

Outbreak Brief #19: Monkeypox in African Union Member States

Date of Issue: 23 November 2022

996 confirmed cases, 198 deaths in AU MS

Data sources: US CDC, WHO, and AU Member State Ministries of Health

Global Update (non-endemic countries)¹: As of 22 November 2022, 80,634 confirmed cases of monkeypox and 237 deaths were reported from 110 countries/territories globally. The countries reporting the majority of cases are mainly in Europe and the Americas.²

Africa update (endemic³ and non-endemic countries): Since the beginning of 2022, the continent has reported 996 confirmed cases and 198 deaths (CFR: 19.8%) of monkeypox from eight endemic Africa Union (AU) Member States (MS): Benin (3 confirmed cases; 0 confirmed deaths), Cameroon (18; 3), CAR (8; 2), Congo (5; 3), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (206; 177), Ghana (107; 4), Liberia (3; 0), Nigeria (624; 7) and five non-endemic MS: Egypt (2; 0), Morocco (3; 0), Mozambique (1; 1), South Africa (5; 0) and Sudan (11; 1). This week, 26 new confirmed cases and 24 new deaths of monkeypox were reported from Cameroon, DRC, Mozambique and Nigeria. Due to inconsistent updates regarding the testing status of suspect cases being reported from Member States, we are now only reporting confirmed cases and deaths and using only these numbers to calculate the CFR.

Cameroon: Since the last report (28 October 2022), the Ministry of Health (MoH) reported 6 new confirmed cases with one new death of monkeypox. There is a 100% increase in the number of confirmed cases compared to the previous update. Cumulatively, 18 confirmed cases and three deaths (CFR: 16.6%) were reported from five regions.

DRC: Since the last report (11 November 2022), the MoH reported no new cases and 22 new deaths of monkeypox. This is a 2,100% increase in the number of new deaths compared to the last report. Cumulatively, 206 confirmed cases and 177 deaths (CFR: 86%) were reported from 23 of the 26 provinces. Three of the provinces reported the most cases: Sankuru (36 confirmed cases; 33 confirmed deaths), Tshopo (33; 56) and Kwango (32; 4).

¹ Global case and death numbers are inclusive of numbers being reported in Africa.

² US CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/world-map.html>; WHO - https://worldhealthorg.shinyapps.io/mpx_global/

³ Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Nigeria, the Republic of the Congo, and Sierra Leone

Mozambique: Since the last brief, (6 October 2022), MoH reported no new cases and one new death from monkeypox. This is a 100% increase in the number of deaths compared to the last brief. Cumulatively, one confirmed case and one death (CFR: 100%) of monkeypox were reported.

Nigeria: Since the last brief, (11 November 2022), the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) reported 20 new confirmed cases and no new deaths from monkeypox. This is a 5% decrease in the number of new confirmed cases compared to the last report. Cumulatively, 624 confirmed cases and seven deaths (CFR: 1.1%) of monkeypox were reported from 36 states and the federal capital.

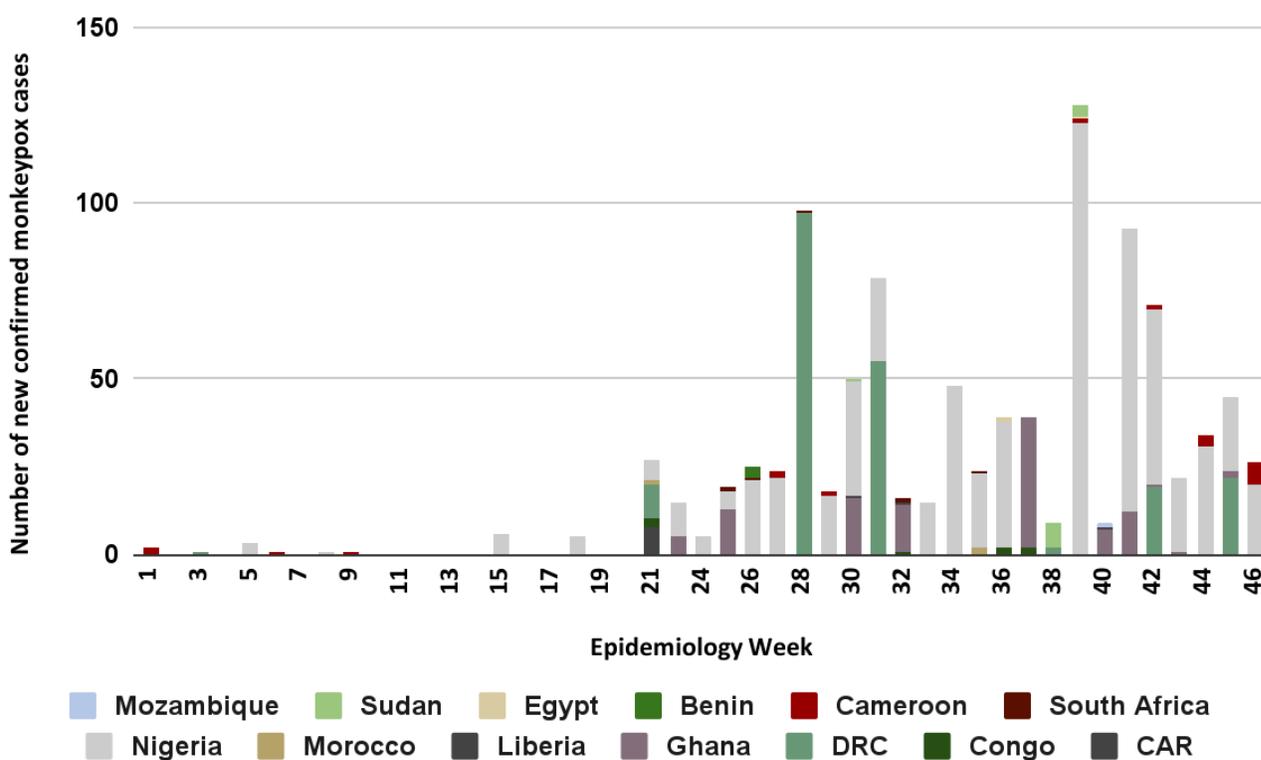


Figure 1. New confirmed monkeypox cases reported by epidemiological week in AU MS since January 2022⁴

The majority of AU MS reporting cases are from the central and western Africa regions with DRC, Ghana and Nigeria accounting for 94% of all confirmed cases reported (Table 1). Most cases were reported after the week of 21 July and this could be a result of enhanced surveillance in MS (Figure 1).

