

## Outbreak Brief #57: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Date of Issue: 16 February 2021

108,758,490 cases and 2,396,826 deaths

*Data sources: World Health Organization and African Union Member States*

**Outbreak Update:** Since the last brief (9 February 2021), 2,933,430 new confirmed<sup>1</sup> coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases and 84,107 new deaths have been reported globally. To date, a total of 108,758,490 COVID-19 cases and 2,396,826 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 5,149,986 (5%), European Region 36,590,927 (34%), Region of the Americas 48,348,520 (44%), South-East Asia Region 13,347,801 (12%) and Western Pacific Region 1,537,649 (1%). Over the last seven days, the United States, Brazil, France, 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.<sup>2</sup>

**As of 9 am East African Time (EAT) 16 February 2021,** a total of 3,759,165 COVID-19 cases and 98,915 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. Seven Member States reported the presence of the 501Y.V1 variant (lineage B.1.1.7): DR Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and The Gambia. Nine Member States have reported the presence of the 501Y.V2 variant (B.1.351): Botswana, Comoros, DR Congo, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zambia. Of the countries actively reporting COVID-19 epidemiologic data, 21 are reporting case fatality rates higher than the global case fatality rate of 2.2%: Sahrawi Republic (17.1%), Sudan (6.7%), Egypt (5.8%), Liberia (4.3%), Mali (4.2%), Zimbabwe (4.0%), Comoros (3.9%), Eswatini (3.8%), Niger (3.6%), Chad (3.6%), Tunisia (3.4%), Malawi (3.3%), South Africa (3.2%), The Gambia (3.1%), Somalia (2.9%), DR Congo (2.8%), Algeria (2.7%), Mauritania (2.5%), Angola (2.4%), Senegal (2.4%), and Lesotho (2.3%).

**For Epi week 6 (8 February 2021 - 14 February 2021),** 78,134 new COVID-19 cases have been reported, which is a 22% decrease in the number of new cases reported compared to Epi week 5. 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 (43%) followed by the Northern (23%), Western (20%), Eastern (11%) and Central

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

<sup>2</sup> WHO coronavirus disease (COVID-19) dashboard: <https://covid19.who.int/>

(3%) regions. The countries reporting the highest incidence (COVID-19 new cases per 100,000 population) this week include Seychelles (541), Sao Tome and Principe (94), Cape Verde (76), Gabon (74) and Tunisia (70).

Table 1 highlights the reported cases and deaths from COVID-19 in all countries in Africa for epi week 6. 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 16 February 2021. The curve continues to trend downward as more countries are recovering from their second wave of cases. This week, seven countries account for about 63% of the new COVID-19 cases reported: South Africa (20%), Zambia (9%), Nigeria (8%), Tunisia (7%), Mozambique (7%), Ethiopia (6%) and Egypt (5%).

**Table 1. Confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths<sup>3</sup> reported in Africa for epi week 6 (8 February 2021 - 14 February 2021)**

Country	Number of cases (new)	Percent change in new cases since the previous Epi week (5)	Number of deaths (new)	Percent change in new deaths since the previous Epi week (5)	Epidemic phase <sup>4</sup>
Central Region	94,437 (2,369)	-29%	1,664 (23)	5%	
Burundi	1,824 (101)	11%	3 (1)	NA*	3
Cameroon	31,394 (0)	-100%	474 (0)	NA*	3
Central African Republic	4,997 (1)	-86%	63 (0)	NA*	3
Chad	3,664 (156)	18%	131 (6)	-14%	3
Congo Republic	8,419 (65)	-78%	122 (0)	-100%	3

<sup>3</sup> Data is continuously verified for accuracy and reliability however it may change based on retrospective updates from Member States.

