downward trend for the last few days that is mainly influenced by declining numbers of cases reported from the Southern region. More information on the COVID-19 situation in Africa is available on the Africa CDC [daily dashboard](#) and [hotspot dashboard](#).

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

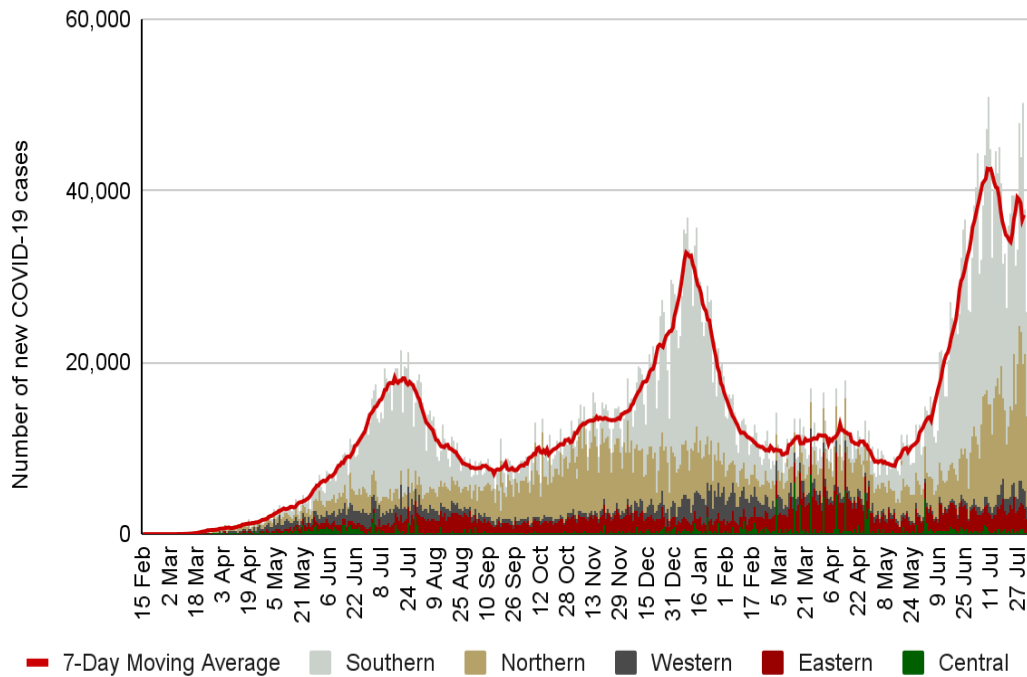


Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported by day in Africa by African Union region, 15 February 2020 - 3 August 2021².

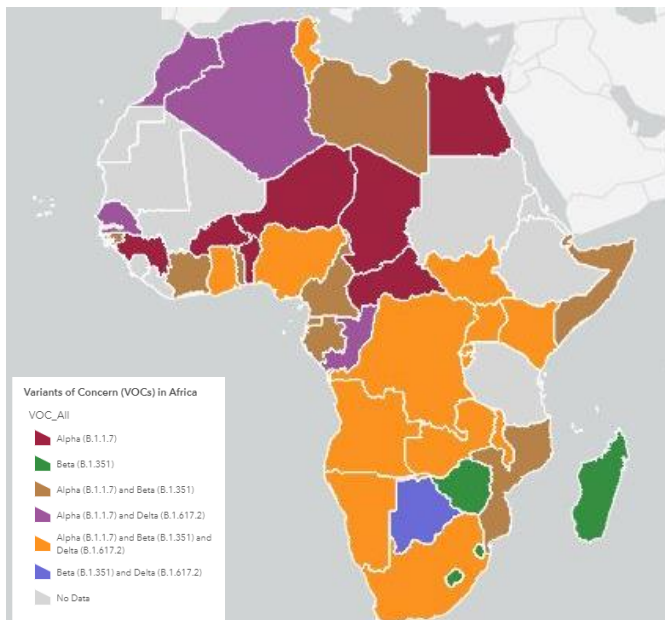


Figure 2: SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern³ reported in African Union Member States, as of 28 July 2021.

As of 28 July 2021, 45 AU Member States (Figure 2) have reported the presence of the Alpha (38 Member States), Beta (32 Member States), and/or Delta (21 Member States) variant of concern (VOC).

The Pathogen Genomics Dashboard provides a breakdown of variant types reported by Member State. More information on SARS-CoV-2 sequencing in Africa is available on the [Africa Pathogen Genomics Initiative Dashboard](#).

