

# COVID-19

Situation update for the WHO African Region  
7 October 2020

## External Situation Report 32



World Health  
Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR  
Africa

# COVID-19

## WHO AFRICAN REGION

### External Situation Report 32

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#### 1. Situation update



The number of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases in the WHO African Region is now at 1 201 111 with 26 475 deaths. Since our last [External Situation Report 31](#) issued on 30 September 2020, a total of 25 840 new confirmed COVID-19 cases and 659 new deaths were reported from 44 countries between 31 September and 6 October 2020. This is a 2% increase in incidence cases and a 20% decrease in deaths compared to 25 327 cases and 817 deaths registered during the previous reporting period (23 - 29 September 2020). Countries reporting the highest number of cases in the past seven days include; South Africa 10 670 (85%), Ethiopia 5 419 (43%), Kenya 1 208 (10%), Uganda 1 065 (9%) and Algeria 1031 (8%). The region observed a slight increase in case incidence in the past seven days for the first time since epidemiological week 30 (mid-July 2020).

Twenty-two countries recorded a decrease in new cases compared to 31 countries in the previous period, with 13 of them registering a decrease of more than 20%; Botswana (100%), Congo (100%), Burundi (78%), Rwanda (62%), Mauritania (59%), Lesotho (58%), Mozambique (56%), Niger (43%), Cameroon (42%), Zimbabwe (38%), Côte d'Ivoire (37%), Malawi (27%) and Madagascar (20%).

During this reporting period, 21 countries reported an increase in case-counts with 14 showing an increase of 20% or more; Seychelles (150%), Equatorial Guinea (140%), Eritrea (109%), Guinea-Bissau (81%), Benin (69%), Togo (61%), Liberia (57%), Democratic Republic of the Congo (46%), Zambia (40%), Senegal (39%), Mali (32%) and Ethiopia (30%). Mauritius, Namibia and Sao Tome and Principe did not record any significant change in their case incidence.

United Republic of Tanzania did not officially submit any reports indicating any new confirmed cases.

A total of 237 new health worker infections were reported from seven countries: Uganda (137), Kenya (59), Mozambique (11), Namibia (8), Eswatini (7), Liberia (7), Burkina Faso (5) and South Sudan (3).

During this period, 650 new COVID-19 related deaths occurred in 26 countries, with 436 (67%) of the deaths recorded in South Africa. This was followed by Ethiopia, with 48 (7%) deaths, Algeria with 47 (7%) and Kenya with 36 (6%). Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa recorded a 27%, 25% and 21% decrease in deaths, respectively; while the number of deaths in Algeria increased by 27%. The other countries that reported new deaths during the reporting period include; Angola (13), Cabo Verde (13), Uganda (9), Mozambique (7), Gambia (5), Namibia (4), Madagascar (4), Eswatini (4), Zambia (3), Senegal (3), Lesotho (3), Chad (3), Nigeria (2), Ghana (2), Guinea (2), Burkina Faso (2), Cameroon (2), Democratic Republic of the Congo (2), Togo (1), Malawi (3), South Sudan (1), and Zimbabwe (1).

As of 6 October 2020, a cumulative total of 1 201 111 COVID-19 cases was reported in the region, including 1 201 110 confirmed, with one probable case reported in Democratic Republic of the Congo. South Africa has consistently registered more than half, 57% (683 242), of all reported confirmed cases in the region. The other countries that have reported large numbers of cases are Ethiopia (80 003), Nigeria (59 583), Algeria (52 399), Ghana (46 829), Kenya (39 586), Cameroon (20 924), Côte d'Ivoire (19 885), Madagascar (16 570) and Senegal (15 141). These 10 countries collectively account for 86% (1 034 191) of all reported cases.

Six countries are still reporting fewer than 1 000 cases: Sao Tome and Principe (914), Burundi (515), Comoros (487), Eritrea (398), Mauritius (395) and Seychelles (146). To date, a total of 1 014 255 (84%) case-patients reported from all the 47 countries have recovered.

