

Outbreak Brief #83: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 17 August 2021

Global case count: 207,218,563 cases and 4,362,968 deaths

Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States

Outbreak Update: Since the last brief (10 August 2021), **4,556,501** new confirmed¹ coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases, including **68,634** new deaths, have been reported globally. To date, a global total of 207,218,563 COVID-19 cases and **4,362,968** 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** 11,648,839 (6%), **European Region** 62,600,959 (30%), **Region of the Americas** 80,203,540 (39%), **South-East Asia Region** 39,992,613 (19%) and **Western Pacific Region** 5,394,531 (3%). In the last seven days, the five countries reporting the highest number of new cases globally are the United States (778,272), Islamic Republic of Iran (267,092), India (255,559), Brazil (198,363) and The United Kingdom (198,075). 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) 17 August 2021, a total of 7,314,632 COVID-19 cases and 184,565 deaths (**CFR: 2.5%**) have been reported in 55 African Union (AU) Member States. This represents 3.5% of all cases and 4.2% of all deaths reported globally. Twenty-two (40%) AU Member States are reporting CFRs higher than the global CFR. Fifty-four (98%) AU Member States have experienced at least a second wave, 36 (65%) have experienced a third wave, and four countries (Algeria, Kenya, Somalia, and Tunisia) 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 17 August 2021. Overall, there is a downward trend in the number of new cases being reported by day and this is still influenced by declining numbers being reported from the Southern region. More information on 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>

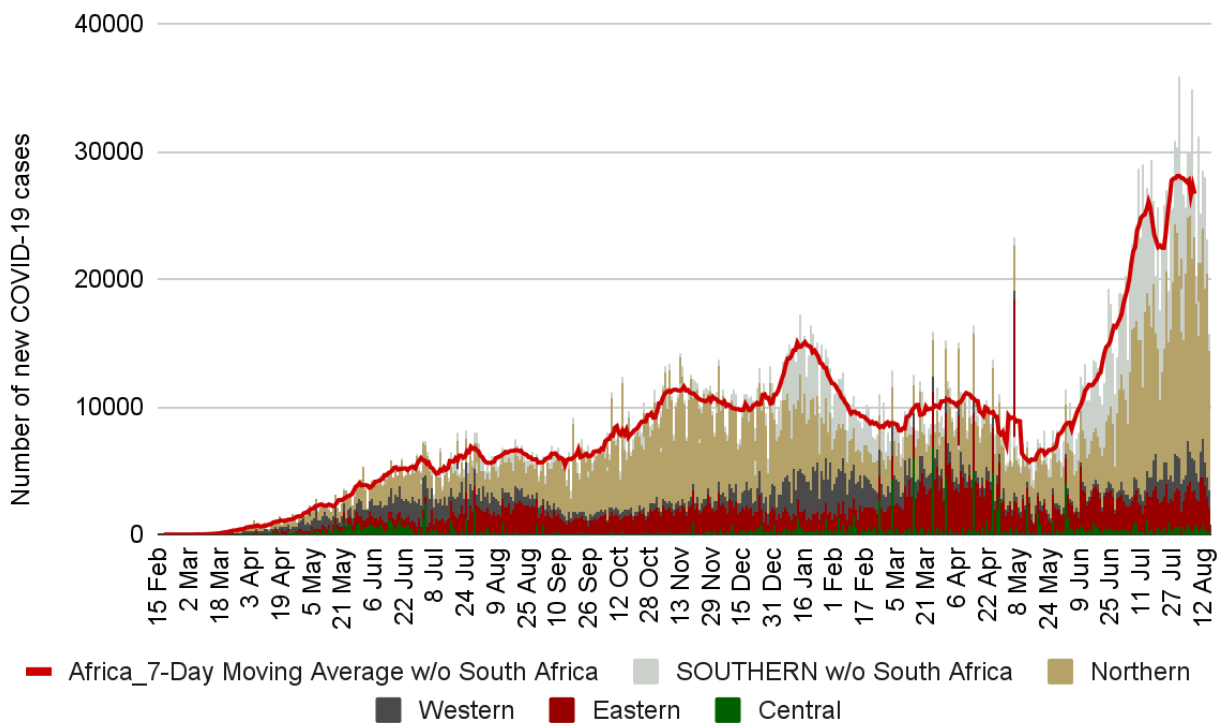


Figure 1: New COVID-19 cases reported by day in Africa by African Union region, 15 February 2020 - 17 August 2021².

