

COVID-19

Situation update for the WHO African Region

12 May 2020

External Situation Report 11



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR

World Health
Organization
Africa

COVID-19

WHO AFRICAN REGION

External Situation Report 11

Date of issue: 13 May 2020

Data as reported by: 12 May 2020 as of 11:59 PM (GMT+1)

1. Situation update



The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak continues to evolve in the WHO African Region since the first case was reported on 25 February 2020 in Algeria. Since then, all Member States have reported COVID-19, with Lesotho reporting its first case on 13 May 2020. While there are variations among countries, the overall numbers of reported cases and deaths have been increasing exponentially in recent weeks and over a half of the countries in the region are experiencing community transmission. There are also increasing incidents of cross-border transmission of COVID-19 between countries in the continent, mainly through long-distance truck drivers and illicit transboundary movement. Notably, in most countries, the disease is still localized to large urban centres with most rural communities relatively unaffected.

Since our last situation report on 6 May 2020 ([External Situation Report 10](#)), an additional 15 000 confirmed COVID-19 cases (a 42% increase) were reported from 42 countries, compared to 10 577 recorded the previous week. During this period, a sharp rise in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases was observed in eight countries: Benin 221% (102 to 327), Zambia 217% (139 to 441), South Sudan 200% (58 to 174), Guinea-Bissau 181% (292 to 820), Gabon 117% (397 to 863), Chad 110% (170 to 357), Central African Republic 90% (94 to 179) and Ghana 89% (2 719 to 4 127). Meanwhile, five countries, Namibia, Seychelles, Eritrea, Mauritania and Mauritius have reported zero new confirmed COVID-19 cases in the past 37, 35, 23 and 15 days, respectively.

From 6 to 12 May 2020, 295 new deaths (25% increase) were reported from 25 countries in the region, including: Nigeria (60), South Africa (58), Algeria (45), Chad (23), Cameroon (17), Democratic Republic of the Congo (16), Kenya (13), Niger (9), Sierra Leone (9), Mali (8), Senegal (8), Ghana (4), Burkina Faso (3), Côte d'Ivoire (3), United Republic of Tanzania (3), Gabon (3), Zambia (3), Togo (2), Equatorial Guinea (2), Congo (1), Guinea (1), Ethiopia (1), Sao Tome and Principe (1), Guinea-Bissau (1) and Eswatini (1).

As of 12 May 2020, a cumulative total of 47 953 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 55 probable cases and 1 488 deaths (case fatality ratio (CFR) 3.1%) have been reported across the 47 affected countries in the region. **Table 1** shows the list of affected countries and their respective number of cases and deaths.

The daily and weekly distribution of cases by date and week of reporting are presented in Figures 1 and 2, respectively. From 6 to 12 May 2020, the region recorded its highest daily case count since the beginning of the outbreak, with more than 1 000 new cases reported each day in the past 14 days. The region observed its highest peak on 8 May 2020 when 2 753 cases were registered in 24 hours. Of the 47 affected countries, nine have registered a cumulative total of more than 1 000 confirmed COVID-19 cases, including South Africa (11 350), Algeria (6 067), Ghana (5 127), Nigeria (4 787), Cameroon (2 689), Guinea (2 298), Senegal (1 995), Côte d'Ivoire (1 857) and Democratic Republic of the Congo (1 169). Democratic Republic of the Congo is the latest country to cross the 1 000 cases mark. South Africa hit the 10 000 mark in this same week. Together, these eight most-affected countries account for 87% of all reported cases in the region.

The highest case load has been observed in the West African region, 43% (20 611, CFR 2.1%), followed by the Southern region 24% (11 575, CFR 1.8%), the North 8.5% (6 067, CFR 8.5%), Central 13% (6 377, CFR 3.9%) and Eastern regions 7% (3 323, CFR 2.6%). Of the 47 953 confirmed COVID-19 cases reported, 15 388 (35%) cases have recovered.