The total number of deaths reported in the region is 26 475, reported in 45 countries, giving an overall case fatality ratio (CFR) of 2.2%. Two countries, including Eritrea and Seychelles, have not registered any COVID-19 related deaths since the beginning of the pandemic.

Since the beginning of the outbreak in the region, the majority of the deaths have been reported from: South Africa 65% (17 103), Algeria 6.7% (1 773), Ethiopia 4.7% (1 238), Nigeria 4.2% (1 113), Kenya 2.8% (743), Cameroon 1.6% (420), Zambia 1.3% (335), Senegal 1.2% (312), Ghana 1.2% (303), Democratic Republic of the Congo 1.0% (274), and Madagascar 0.9% (233). The top five countries: South Africa, Algeria, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Kenya account for 83% (21 970) of the total deaths reported in the region. Chad (7.1%), Liberia (6.1%), Niger (5.8%), Mali (4.1%), Angola (3.5%), Algeria (3.4%) and Sierra Leone (3.2%) have the highest country specific case fatality ratios.

The current figures in the region represent 3.4% of confirmed COVID-19 cases and 2.6% of deaths reported worldwide. South Africa remains the hardest hit country on the African continent and is ranked tenth globally, although with relatively low numbers of deaths. **Table 1** shows the affected countries and their corresponding 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. **Figures 3** and **4** show the distribution of cases and deaths with case fatality ratio by reporting date in South Africa and in the other top six countries.

The number of health worker infections continue to increase gradually with 43 868 (3.6%) infections reported in 43 countries since the beginning of the outbreak. South Africa remains the most affected, with 27 360 (63%) health workers infected, followed by Algeria (2 300), Nigeria (2 175), Ghana (2 065), Ethiopia (1 506), Kenya (1 029), Cameroon (808), Uganda (592), Guinea (513), Mozambique (484), Namibia (464), Equatorial Guinea (363), Senegal (349), Eswatini (291), Guinea-Bissau (282) and Malawi (280). The other 28 countries that have recorded health worker infections are shown in **Table 1**. Liberia 16.3% (221/1 354), Niger 15.3% (184/1 200), Guinea Bissau 12.0% (282/2 362), Sierra Leone 10.1% (230/2 277), Sao Tome and Principe 9.6% (88/914), Mauritius 7.6% (30/395) and Equatorial Guinea 7.2% (363/5 052) have the highest country specific proportion of health worker infections among confirmed cases.

Basing on available data 1.0% (11 874) on age and gender distribution, males (61%) 7 240 in the 31-39 and 40-49 age groups are more affected than females (39%) 4 634 across the same age groups in the African region. The male to female ratio among confirmed cases is 1.6, and the median age is 37 years (range: 0 - 105). The distribution of cases by age and sex is presented in **Figure 5**.

Diverse transmission patterns continue to be observed across the region, with established community transmission seen in 39 (83%) countries, five (11%) countries have clusters of cases and three (6%) with sporadic cases.

As of 6 October 2020, the seven African countries in the WHO EMRO Region reported a total of 325 892 confirmed COVID-19 cases: Morocco (137 248), Egypt (103 902), Libya (38 468), Tunisia (23 453), Sudan (13 653), Djibouti (5 423), and Somalia (3 745). Additionally, a total of 10 330 deaths has been recorded from Egypt (6 001), Morocco (2 410), Sudan (836), Libya (602), Tunisia (321), Somalia (99) and Djibouti (61).

A cumulative total of 1 527 003 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 36 805 deaths (case fatality ratio 2.4%) with 1 267 136 cases that have recovered have been reported in the African continent.