As of 17 August 2021, 51 AU Member States have reported the presence of the Alpha (42 Member States), Beta (37 Member States), Delta (30 Member States), and/or Gamma³ (1 Member State) Variants 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](#).

For Epi week 32 (9 - 15 August 2021); 242,041 new COVID-19 cases were reported, a 11% decrease in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 31. The Southern Region accounted for 43% of the new COVID-19 cases reported for this week, followed by the Northern (41%), Eastern (9%), Western (6%) and Central (1%) regions. This week, seven countries accounted for 79% of the new COVID-19 cases reported: South Africa (30%), Morocco (26%), Libya (6%), Tunisia (5%), Botswana (5%), Kenya (4%), and Mozambique (3%). The countries reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 new cases per 100,000 population) this week are Botswana (484), Eswatini (412), Seychelles (399), Libya (214), Morocco (171), South Africa (122), and Tunisia (101).

² The dates are at a two-week interval; the last date is 17 August 2021

³ Sudan inadvertently reported the presence of the Gamma VOC. Correct number now listed.

Table 2 summarizes 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 32.

Table 2: Confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths⁴ reported in Africa for epidemiological week 32 (9 - 15 August 2021).

Country	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 31	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 31
Central Region	212,569 (2,986)	0%	3,175 (2)	-87%
Burundi	10,103 (1,303)	123%	10 (0)	-100%
Cameroon	82,454 (0)	-100%	1,338 (0)	-100%
Central African Republic	11,262 (36)	-32%	99 (0)	-100%
Chad	4,982 (4)	-20%	174 (0)	NA*
Congo	13,398 (141)	NA*	179 (0)	-100%
Democratic Republic of Congo	53,346 (1,361)	-31%	1,050 (2)	-80%
Equatorial Guinea	8,972 (21)	-48%	123 (0)	NA*
Gabon	25,564 (102)	31%	165 (0)	-100%
Sao Tome and Principe	2,488 (18)	13%	37 (0)	NA*
Eastern Region	859,027 (20,875)	5%	17,945 (457)	-1%
Comoros	4,081 (0)	NA*	147 (0)	NA*
Djibouti	11,682 (20)	100%	156 (0)	NA*
Eritrea	6,601 (25)	-14%	37 (2)	NA*
Ethiopia	289,274 (5,183)	47%	4,478 (52)	44%
Kenya	220,727 (8,899)	9%	4,340 (191)	-6%
Madagascar	42,819 (38)	-7%	961 (3)	NA*
Mauritius	6,166 (1,104)	53%	21 (2)	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 31	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 31
Rwanda	79,692 (3,621)	-24%	959 (69)	No change
Seychelles	18,981 (399)	2%	98 (4)	NA*
Somalia	16,319 (454)	11%	883 (33)	-11%
South Sudan	11,172 (72)	41%	120 (0)	-100%
Sudan	37,556 (28)	-92%	2,813 (10)	-63%
Tanzania	16,970 (0)	NA*	50 (21)	NA*
Uganda	96,987 (1,032)	-27%	2,882 (70)	-20%
Northern Region	2,173,959 (98,406)	-10%	58,967 (2,003)	6%
Algeria	187,258 (5,882)	-33%	4,794 (244)	-6%
Egypt	285,358 (652)	65%	16,619 (44)	-6%
Libya	284,618 (14,771)	9%	3,933 (183)	7%
Mauritania	30,121 (1,924)	-13%	636 (31)	-18%
Morocco	759,456 (63,174)	-5%	11,017 (682)	36%
Tunisia	625,688 (11,862)	-30%	21,905 (816)	-5%
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	1,460 (141)	-41%	63 (3)	-63%
Southern Region	3,484,560 (105,807)	-14%	96,222 (3,262)	-13%
Angola	44,617 (955)	13%	1,100 (57)	111%
Botswana	142,380 (11,609)	-25%	2,043 (211)	18%
Eswatini	36,008 (4,948)	2%	934 (73)	16%
Lesotho	14,243 (400)	67%	397 (7)	-46%
Malawi	58,083 (2,163)	-34%	1,968 (140)	-16%
Mozambique	138,749 (6,297)	-29%	1,716 (103)	-32%
Namibia	122,545 (1,342)	-24%	3,285 (89)	-33%
South Africa	2,605,586 (72,120)	-7%	77,141 (2,328)	-11%