² The dates are at a two-week interval; the last date is 3 August 2021

³ Variant of concern: a SARS-CoV-2 virus variant that is associated with one or more of the following: increase in transmissibility or changes in the epidemiology of COVID-19; increase in virulence or change in clinical disease presentation; or decrease in effectiveness of public health and social measures or available diagnostics, vaccines, therapeutics.

For Epi week 30 (26 July - 1 August 2021); 270,293 new COVID-19 cases were reported, a 13% increase in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 29. The Southern Region accounted for 49% of the new COVID-19 cases reported for this week, followed by the Northern (38%), Eastern (7%), Western (5%) and Central (1%) regions. This week, six countries account for 72% of the new COVID-19 cases reported: South Africa (29%), Morocco (19%), Tunisia (8%), Libya (7%), Mozambique (5%) and Botswana (5%). The countries reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 new cases per 100,000 population) this week are Botswana (546), Seychelles (442), Libya (280), Eswatini (268), Tunisia (174), Morocco (137) and South Africa (132). Table 2 summarises the cumulative COVID-19 cases and deaths reported by Member State and Region in Africa and the new COVID-19 cases and deaths reported during Epi week 30.

Table 2: Confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths⁴ reported in Africa for epidemiological week 30 (26 July - 1 August 2021).

Country	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 29	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 29
Central Region	205,657 (2,635)	-16%	3,155 (18)	157%
Burundi	7,505 (932)	21%	9 (1)	NA*
Cameroon	82,064 (0)	NA*	1,334 (0)	NA*
Central African Republic	11,163 (18)	-38%	98 (0)	NA*
Chad	4,973 (4)	-20%	174 (0)	NA*
Congo	13,186 (30)	-72%	178 (1)	No change
Democratic Republic of Congo	50,017 (1,514)	-29%	1,038 (15)	200%
Equatorial Guinea	8,911 (48)	220%	123 (0)	NA*
Gabon	25,384 (59)	-9%	164 (1)	No change
Sao Tome and Principe	2,454 (30)	114%	37 (0)	NA*
Eastern Region	802,092 (17,613)	1%	17,013 (349)	-13%
Comoros	4,081 (0)	-100%	147 (0)	NA*

⁴ Data is continuously verified for accuracy and reliability, thus may change based on retrospective updates from Member States.

Country	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 29	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 29
Djibouti	11,652 (17)	113%	156 (1)	NA*
Eritrea	6,547 (52)	-44%	35 (2)	-33%
Ethiopia	280,565 (2,022)	139%	4,390 (21)	75%
Kenya	203,680 (6,271)	35%	3,946 (81)	-10%
Madagascar	42,740 (71)	16%	958 (14)	367%
Mauritius	4,339 (604)	-48%	19 (0)	NA*
Rwanda	71,326 (6,119)	-22%	821 (79)	-15%
Seychelles	18,189 (442)	-14%	94 (5)	-38%
Somalia	15,456 (253)	216%	813 (24)	200%
South Sudan	11,049 (132)	NA*	119 (2)	NA*
Sudan	37,185 (0)	-100%	2,776 (0)	NA*
Tanzania	858 (0)	-100%	29 (0)	-100%
Uganda	94,425 (1,630)	-14%	2,710 (120)	-33%
Northern Region	1,965,507 (103,506)	47%	54,917 (1,830)	4%
Algeria	172,564 (10,409)	18%	4,291 (228)	82%
Egypt	284,311 (287)	-11%	16,528 (41)	No change
Libya	256,328 (19,367)	61%	3,579 (181)	83%
Mauritania	25,973 (2,218)	98%	567 (32)	23%
Morocco	629,717 (50,445)	133%	9,833 (244)	76%
Tunisia	595,532 (20,530)	-22%	20,067 (1,099)	-17%
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	1,082 (250)	576%	52 (5)	NA*
Southern Region	3,255,495 (132,029)	-4%	89,211 (3,890)	-12%