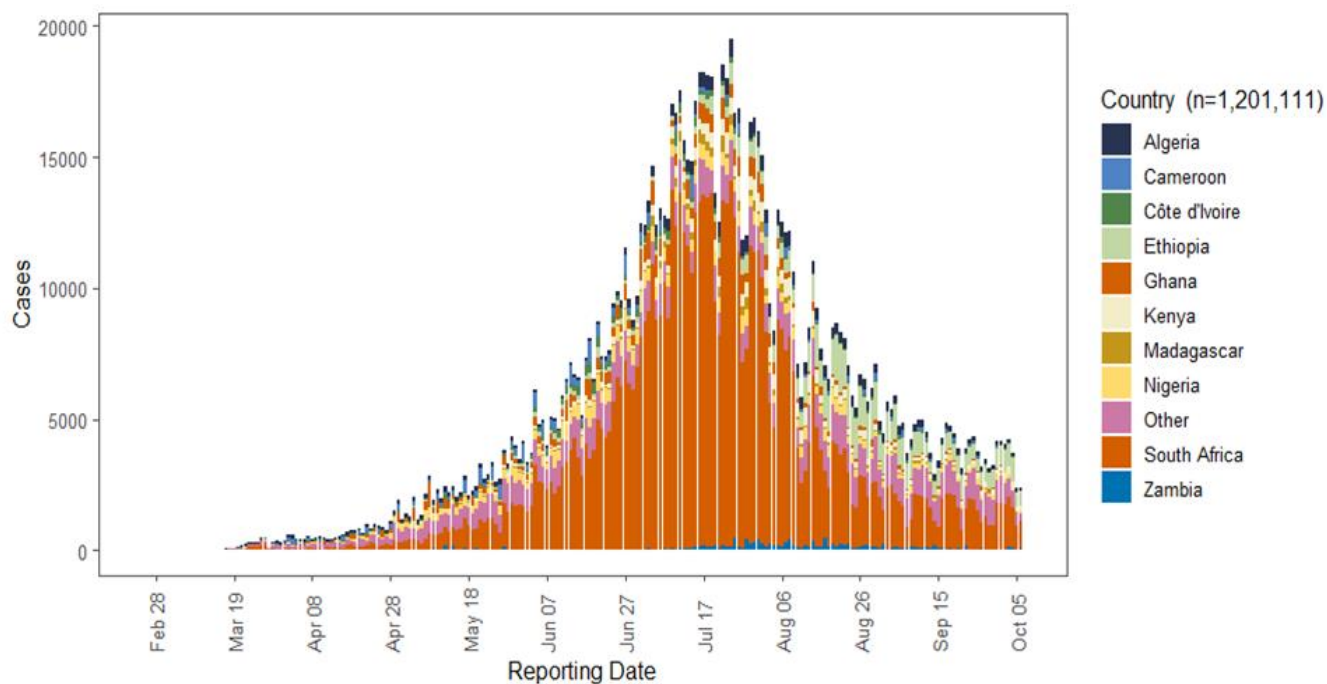
**Table 1. Number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the WHO African Region, 25 February –6 October 2020**  
(*n* =1 201 111)