<sup>4</sup> 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	24,386 (715)	-14%	693 (12)	50%	3
Equatorial Guinea	5,694 (80)	No change	86 (0)	NA*	3
Gabon	12,577 (1,120)	58%	73 (2)	-33%	3
Sao Tome and Principe	1,482 (131)	39%	19 (2)	NA*	3
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>380,134 (8,913)</b>	<b>-7%</b>	<b>7,170 (150)</b>	<b>-4%</b>	
Comoros	3,334 (246)	-32%	129 (17)	-11%	3
Djibouti	5,971 (24)	60%	63 (0)	NA*	3
Eritrea	2,429 (103)	-46%	7 (0)	NA*	3
Ethiopia	147,092 (4,754)	1%	2,194 (46)	-16%	3
Kenya	102,867 (1,048)	0%	1,795 (16)	No change	3
Madagascar	19,598 (0)	-100%	292 (0)	-100%	3
Mauritius	595 (11)	-27%	10 (0)	NA*	3
Rwanda	17,343 (892)	-22%	239 (19)	-21%	3
Seychelles	1,892 (379)	23%	8 (2)	No change	3
Somalia	5,183 (321)	312%	152 (18)	350%	3
South Sudan	5,310 (701)	29%	74 (8)	700%	3
Sudan	27,956 (239)	-46%	1,858 (23)	No change	3
Tanzania <sup>5</sup>	509 (0)	NA*	21 (0)	NA*	3
Uganda	40,055 (195)	-23%	328 (1)	-50%	3
<b>Northern Region</b>	<b>1,131,175 (17,701)</b>	<b>-23%</b>	<b>31,466 (841)</b>	<b>-18%</b>	
Algeria	110,619 (1,623)	-7%	2,941 (25)	9%	3
Egypt	173,813 (4,173)	13%	9,994 (343)	2%	3
Libya	127,705 (2,823)	-48%	2,042 (68)	-25%	3
Mauritania	16,974 (167)	-3%	430 (4)	No change	3

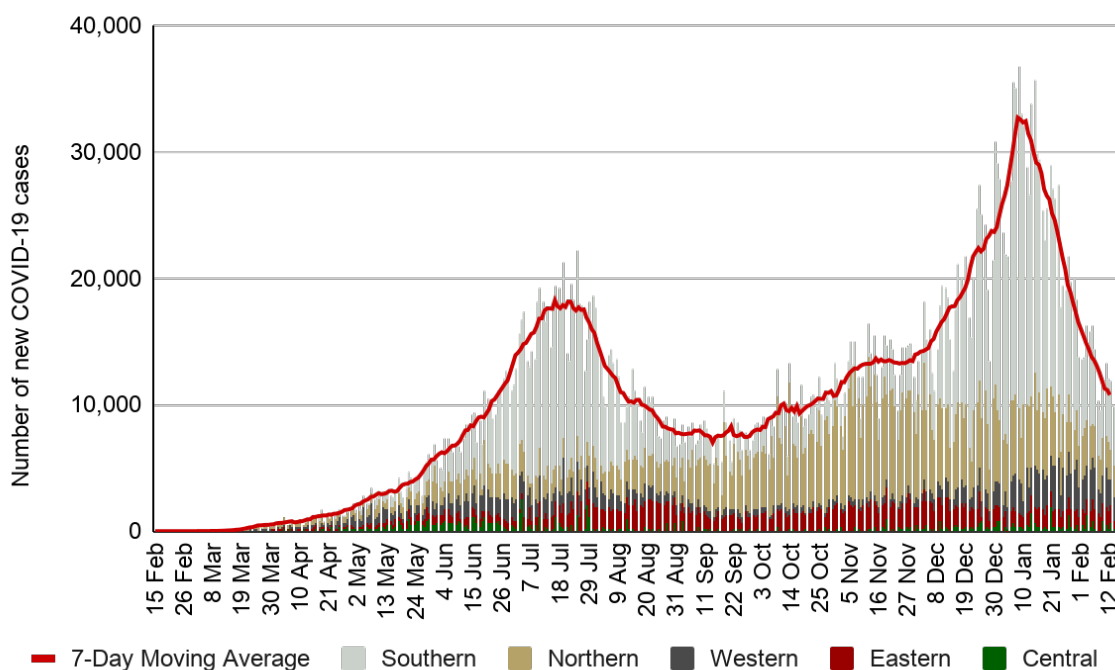
<sup>5</sup> Last report received 7-May-2020.