Algeria has reported the highest mortality in the region, with 515 deaths, followed by South Africa with 206, Nigeria (158), Cameroon (125), Burkina Faso (51) and Democratic Republic of the Congo (50). The highest case fatality ratios were observed in Chad (11.2%), Liberia (9.4%), Algeria (8.5%), Burkina Faso (6.7%), Sierra Leone (5.9%), Niger (5.5%), Mali (5.5%) and Togo (5.5%). Algeria alone accounted for 35% of all COVID-19 deaths reported in the region. **Figure 3** shows the distribution of cases and deaths by week of notification in the six most affected countries. Notably, a critical group of people, health workers, have been greatly affected by the COVID19 outbreak, with 1 595 health workers being infected in 30 countries in the region since the beginning of the outbreak.

Two countries, Guinea-Bissau and Malawi, recorded their first health worker infections this week. Overall, Nigeria has been the most affected, with 401 health workers infected, followed by south africa with 325, Niger 167, Côte d'Ivoire (85), Democratic Republic of the Congo (63), Ghana (63), Senegal (59), Gabon (57), Chad (44), Guinea-Bissau (43) and Liberia (42). The other 20 countries that recorded health worker infections are shown in **Table 1**.

According to available data on age and gender distribution ($n=4\,805$), the male to female ratio among confirmed cases is 1.8, and the median age is 42 years old (range: 0 - 105). Males (62%) in the 31-39 and 40-49 age-groups are more affected than females (38%) across the same age-groups. The distribution of cases by age and sex is presented in **figure 4**.

Currently, 24 countries in the region are experiencing community transmission, 13 have clusters of cases and nine have sporadic cases of COVID-19. The region has also observed increased incidences of importation of cases from affected countries within the region, largely fueled by long-distance truck drivers and illicit transboundary movement.

Overall, in the African continent, a total of 69 126 cases and 2 386 deaths (CFR= 3.5%) have been reported as of 12 May 2020, including 47 952 cases and 1 488 deaths in the WHO African Region and 21 174 cases and 898 deaths in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region.

Table 1. Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the WHO African Region, 25 February – 12 May 2020 ($n=47\,953$)

Country	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Probable Total	Health Workers	Case fatality ratio (%)	Days since last reported case
South Africa	11 350	206		325	1.8	1
Algeria	6 067	515			8.5	1
Ghana	5 127	22		63	0.4	1
Nigeria	4 787	158		401	3.3	1
Cameroon	2 689	125		40	4.6	2
Guinea	2 298	11			0.5	1
Senegal	1 995	19		59	1.0	1
Côte d'Ivoire	1 857	21		85	1.1	1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1 169	50		63	4.3	1
Gabon	863	9		57	1.0	1
Niger	854	47		167	5.5	1
Guinea-Bissau	820	3		43	0.4	2
Burkina Faso	766	51			6.7	1
Mali	730	40			5.5	1
Kenya	715	36		2	5.0	1
Equatorial Guinea	522	6		26	1.1	4
United Republic of Tanzania	509	21		1	4.1	4
Zambia	441	7		19	1.6	1
Chad	357	40		44	11.2	2

Sierra Leone	338	20		47	5.9	2
Congo (Republic of)	333	11		12	3.3	2
Mauritius	332	10		30	3.0	15
Benin	327	2		2	0.6	1
Rwanda	286				0.0	2
Cabo Verde	270	2			0.7	1
Ethiopia	261	5			1.9	1
Sao Tome and Principe	220	4	55	32	1.8	2
Liberia	212	20		42	9.4	2
Togo	199	11		12	5.5	1
Madagascar	192			5	0.0	1
Eswatini	184	2		8	1.1	1
Central African Republic	179			1	0.0	2
South Sudan	174				0.0	2
Uganda	126				0.0	1
Mozambique	104				0.0	1
Malawi	58	3		5	5.2	1
Angola	45	2			4.4	2
Eritrea	39				0.0	23
Zimbabwe	37	4		1	10.8	2
Burundi	27	1		1	3.7	3
Botswana	24	1		1	4.2	2
Gambia	23	1			4.3	1
Namibia	16			2	0.0	37
Comoros	11	1			9.1	2
Seychelles	11				0.0	35
Mauritania	8	1			12.5	12
Lesotho	1				0.0	0
Total (n=47)	47 953	1 488	55	1 595		