Country	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Recovered Cases	Probable Cases	Case fatality ratio (%)	Health Worker infections
South Africa	683 242	17 103	616 857	0	2.5	27 360
Ethiopia	80 003	1 238	34 960	0	1.5	1 506
Nigeria	59 583	1 113	51 308	0	1.9	2 175
Algeria	52 399	1 773	36 763	0	3.4	2 300
Ghana	46 829	303	46 060	0	0.6	2 065
Kenya	39 586	743	27 331	0	1.9	1 029
Cameroon	20 924	420	19 764	0	2.0	808
Côte d'Ivoire	19 885	120	19 490	0	0.6	187
Madagascar	16 570	233	15 601	0	1.4	70
Zambia	15 170	335	14 313	0	2.2	139
Senegal	15 141	312	12 936	0	2.1	349
Namibia	11 673	125	9 611	0	1.1	464
Guinea	10 863	68	10 176	0	0.6	513
Democratic Republic of the Congo	10 789	274	10 239	1	2.5	256
Mozambique	9 196	66	5 852	0	0.7	484
Uganda	9 082	84	5 588	0	0.9	592
Gabon	8 808	54	8 135	0	0.6	57
Zimbabwe	7 915	229	6 440	0	2.9	238
Mauritania	7 523	161	7 188	0	2.1	5
Cabo Verde	6 518	69	5 632	0	1.1	90
Malawi	5 796	180	4 549	0	3.1	280
Eswatini	5 598	112	5 169	0	2.0	291
Angola	5 530	192	2 585	0	3.5	40
Congo	5 089	89	3 995	0	1.7	166
Equatorial Guinea	5 052	83	4 894	0	1.6	363
Rwanda	4 873	29	3 246	0	0.6	0
Central African Republic	4 853	62	1 924	0	1.3	1
Gambia	3 613	117	2 233	0	3.2	142
Mali	3 195	131	2 494	0	4.1	0
Botswana	3 172	16	710	0	0.5	56
South Sudan	2 748	50	2 560	0	1.8	131
Benin	2 411	41	2 287	0	1.7	139
Guinea-Bissau	2 362	39	1 638	0	1.7	282
Sierra Leone	2 277	72	1 710	0	3.2	230
Burkina Faso	2 167	59	1 419	0	2.7	122
Togo	1 881	49	1 410	0	2.6	68
Lesotho	1 639	38	874	0	2.3	20
Liberia	1 354	82	1 236	0	6.1	221
Chad	1 238	88	1 077	0	7.1	75
Niger	1 200	69	1 115	0	5.8	184
Sao Tome and Principe	914	15	888	0	1.6	88
Burundi	515	1	495	0	0.2	35
United Republic of Tanzania	509	21	180	0	4.1	1
Comoros	487	7	466	0	1.4	34
Eritrea	398	0	358	0	0.0	0
Mauritius	395	10	357	0	2.5	30
Seychelles	146	0	142	0	0.0	0
<b>Total (N=47)</b>	<b>1 201 111</b>	<b>26 475</b>	<b>1 014 255</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>43 686</b>

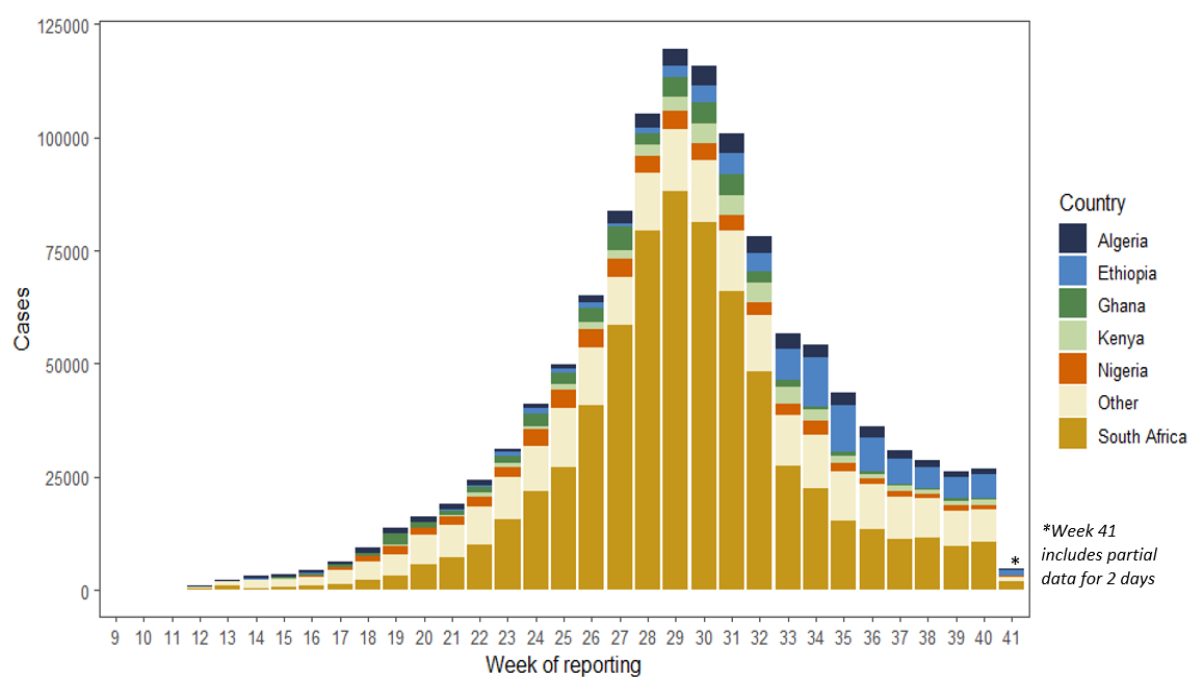
\* Chad and Liberia are implementing community mortality surveillance that could have attributed to high case fatality ratios.