Country	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 29	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 29
Angola	42,815 (1,035)	6%	1,016 (32)	19%
Botswana	115,220 (13,096)	28%	1,653 (168)	7%
Eswatini	26,220 (3,215)	72%	798 (46)	15%
Lesotho	13,603 (723)	85%	377 (14)	-22%
Malawi	52,631 (3,994)	-23%	1,661 (181)	27%
Mozambique	123,541 (13,253)	22%	1,462 (180)	10%
Namibia	119,442 (2,478)	-40%	3,064 (230)	-24%
South Africa	2,456,184 (78,361)	-5%	72,191 (2,416)	-17%
Zambia	196,293 (4,222)	-34%	3,406 (134)	-29%
Zimbabwe	109,546 (11,652)	-18%	3,583 (489)	4%
Western Region	534,607 (14,510)	20%	6,928 (169)	41%
Benin	8,394 (70)	-13%	108 (1)	NA*
Burkina Faso	13,588 (47)	840%	169 (0)	NA*
Cape Verde	33,822 (245)	-11%	298 (0)	-100%
Côte d'Ivoire	50,278 (686)	73%	330 (6)	50%
Gambia	7,962 (629)	52%	213 (5)	-72%
Ghana	104,994 (1,975)	-35%	837 (14)	180%
Guinea	25,914 (703)	75%	232 (26)	136%
Guinea-Bissau	4,498 (286)	79%	76 (2)	100%
Liberia	5,459 (63)	NA*	148 (0)	NA*
Mali	14,587 (45)	55%	533 (3)	NA*
Niger	5,637 (38)	46%	195 (0)	-100%
Nigeria	174,315 (3,204)	103%	2,149 (17)	240%
Senegal	63,002 (5,739)	11%	1,367 (86)	41%
Sierra Leone	6,287 (59)	40%	120 (2)	-33%

Country	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 29	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 29
Togo	15,870 (721)	44%	153 (7)	-13%
Total	6,763,358 (270,293)	13%	171,224 (6,256)	-7%

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

Public Health and Social Measure (PHSM) Highlights

Table 3 below highlights changes in PHSMs for selected countries based on data from the [Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker](#). An up arrow indicates new PHSMs were announced; a horizontal arrow indicates PHSM was extended; a down arrow indicates PHSMs were loosened/expired. Member States are organised by tiers based on current epidemiological data from 24 - 30 July 2021.

Table 3: Changes in Public Health and Social Measures, selected countries, 24- 30 July 2021.

Country	PHSM Trend	PHSM Change
Tier 4 (High Alert): Daily case incidence per 1M people/day \geq 80 and/or positivity rate \geq 12%		
Libya	↑	Officials in Libya imposed a nationwide nightly curfew, from 18:00-06:00, currently enforced by the military.
Morocco	→/↑	Morocco extended the nationwide state of health emergency until 10 September. The city of Casablanca was also put into lockdown, which includes a nightly curfew and school closures.
Rwanda	→	Authorities in Rwanda extended lockdown measures in the capital city Kigali and surrounding districts through 31 July. Measures include a stay-at-home order for nonessential travel, a ban on public gatherings, and capacity limits on public transport and in other businesses.
South Africa	↑	Some restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 have been lifted in South Africa , including the ban on the sale of alcohol and restrictions on movement between provinces. Other measures--including the mask mandate--remain in place.

Zimbabwe	↓	Although other nationwide lockdown measures remain in place, Zimbabwe is reopening some of its tourist attractions to vaccinated visitors, including the famous Victoria Falls.
Tier 3 (Moderate Alert): Daily case incidence per 1M people/day is 20 to <80 and/or positivity rate is 5% to <12%		
Algeria	↑	The nightly curfew in Algeria was extended by 5 hours (from 20:00-6:00, previously 23:00-4:00) and imposed additional restrictions, including closure of gyms and beaches, and takeout service only at restaurants and cafes.
Cabo Verde	↓	Authorities in Cabo Verde allowed the nationwide state of calamity to lapse given the current epidemiological situation in the country. Restrictions on activities and gatherings will be lifted for people who can show proof of vaccination.
Lesotho	↑	Lesotho increased its nationwide alert level from blue to purple. Measures under this order include a nightly curfew, capacity limits on religious services, and a ban on public and private social gatherings.
Mauritania	↑	Authorities in Mauritania extended the nationwide nightly curfew by two hours, from 22:00-6:00 to 20:00-6:00.
Tier 2 (Low Alert): Daily case incidence per 1M people/day is 5 to <20 and/or positivity rate is 3% to 5%		
Ghana	↑	Officials in Ghana imposed some restrictions on certain public gatherings, including time limits on funerals and a ban on post-wedding receptions.
Guinea-Bissau	→	Guinea-Bissau extended the nationwide state of alert until 8 August. Measures include capacity restrictions on social and cultural events (including funerals), ongoing closure of gyms and nightclubs, and a public mask mandate.
Tier 1 (Standard Precautions): Daily case incidence per 1M people/day is <5 and/or positivity rate is <3%		
Congo	↑/→	Congo banned flights from the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo due to concerns over the circulation of the Delta variant. Authorities in Congo also extended the nationwide state of health emergency until 13 August.