*New cases and new deaths are for the past 24 hours

Figure 1. Daily number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the WHO African Region by country, 25 February – 12 May 2020 (n=47 953)

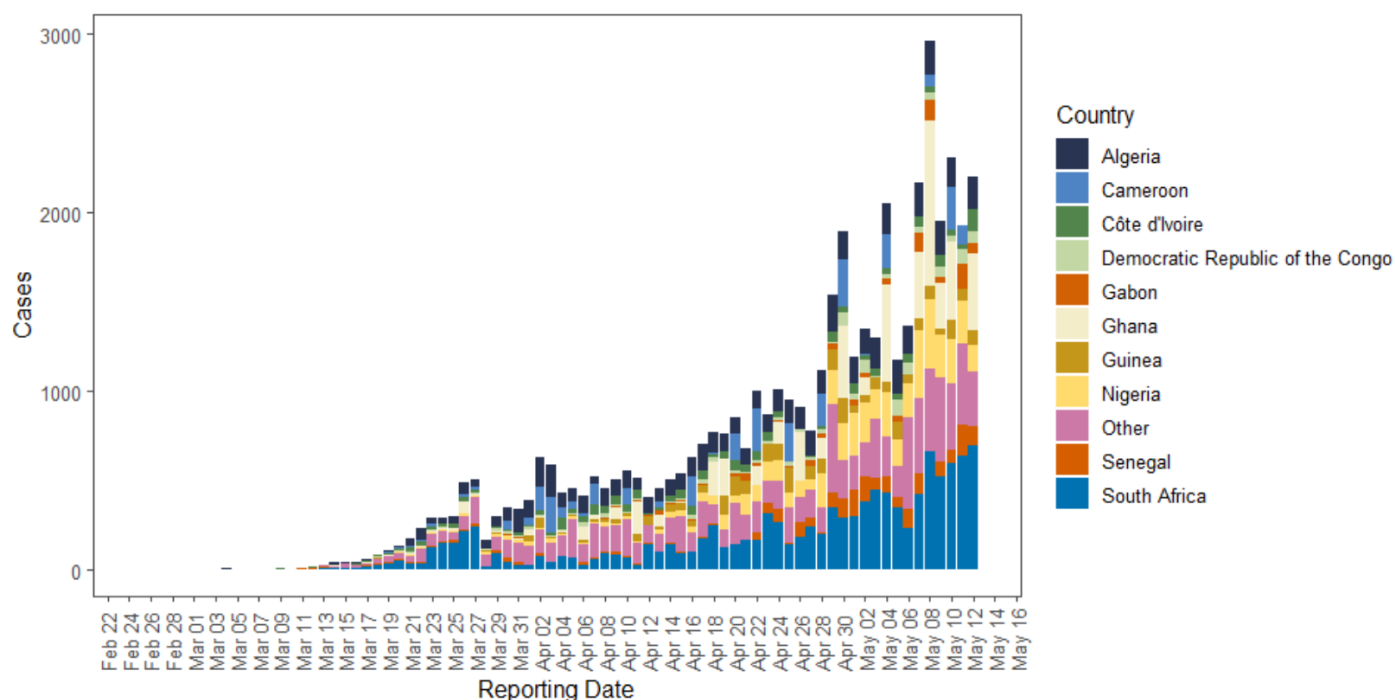
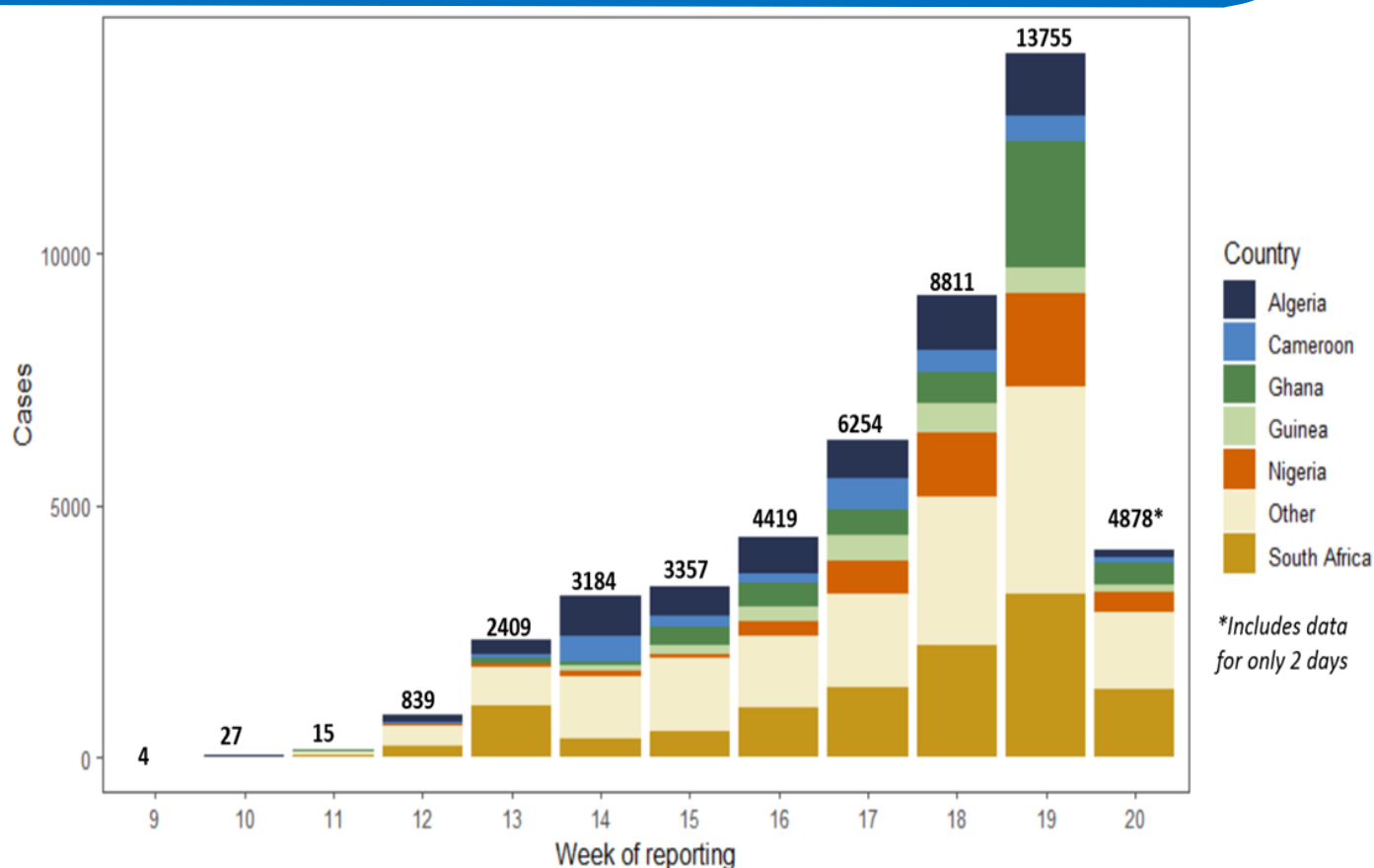