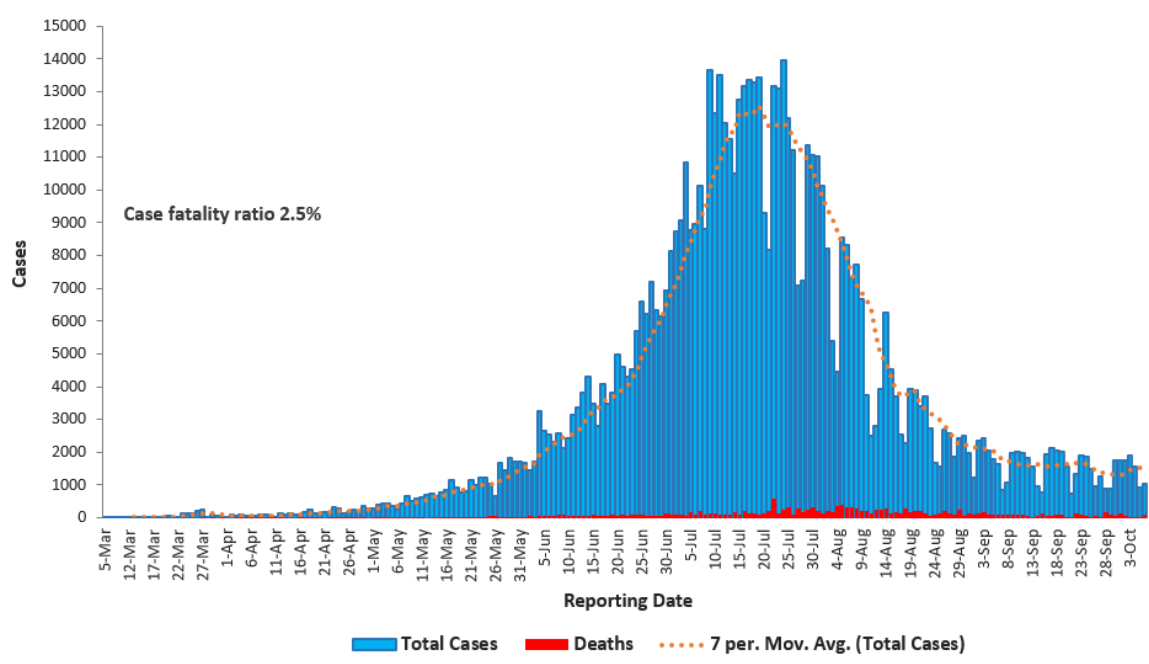
**Figure 1. An epicurve of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the WHO African Region, 25 February – 6 October 2020 ( $n=1\,201\,111$ )**