Country	Cumulative number of cases (new cases)	% change in new cases since week 31	Cumulative number of deaths (new deaths)	% change in new deaths since week 31
Zambia	202,261 (2,212)	-41%	3,529 (45)	-42%
Zimbabwe	120,088 (3,761)	-45%	4,109 (209)	-34%
Western Region	566,442 (13,967)	-13%	7,582 (345)	25%
Benin	9,065 (457)	114%	113 (3)	50%
Burkina Faso	13,675 (54)	64%	170 (1)	NA*
Cape Verde	34,407 (431)	180%	300 (2)	NA*
Côte d'Ivoire	52,202 (822)	-25%	359 (18)	64%
Gambia	9,195 (275)	-56%	271 (20)	-17%
Ghana	111,232 (1,804)	-40%	930 (31)	-31%
Guinea	28,118 (1,006)	-10%	292 (29)	No change
Guinea-Bissau	5,123 (335)	16%	90 (11)	267%
Liberia	5,482 (23)	NA*	221 (73)	NA*
Mali	14,695 (53)	-4%	535 (1)	No change
Niger	5,724 (37)	-26%	196 (0)	-100%
Nigeria	182,503 (4,417)	17%	2,219 (32)	-16%
Senegal	70,679 (3,100)	-32%	1,600 (118)	3%
Sierra Leone	6,342 (27)	-4%	121 (0)	-100%
Togo	18,000 (1,126)	12%	165 (6)	No change
Total	7,296,557 (242,041)	-11%	183,891 (6,069)	-5%

*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 organized by tiers based on current epidemiological data from 7 - 13 August 2021.

Table 3: Changes in Public Health and Social Measures, selected countries, 7 - 13 August 2021.

Country	PHSM Trend	PHSM Change
Tier 4 (High Alert): Daily case incidence per 1M people/day ≥ 80 and/or positivity rate $\geq 12\%$		
Libya	↓	The three-day lockdown in Libya expired , but authorities have imposed a nightly curfew from 18:00-06:00 in its place to combat COVID-19 transmission. The border with Tunisia has also been closed for a week to rising cases.
Morocco	→	Authorities in Morocco extended the state of health emergency until 10 September, but have lifted some restrictions for fully-vaccinated individuals, including the nightly curfew and ban on interstate travel.
Namibia	↓	Namibia relaxed some COVID-19 measures, including increasing the capacity limits on public gatherings from 50 to 100 people, reopening of some businesses including nightclubs and gyms (with restrictions), and resumption of contact sports with no spectators. Other measures, including a nightly curfew, remain in place until 14 September.
Zimbabwe	→	Level four lockdown measures were extended in Zimbabwe amid a continuing rise in COVID-19 transmission. Measures include school closures, a nationwide nightly curfew, and a ban on nonessential intercity travel. The government also announced that vaccinated people could return to religious services.
Tunisia	↓	The nightly curfew in Tunisia was shortened by 2 hours starting 1 August.
Tier 3 (Moderate Alert): Daily case incidence per 1M people/day is 20 to <80 and/or positivity rate is 5% to <12%		
Angola	↓	Casinos and gaming rooms are allowed to reopen in Angola with some restrictions on capacity and hours of operation.
Rwanda	↓	Authorities in Rwanda have eased some COVID-19 restrictions. The nationwide curfew was reduced by 2 hours, on-premise dining is allowed at restaurants and cafes, gyms reopened, capacity limits on public transportation were increased to 75%, and marriage ceremonies are allowed to occur with 50 people in attendance.
Tier 2 (Low Alert): Daily case incidence per 1M people/day is 5 to <20 and/or positivity rate is 3% to 5%		
Côte d'Ivoire	→	The state of health emergency in Cote d'Ivoire has been extended until at least 30 September. No new measures have been introduced, but restrictions on international travelers and enforcement of individual protective measures in public spaces (wearing a facemask, social distancing) have been maintained.
Guinea	↑	Guinea tightened some COVID-19 measures amid rising cases. Bars and entertainment venues have been closed, a nightly curfew was expanded to the entire nation, and civil servants are now required to present a health pass to access their offices.
Guinea-Bissau	→	Authorities in Guinea-Bissau have declared a state of calamity amid rising COVID-19 cases until at least 8 September. No new measures have been imposed, but a mask mandate is maintained for all people in public spaces.