Figure 2. Weekly number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the WHO African Region by country, 25 February – 12 May 2020 (n = 47 953)



*Week 20 data is up to 12 May 2020 (2 days) and is therefore partial

Figure 3. Epidemic curves of COVID-19 outbreaks in South Africa, Algeria, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon and Guinea, 25 February – 12 May 2020 (n=47 953)

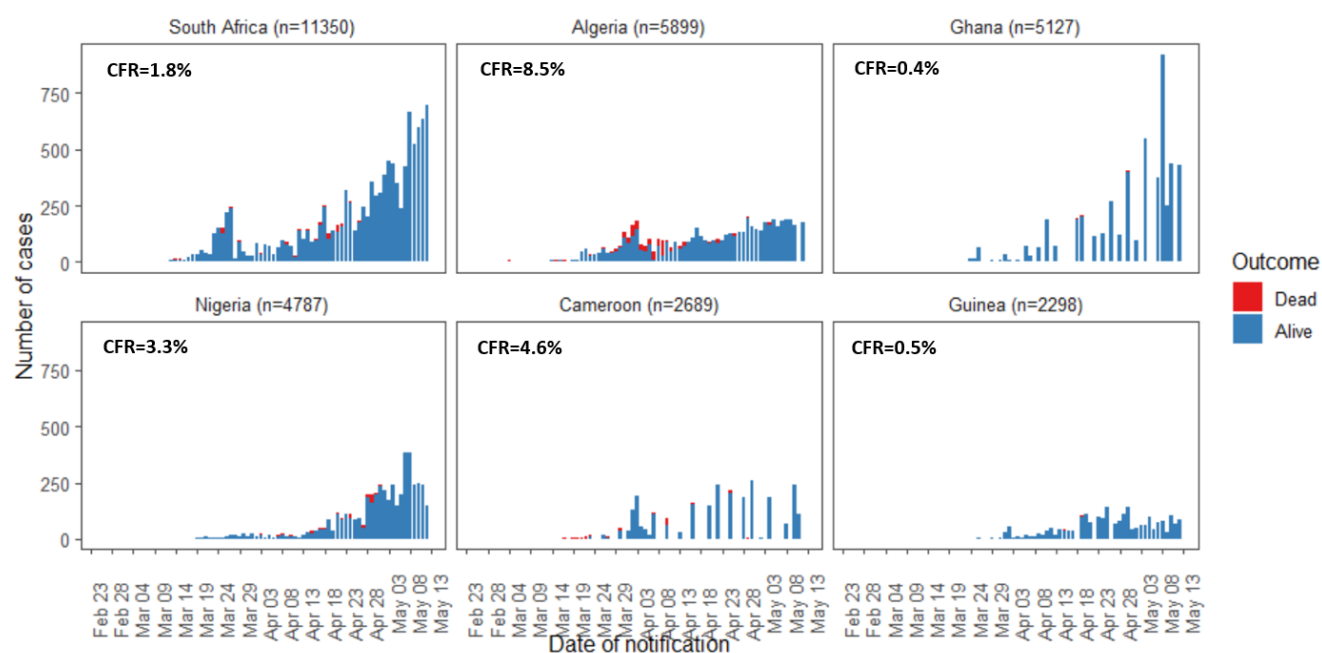
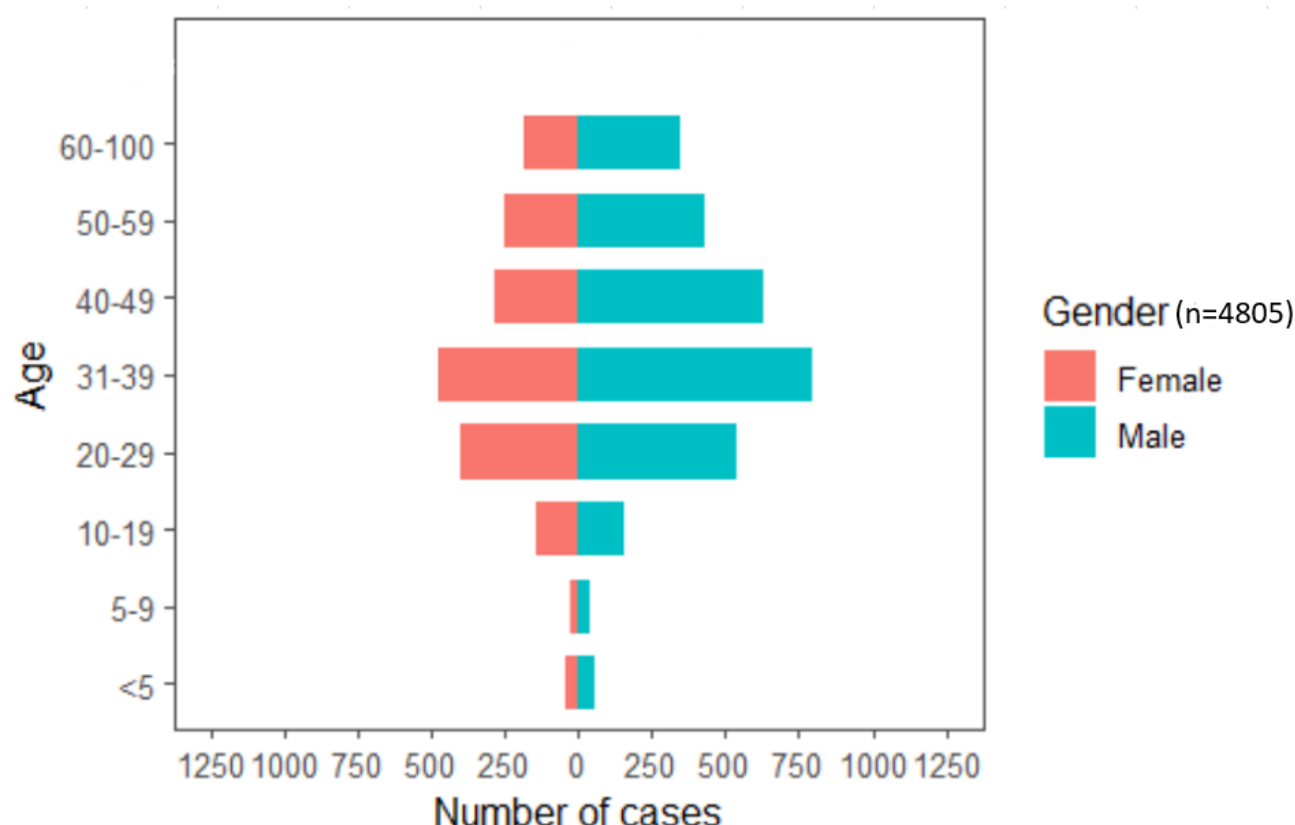