⁴ The high numbers of confirmed cases reported from DRC in week 15 July is likely the result of batch reporting.

Table 1. Cumulative confirmed monkeypox cases and deaths reported from African Union Member States in 2022 - as of 21 November 2022.

Country	Total confirmed cases (new)	Total confirmed deaths (new)	CFR ⁵
Benin	3 (0)	0 (0)	0%
Cameroon	18 (6)	3 (1)	16.6%
Central African Republic	8 (0)	2 (0)	25%
Congo Republic	5 (0)	3 (0)	60%
Democratic Republic of Congo	206 (0)	177 ⁶ (22)	86%
Ghana	107 (0)	4 (0)	3.7%
Egypt	2 (0)	0 (0)	0%
Liberia	3 (0)	0 (0)	0%
Morocco	3 (0)	0 (0)	0%
Mozambique	1 (0)	1 (1)	100%
Nigeria	624 (20)	7 (0)	1.1%
Sudan	11 (0)	1 (0)	9.0%
South Africa	5 (0)	0 (0)	0%
TOTAL	996 (26)	198 (24)	19.8%

⁵ Case fatality ratio is the proportion of confirmed deaths over confirmed cases.

⁶ Africa CDC cannot ascertain that all deaths reported from DRC are laboratory confirmed. Africa CDC is working with DRC to clarify this data

Event Geoscope and Risk Assessment Levels

Geoscope level: High

Risk level: Moderate

Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) conducted a preliminary assessment of the geographic scope (geoscope) and risk level for the monkeypox events being reported for Africa and globally. Given that this outbreak is currently affecting multiple countries both on and outside of the continent, the geoscope assessment is

high. If additional AU MS report disease linked to this outbreak, we will reassess and elevate accordingly. For the risk assessment level, we looked at the following criteria: morbidity and mortality of the disease, probability to spread within and to other AU MS, and the availability of effective treatments, vaccines, or other control measures. We have listed the risk level as moderate given that monkeypox is not an easily transmissible, self-limiting disease with low mortality, which lacks effective treatment for those infected. We are closely monitoring the situation and we will reevaluate the risk periodically.

New Africa CDC Response Activities

- On 8 August 2022, the Africa CDC Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) was activated to support preparedness and response efforts of African Union Member States, in close collaboration with relevant partners
- The Africa CDC continues to provide support to AU MS with laboratory test kits on request.
- The Africa CDC continues to engage with Ministries of Health in Member States reporting cases to provide support as requested
- Africa CDC continues to communicate with global partners to secure adequate access to test kits and vaccines for AU Member States

Recommendations for AU Member States

Member States are advised to:

- Establish laboratory diagnostic and genomic sequencing capacity for orthopoxviruses, including monkeypox.
- Establish and/or strengthen existing monkeypox surveillance efforts.
- Develop and distribute both general and tailored risk communication messages for the community at large as well as specific populations currently impacted and at risk (e.g. sex-workers, immunocompromised individuals, children).
- Strengthen knowledge of monkeypox clinical management and infection prevention control measures.
- Report new cases of monkeypox as part of the current multi-country outbreak to Africa CDC (AfricaCDCEBS@Africa-Union.org).

The general public is advised to:

- Seek medical attention if you experience any monkeypox-like symptoms (e.g. develop rash

with or without prior symptoms of fever, swollen lymph nodes, body aches, and weakness), especially if you have been in contact with a positive case

- Practice effective hand hygiene by washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially after contact with any infected animal or human
- Avoid contact with animals that could harbor the virus, including animals that are sick or found dead in areas where monkeypox occurs
- Avoid contact with any potentially contaminated material, such as clothes and bedding, with which animals with monkeypox have been in contact with
- If deemed a close contact of a monkeypox case, individuals should self-monitor for the development of symptoms up to 21 days from the last exposure to a case
- If you are infected with monkeypox, adhere to recommended isolation protocols prescribed by your medical provider to minimize transmission to others, including pets and other animals that may be susceptible to monkeypox infection

References

1. European Centres for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) - [Risk assessment: Monkeypox multi-country outbreak](#) (23 May 22)
2. Nigerian CDC National Monkeypox Public Health Response Guidelines - https://ncdc.gov.ng/themes/common/docs/protocols/96_1577798337.pdf
3. US CDC - [Information for the clinical management of monkeypox](#)
4. US CDC - [2022 Monkeypox Outbreak Global Map | Monkeypox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)
5. US CDC - [Monkeypox: Get the Facts](#)
6. WHO - [Monkeypox](#) factsheet
7. WHO - [Multi-country monkeypox outbreak in non-endemic countries](#)
8. WHO - [Laboratory testing for the monkeypox virus: Interim guidance](#)
9. WHO - [Meeting of the international health regulations \(2005\) emergency committee regarding the multi-country monkeypox outbreak](#)
10. WHO - [Director-General's statement on the report of the meeting of the IHR 2005 emergency committee regarding the multi-country monkeypox outbreak](#)