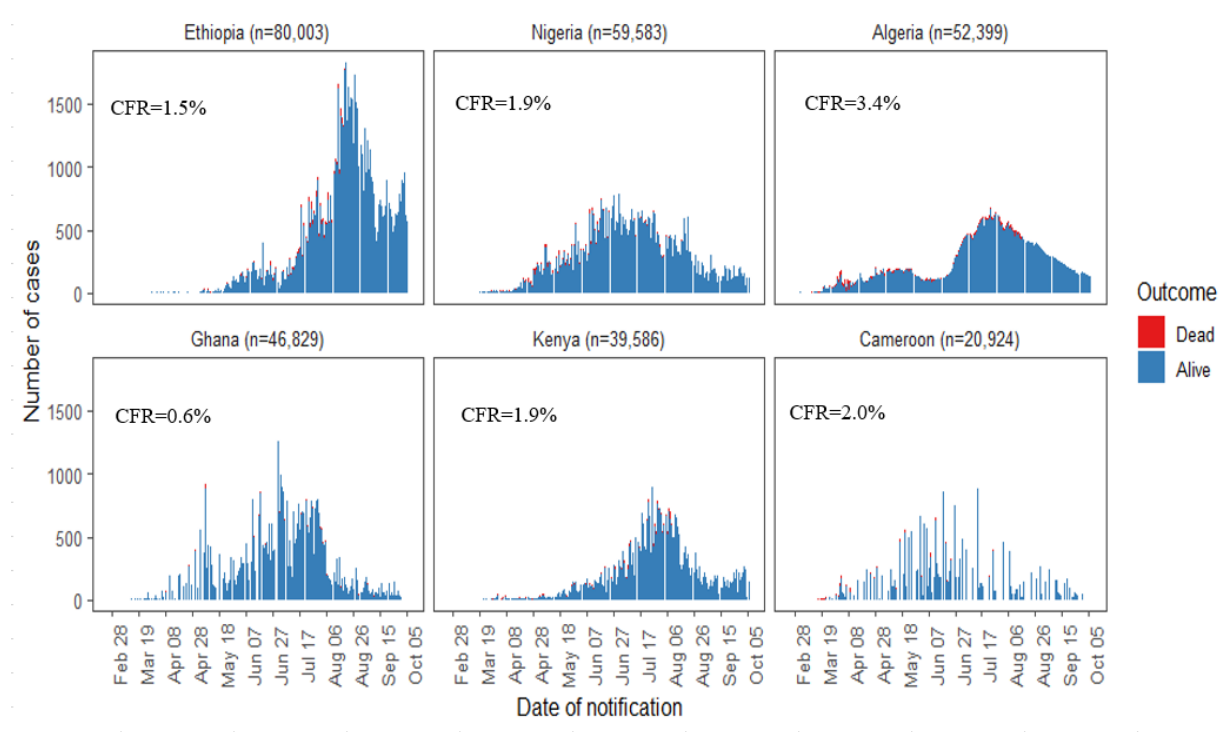
**Figure 2. Weekly number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the WHO African Region by country, 25 February – 6 October 2020 ( $n=1\,201\,111$ )**



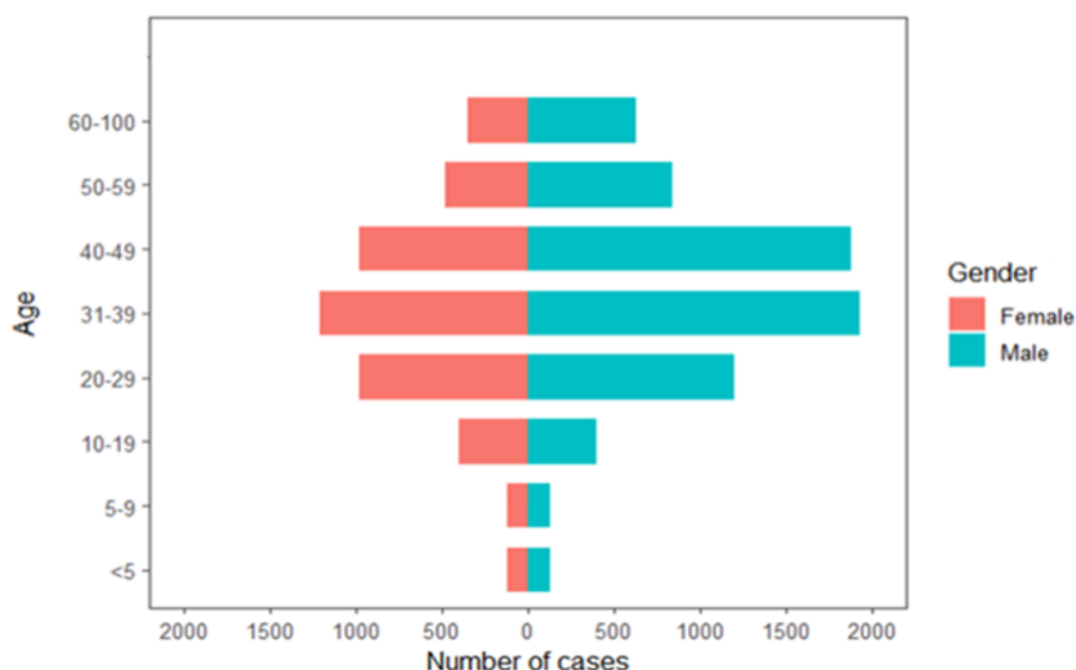
**Figure 3. The distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and 7-day moving average for South Africa by date of reporting, 5 March – 6 October 2020 (n= 683 242)**