Morocco	478,474 (3,119)	-26%	8,477 (83)	-30%	3
Tunisia	223,549 (5,796)	-25%	7,575 (318)	-30%	3
Sahrawi Republic	41 (0)	-100%	7 (0)	-100%	3
<b>Southern Region</b>	<b>1,783,461 (33,588)</b>	<b>-25%</b>	<b>53,679 (2,097)</b>	<b>-21%</b>	
Angola	20,366 (280)	-3%	492 (17)	89%	3
Botswana	24,926 (491)	-71%	202 (23)	-26%	3
Eswatini	16,535 (331)	-33%	630 (26)	-33%	3
Lesotho	9,965 (585)	-18%	230 (47)	327%	3
Malawi	29,035 (2,160)	-26%	952 (115)	-15%	3
Mozambique	50,266 (5,666)	-5%	535 (75)	-19%	3
Namibia	35,952 (979)	-5%	388 (13)	-43%	3
South Africa	1,491,807 (15,672)	-30%	47,899 (1,609)	-24%	3
Zambia	69,437 (6,804)	-19%	951 (98)	9%	3
Zimbabwe	35,172 (620)	-47%	1,400 (74)	-32%	3
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>363,126 (15,563)</b>	<b>-21%</b>	<b>4,580 (241)</b>	<b>-3%</b>	
Benin	5,039 (846)	182%	62 (7)	133%	3
Burkina Faso	11,614 (329)	-45%	138 (4)	-71%	3
Cabo Verde	14,741 (318)	-10%	139 (4)	300%	3
Côte d'Ivoire	31,140 (1,315)	-8%	174 (12)	50%	3
The Gambia	4,414 (177)	20%	138 (4)	-33%	3
Ghana	76,492 (2,935)	-41%	542 (48)	-21%	3
Guinea	14,967 (224)	14%	85 (1)	-50%	2
Guinea-Bissau	2,924 (144)	-1%	46 (0)	-100%	2
Liberia	1,985 (29)	142%	85 (1)	NA*	2
Mali	8,229 (53)	-38%	342 (4)	-50%	2

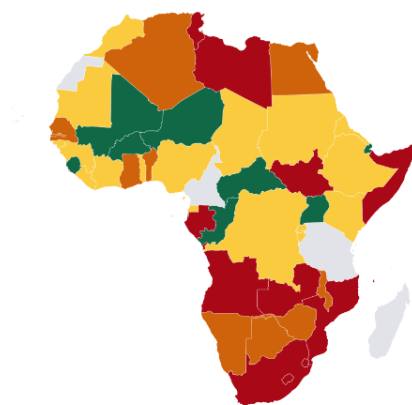
Niger	4,695 (83)	-13%	169 (4)	-33%	2
Nigeria	146,184 (6,436)	-24%	1,752 (85)	5%	1
Senegal	31,007 (2,247)	0%	748 (66)	22%	1
Sierra Leone	3,821 (36)	-81%	79 (0)	NA*	1
Togo	5,874 (391)	-4%	81 (1)	-67%	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,752,333 (78,134)</b>	<b>-22%</b>	<b>98,559 (3,352)</b>	<b>-19%</b>	

\*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 - 16 February 2021.**



### Public Health and Social Measure (PHSM) Highlights



**Figure 3.** Map of AU Member States by hotspot level<sup>6</sup> 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
<b>Warning Level 4: Red A very widespread or fast-growing outbreak.</b>		
Angola	↓	In <b>Angola</b> , primary schools officially <a href="#">reopened</a> after an 11 month closure. New measures are in place to protect staff and students, including mandatory hand washing before entering classrooms, mask wearing, and social distancing.
Cabo Verde	↑	The Council of Ministers in <b>Cabo Verde</b> <a href="#">announced</a> that Carnival celebrations would not be permitted to take place this year due to high COVID-19 transmission.
Eswatini	→	In lieu of resuming in-person learning, the government of <b>Eswatini</b> <a href="#">announced</a> that it will air pre-recorded lessons on public radio until lockdown measures are lifted and schools reopen.
Lesotho	↓	<b>Lesotho</b> <a href="#">downgraded</a> the country's risk level from red to orange on 3 February. As a result, some restrictions were eased, including capacity limits on funerals, and the nationwide curfew was shortened by an hour.
South Africa	→	<b>South Africa</b> <a href="#">extended</a> a nationwide state of disaster until 15 March, and maintained measures such as the nightly curfew from 23:00-4:00.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