Madagascar	→	Madagascar extended the nationwide state of health emergency for an additional 15 days. Measures include nightly curfews in specific regions of higher transmission, as well as a mandate requiring the use of facemasks in public.
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NEW Africa CDC Response Activities

General:

1. Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) hosted Africa CDC’s weekly press briefing on Thursday 29 July 2021. He was joined by Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa to discuss the COVID-19 vaccines situation on the continent, the distribution of US donated vaccine doses to AU Member States, Africa vaccine manufacturing initiative, the third and fourth waves, as well as COVID-19 Variants of Concern. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Twitter page](#).
2. Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention met with H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania on Thursday 27 July 2021 to discuss areas of collaboration for COVID-19 response in Tanzania.
3. Africa CDC will hold a webinar on Cross Country Learning for Community Health System Strengthening. The webinar will be co-hosted by Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC and H.E. Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, Former President of Liberia to discuss implementation of the Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing initiative (PACT) and experience sharing by representatives from six AU Member States. The webinar will be held on 3 - 4 August 2021 at 2 p.m. EAT. Register [here](#)
4. As of 2 August 2021, 53 (96%) out of 55 African Union Member States have started COVID-19 vaccination campaigns targeting priority populations. Cumulatively, over 68.3million doses have been administered, giving a coverage of 2.7% of the continental population. Of the doses administered, 48.3 million have received the first dose and 19.9million have received the second dose. Eritrea, and Burundi are the two AU Member States yet to start the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. More information on COVID-19 vaccination can be found on the [Africa CDC COVID-19 vaccine dashboard](#).

Laboratory:

1. Over 59.4 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted in Africa since February 2020. The cumulative positivity rate⁵ and test per case ratio⁶ are 11% and 9, respectively. For Epi week 30, a total of 1,373,495 new tests were conducted, a decrease of 4% compared to Epi week 29 when 1,318,499 tests were conducted.
2. Africa CDC, in collaboration with Global Health System Solutions (GHSS) held a step down training on antigen testing for 89 participants in Congo-Brazzaville on 26 - 29 July 2021.

⁵ [Public health criteria to adjust public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19](#)

⁶ WHO set 10-30 tests per every confirmed case as a general benchmark of adequate testing.

3. Africa CDC will support a training on antigen testing for participants in Burkina Faso and Chad on 27-30 August 2021.

Healthcare Preparedness and Medical Countermeasures:

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

1. Africa CDC participated in a joint virtual training hosted by WHO AFRO on COVID-19 prevention and control; in collaboration with UNICEF/US CDC, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and Action Against Hunger on 28-30 July 2021. The training addressed the resurgence of COVID-19 infection in Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia and Mozambique. A total of 700 participants attended.
2. Africa CDC will hold the third session of the eighth IPC webinar series titled “Strengthening IPC Programmes to prevent disease outbreaks” on Wednesday 4 August 2021 at 1 p.m. EAT for the English session. Register [here](#).
3. Africa CDC will hold the second session of the eighth IPC webinar series titled “Strengthening IPC Programmes to prevent disease outbreaks” in French, on 5 August 2021 at 2 p.m. EAT. Register [here](#).

Sciences, Standards and Regulations:

1. Access the biweekly COVID-19 Scientific and Public Health Policy Update [here](#).
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 for influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI).⁸
 - b. Rapid mortality surveillance includes collection, analysis and the use of all-cause mortality data collected through the facility- or community-based surveillance.⁹
 - c. Genomic surveillance¹⁰ to monitor the presence of variants, the spread and the continuous evolution of the virus.

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

2. Member States should continue to perform contact tracing¹¹ of confirmed cases based on transmission type and country capacity and enhance diagnostic screening efforts using the rapid antigen tests¹².
3. All Member States should notify and routinely share data with WHO and Africa CDC regarding confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths, recoveries, tests conducted and infected healthcare workers for updated information for action. 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 (e.g. difficulty breathing).
5. Member States should put in place or strengthen existing public health and social measures if COVID-19 incidence starts to rise.

Resources for more information

- Africa CDC COVID-19 updates: <https://africacdc.org/covid-19/>
- Adapted Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://africacdc.org/download/adapted-africa-joint-continental-strategy-for-covid-19-pandemic/>
- 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>

¹¹Africa 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](#)