Figure 4. Age and sex distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the WHO African Region, 25 February – 12 May 2020



2. Global update

- As of 12 May 2020, at 18:00 CET, a total of 4 088 848 confirmed cases, including 283 153 deaths (CFR= 6.9%), were reported globally. Both the global number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths have continued to increase significantly during the past week
- As of 12 May 2020, 213 countries/territories/areas and one international conveyance have reported laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases. The 10 countries with the highest number of cumulative cases are: United States of America (1 298 287), the Russian Federation (232 243), Spain (227 436), the United Kingdom (223 064), Italy (219 814), Germany (170 508), Turkey (139 771), France (137 491), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (109 286) and China (84 451). All affected countries have reported new confirmed cases in the past week.

Please refer to the WHO Daily Coronavirus disease (COVID-2019) situation reports for further information: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>.

3. Current risk assessment

On 11 March 2020, the WHO Director-General characterized the COVID-19 as a pandemic.

Chinese authorities identified a new type of coronavirus (novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2) from a cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan city, Hubei Province, China, on 7 January 2020. SARS-CoV-2 is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans. According to the information provided, the initial cases described in Wuhan were linked to Hunan seafood market in Wuhan (the market was closed on 1 January

2020). The possible source of the outbreak is still under investigation by the Chinese authorities and it may have emerged from an animal species, as has been the case for other coronaviruses. The exact extent of the outbreak remains unknown.

On 30 January 2020, the WHO Director-General declared the COVID-19 outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), with temporary recommendations issued for all countries. On 28 February 2020, WHO raised the risk assessment for the COVID-19 outbreak internationally from “high” to “very high”.

4. Actions to date

The WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO) is working closely with its 47 Member States, as well as partners, in order to implement several outbreak preparedness and response interventions.