Country	PHSM Trend	PHSM Change
Tier 1 (Standard Precautions): Daily case incidence per 1M people/day is <5 and/or positivity rate is <3%		
Congo	→	Congo extended the nationwide state of health security until at least 4 September. Ongoing measures include restrictions on public gatherings to just 3 people, a nightly curfew in the hotspot areas of Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, and closure of nightclubs.
Madagascar	→	Officials in Madagascar are extending the COVID-related state of health emergency until 23 August, but have lifted some other restrictions, including the nightly curfew, and have allowed some businesses to reopen, including nightclubs. A ban on gatherings of 400 people or more remains in effect.

NEW Africa CDC Response Activities

General:

1. Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) hosted the 71st Africa CDC’s weekly press briefing on Thursday 12 August 2021. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Twitter page](#).
2. During the 71st Weekly COVID-19 Briefing, Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC, announced the first [International Conference on Public Health in Africa](#). The conference will provide a platform for African researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders to share scientific findings and public health perspectives and collaborate on research, innovation and public health across the continent. Registration is now open: <https://cphia2021.com/>
3. African Union Member States continue to receive their first allocation of Johnson & Johnson vaccines through the AVAT initiative. In the past week, Angola (165,600), Botswana (108,000), Mauritius (108,000), Nigeria (177,600) and Tunisia (108,000) received their first consignments of the Johnson & Johnson single-shot vaccine. Overall, 1,490,400 vaccine doses have been delivered in ten countries.
4. The African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI) has provided financial support of USD 250,000 to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC). The contribution will assist the efforts of the public health agency to bridge the gap in vaccination against COVID-19 across Africa.
5. Africa CDC received 2.9 million of N95 masks from the Canadian government.
6. As of 16 August 2021, 52 (95%) out of 55 African Union Member States have started COVID-19 vaccination campaigns targeting priority populations. Cumulatively, over 83.9 million doses have been administered, giving a coverage of 3.1% of the continental population. Of the doses administered, 59.7 million have received the first dose and 24.2 million have received the second dose. Saharawi Republic, Eritrea, and Burundi are the three 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 63 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted in Africa since February 2020. The cumulative positivity rate⁵ and test per case ratio⁶ are 11.6% and 9, respectively. For Epi week 32, a total of 1,517,446 new tests were conducted, an increase of 7% compared to Epi week 31 when 1,421,899 tests were conducted.

Healthcare Preparedness and Medical Countermeasures:

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

1. Africa CDC held the English session of the fourth session of the eight IPC webinar series titled "IPC - WASH in healthcare facilities" on Wednesday 11 August 2021 and was attended by 798 participants. A recording of the webinar can be accessed on the [Africa CDC Twitter page](#).
2. Africa CDC held the French session of the fourth session of the eighth IPC webinar series titled "IPC - WASH in healthcare facilities" and was attended by 146 participants on Thursday 12 August 2021.
3. The fourth session of the eighth IPC webinar series "IPC - WASH in healthcare facilities" will continue Wednesday 18 August 2021 at 1 p.m. EAT for the English facilitated session. Register [here](#).
4. The fourth session of the eight IPC webinar series entitled "IPC - WASH in healthcare facilities" will continue Thursday 12 August 2021 for the French facilitated session. 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

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.

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](#)

- 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.
2. Member States should continue to perform contact tracing¹¹ of confirmed cases based on transmission type and country capacity as well as 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>

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](#)