Tunisia	→	<b>Tunisia</b> <a href="#">extended</a> partial lockdown measures until 7 March amidst surges in new cases. This includes maintenance of a nightly curfew and a ban on public gatherings.
<b>Warning Level 2: Yellow</b> A moderate outbreak or the possible start of a growing outbreak.		
Chad	→	<b>Chad</b> <a href="#">extended</a> the existing nighttime curfew in N’Djamena and the surrounding area until 24 February.
Ethiopia	↑	<b>Ethiopia</b> <a href="#">launched</a> the “No Mask, No Service,” campaign in schools across the country to encourage students to wear face masks and reduce the spread of COVID-19.
Equatorial Guinea	↑	<b>Equatorial Guinea</b> <a href="#">imposed</a> new COVID-19 restrictions to curb increasing transmission, including a nighttime curfew, closures of bars, restaurants, and other “leisure sites,” and limits on flights.
Morocco	→	<b>Morocco</b> <a href="#">announced</a> that it will provide economic relief to workers of traditional hammams that were forced to close in March 2020 due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.
Nigeria	↑	In <b>Nigeria</b> , authorities <a href="#">imposed</a> an indefinite nightly curfew in Anambra State from 21:00-6:00.
Rwanda	↓	<b>Rwanda</b> <a href="#">eased</a> lockdown measures in capital city Kigali, shortening the nightly curfew to 19:00-4:00. Public employees will continue to work from home until 22 February, and bars, restaurants, churches, and schools remain closed.
<b>Warning Level 1: Green</b> Relatively low spread and no evidence of a growing outbreak.		
Mali	↑	In <b>Mali</b> , most of the events, including concerts and fairs, that typically mark one of the nation’s largest celebrations, Festival Sur Le Niger, <a href="#">were cancelled</a> this year to prevent COVID-19 transmission.
Sierra Leone	↓	<b>Sierra Leone</b> <a href="#">lifted</a> lockdown measures in Freetown. A nightly curfew from 22:00-5:00 and mandatory wearing of face masks in public remain in effect.



## NEW Africa CDC Response Activities

### General:

1. Last week, Dr. Nkengasong hosted Africa CDC's weekly press briefing on Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 11 am EAT. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Facebook page](#).
2. Last week, Africa CDC facilitated the Public Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHEOCs) and COVID-19 Management webinar series on the topic 'Implementing an Incident Management System'. The recording is available on the [Africa CDC Facebook page](#). The next session in this webinar series will be held on Thursday, 18 February 2021 at 3 pm EAT.

### Laboratory:

1. To date, over 33 million tests for COVID-19 have been conducted across the continent with a positivity rate of 11.3% and test per case ratio of 8.8. For epi week 6, 810,199 new tests were conducted, which is a 3% decrease when compared to the previous week (834,810 tests).

### Healthcare Preparedness and Medical Countermeasures:

#### *Case Management*

1. Last week, Africa CDC's Case Management TWG held the 42nd clinical webinar titled "Healthcare associated SARS-COV-2 Transmission in a Neonatal Unit" on Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 2 pm EAT. There were 120+ participants on the webinar and IWD Facebook page. The recording can be accessed here: <https://www.africacdc.training/courses/ccop>
2. A training of trainers is being held for frontline health care workers and immunization program managers on COVID-19 vaccine development, vaccine types, side effects, vaccine delivery, and risk communication on 19 February 2021. This will be implemented in collaboration with Project HOPE.
3. This week, 22 Oxygen concentrators and seven mechanical ventilators were delivered to Eswantini to support in case management.

#### *Infection and Prevention Control (IPC)*

1. Last week on Wednesday 10 February 2021, the Infection and Prevention Control (IPC) TWG will held the 4th session on "Recommendations for Healthcare Facility Leadership and Management in the context of COVID-19" and this was attended by over 650 participants from both Anglophone and Francophone speaking countries.
2. The IPC TWG has published [Advisory on Respiratory Protective Equipment](#) and [Advisory on Disinfection Cards](#) for the control of COVID-19.

### 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-19<sup>7</sup> surveillance efforts to include:
  - a. Syndromic surveillance like influenza like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI).<sup>8</sup>
  - b. Rapid mortality surveillance that includes the collection, analysis and use of all-cause mortality data collected through the facility- or community-based surveillance.<sup>9</sup>
  - c. Genomic surveillance<sup>10</sup> to monitor variant presence and spread as well as the continued evolution of the virus.
2. Member States should continue to perform contact tracing<sup>11</sup> of confirmed cases based on transmission type and country capacity and enhance diagnostic screening efforts with the use of rapid antigen tests<sup>12</sup>.
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](mailto: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://afriacdc.org/covid-19/>
- Africa CDC Resources, policy guidelines, and infographics: <https://afriacdc.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>

<sup>7</sup> [WHO COVID-19 Case definition](#)

<sup>8</sup> 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](#)

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

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

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

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