Coordination

- The WHO AFRO COVID-19 Incident Management Support Team (IMST) continues to coordinate and support response efforts across the region. The IMST holds daily virtual coordination meetings and regularly engages with the country Incident Management Systems in Member States to provide technical, financial and logistical support. Focal points have been designated for all the countries in the region to strengthen follow up and support.
- The update of the WHO AFRO COVID-19 Strategic Response Plan (SRP), February – December 2020, has been finalized. The total cost of the SRP is US\$ 455 910 114, with US\$ 40 436 494 for supporting Regional Office activities and US\$ 415 473 620 to support critical interventions in Member States in the region. Mobilization of the resources for effective implementation of the SRP is ongoing.

Surveillance

- The Surveillance Pillar of the IMST continues to provide technical support to Member States to improve active surveillance, including alert management systems, case investigations and contact tracing. During the reporting week, technical support was provided to many countries, as follows:
 - Virtual meetings were held with staff from the Ministries of Health and WHO Country Offices in Botswana, Eritrea, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Tanzania to strengthen COVID-19 surveillance, including alert management system, contact tracing, reporting and data analysis.
 - Technical support was provided to Niger, Senegal and Burkina Faso in contact tracing, data entry, quality control and analysis.
- A detailed epidemiological analysis of COVID-19 cases, laboratory testing and contact tracing database was continued to provide evidence to guide and improve public health measures.
- A rapid assessment of the status of COVID-19 surveillance was initiated in the 47 countries of the region to inform targeted technical support and guidance.

Infection Prevention and Control

- WHO AFRO has developed an infection and prevention control (IPC) assessment framework of healthcare facilities, aimed to reduce the high rate of infection among health workers.
- Since the beginning of the pandemic:
 - **7 127** healthcare workers (948 more than last week) were trained in Algeria (33), Angola (303), Burkina Faso (757), Cameroon (534), Congo (407), Cote d'Ivoire (1 512), Democratic Republic of the Congo (246), Kenya (32), Senegal (1 079), South Africa (1 800) and Tanzania (424).
 - **2 122** households (476 more than last week) were disinfected in Burkina Faso (406), Cameroon (1 231), DRC (162) and Senegal (128).
 - **993** IPC trainers (331 more than last week) were trained in Angola (687), Burkina Faso (69), Cameroon (4), Congo (Republic of) (12), Cote d'Ivoire (12), Democratic Republic of the Congo (51), Ethiopia (2), Gabon (2), Ghana (1), Kenya (34), Madagascar (2), Malawi (2), Mali (1), Mozambique (2), Namibia (2), Nigeria (6), Senegal (30), Uganda (2), Zambia (1) and Zimbabwe (1).

- **179** healthcare facilities (87 more than last week) have been disinfected in Angola (1), Burkina Faso (83), Cameroon (17), Congo (6), Cote d'Ivoire (13) and Democratic Republic of the Congo (50)
- **112** COVID-19 treatment centres (two more than last week) have been assessed across the region in Angola (7), Burkina Faso (3), Cameroon (17), Congo (4), Democratic Republic of the Congo (8), Kenya (4), Senegal (13), South Africa (47) and Tanzania (9).

Laboratory

- WHO AFRO has completed the mapping of diagnostic platforms in the region to facilitate the planning required to expand testing capacity.
- A procurement consortium between the UN agencies and partners was established to harmonize procurement and equitable allocation of critical COVID commodities to countries. The first round of allocations has been made and will be shipped to countries in the coming weeks.
- Robert Koch Institute have developed laboratory training materials which have been disseminated to laboratories in the region as a follow up to an instructional webinar.
- Testing is expanding and ramping up in nearly all countries
- Laboratory performance monitoring tool will be launched this week.

Case management

- A meeting was held with Africa CDC Case Management Pillar where areas of possible collaboration were agreed, on 6 May 2020. It was agreed that training and AFRO guidelines are jointly adapted by these bodies.
- A home, community and urban slum care of asymptomatic and mild COVID-19 cases guidance note development was completed on 9 May 2020. This will be shared in this week to be used for case management in the member countries.
- Training arrangements for AEMRN members to be conducted on 19 May 2020 were finalized. This training is opened to all healthcare workers across the continent.
- An Assessment of Antimicrobial Treatment Practices has been shared among FP and responses are slowly coming in.

Risk Communication

- WHO AFRO has distributed its guidance on physical distancing to all Member States.
- Twenty-eight countries have developed and are implementing engagement strategies.
- The team submitted and cleared two guidance documents on Ramadan and Risk communication and community engagement.
- The Senegal hub had in-depth discussions with Algeria, Cameroun, Benin, Togo and DRC country team to support them in strategies to improve capacity.
- The Nairobi team had a webinar with 200 journalists on emerging issues and stigma.

Logistics

- Supported the implementation of the centralized supply portal.
- Ongoing briefings and trainings on the new supply chain system.
- Implementation of a centralized helpdesk and offering direct support from AFRO.
- Developed a stock management and supplies monitoring tool that will be rolled out in coming days.
- A tool has been developed to help with preparing supplies allocation to countries through quantification.

Emergency Medical Team

- Exchanges with French-speaking academic institutions continue, who are still working on the agreement for collaboration.
- The process of working on the call for proposals in order to assess the proposals submitted by partners to WHO/AFRO has started.
- The deployment of EMTs in countries is being monitored and is still awaiting the formal request of support from the Ministries of Health.
- An assessment of priority countries to benefit EMTs support is being conducted.
- There is ongoing identification of challenges and needs in the case management to guide the activities of EMTs.
- The arrival of Portugal EMT in Sao Tome Principe is expected in the next few days.

Human Resources

- Since the outbreak started, a total of 232 experts have been deployed to 39 countries, including the Regional Office in Congo, to support: Coordination (33), Surveillance (19), Laboratory (14), IPC (24), Case Management (19), Point of Entry (5), Epidemiology (11), Risk Com (22), Media Com (10), Logistics (19), Partnership coordination (2), Data Management (15), Information Management Officer (1), SHOC Support (1), Training & Capacity Building (2), Planning & Monitoring (1), technical support to Countries (focal points) (25), Resources Mobilization (2), Planning & Information Management (1), Translator (2), staff wellbeing (1), EOC (1) Technical advisor (1) and Writing and Reporting (1).
- The lockdowns and international flights restrictions in most African countries remain the main challenges affecting the deployment of experts to support national responses.

5. IHR travel measures and cross border health

- WHO recommendations for international traffic in relation to COVID-19 outbreak are available at <https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/updated-who-recommendations-for-international-traffic-in-relation-to-covid-19-outbreak>

WHO continues to monitor IHR measures being implemented by countries in the region:

- All countries in the region are conducting entry screening at the Points of Entries (PoEs), mainly at the airports, with some doing so at seaports and ground crossings.
- Due to movement of goods through the ground crossing, countries have intensified screening at ground crossings, which has led to detection of COVID-19 cases among truck drivers.
- A total of 24 countries are implementing lockdown; nationwide lockdown in 13 countries and lockdown in affected areas in 11 countries.
- Eight countries have started a phased easing of the lockdown measures.

6. Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve in the WHO African Region, with the number of new confirmed cases and deaths increasing every week. Lesotho reported its first confirmed case on 13 May 2020, bringing in all countries in the African continent. More than a half of the countries in the region are experiencing community transmission and cross-border spread of COVID-19 between countries is still ongoing, mainly attributed to open transport corridors for goods and illicit activities along porous borders.

Recent analyses of the evolution of the outbreak in Africa show that the disease has largely affected urban populations, with most rural communities relatively unaffected or only reporting sporadic cases. This means that the outbreak can still be controlled by aggressive implementation of both containment and mitigation measures. The critical control measures include active case finding, testing and isolation of cases, contact tracing, physical distancing and promotion of good personal hygiene practices. These measures must be implemented diligently and comprehensively in all communities. Governments, Ministries of Health and other national authorities, WHO and partners need to put in place stronger systems to monitor effective implementation of these critical interventions as well as proper accountability systems. Communities also need to own their role as responsible citizenry.

Annex 1. Global and Regional time line for COVID-19 as of 4 May 2020