**Figure 4. Epicurves showing distribution of confirmed cases and deaths with case fatality ratios of COVID-19 in the other top six reporting countries: Ethiopia, Nigeria, Algeria, Ghana, Kenya, and Cameroon, 25 February – 6 October 2020 (n= 299 324)**



**Figure 5. Age and sex distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the WHO African Region, 25 February – 6 October 2020 (n=11 874)**



## 2. Global update

As of 6 October 2020, at 10:38 CET, a total of 35 347 404 confirmed cases, including 1 039 406 deaths (CFR 3.0%), was reported globally. Both the global number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths have continued to increase significantly during the past weeks.

To date, 215 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 (7 341 406), India (6 685 082), Brazil (4 915 289), the Russian Federation (1 237 504), Colombia (855 052), Peru (828 169), Argentina (798 486), Spain (789 932), Mexico (761 665) and South Africa (683 242).

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 continues to work closely with its 47 Member States, as well as partners, in order to implement several outbreak preparedness and response interventions.

### Cross-pillar country actions

- The National Commission for Civic Education in Ghana has provided education on adherence to COVID-19 protocols in selected districts across the country during the Electoral Commission’s one-day voter registration exercise.
- The Health Promotion Division of the Ghana Health Service has developed a comprehensive multi-year national implementation plan for Ghana’s wellness clinics (2021-2025) incorporating COVID-19 related activities.
- The government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Services, distributed PPE and hand sanitizers to junior and senior high schools when they reopened on 5 October 2020.
- The Eswatini Risk Communication team have developed new jingles for TV and radio, addressing changed guidelines; a protocol for sentinel surveillance of COVID-19 and other related illnesses is being finalized.
- Verification of COVID-19 rapid antigen tests has been finalized in Eswatini.
- In Sao Tome and Principe, a multi-sectoral team from Ministry of Health, WHO and the Project Administration Trust Agency are in Principe carrying out a needs assessment, specifically for response at points of entry; a team has arrived for one-month intensive care training, including case management of COVID-19; a risk communication specialist is in the country to reinforce COVID-19 response.
- In South Sudan a joint supervisory visit was undertaken to the Nimule point of entry, by country epidemiological surveillance and IOM from 25-30 September 2020 to report on mobile laboratory facilities, cargo screening and testing, returnee screening and testing, isolation and quarantine capacity and data documentation and reporting; home-based care kits have been distributed in Juba by Solidarity, ACF and Medair; IPC activities include distribution of critical WASH and hygiene items to households and community health centres, cloth masks, training of community workers, installation of hand-washing facilities; risk communication and community engagement activities include awareness raising by community mobilizers, training of community influencers, messages through radio jingles and talk shows, flyers, posters and banners and training community mobilizers.
- The Equatorial Guinea Ministry of Health and partners participated in a meeting on the use of robots in the COVID-19 response.
- The Gambia has had a donation of 100 refurbished bicycles to the Ministry of Health for community-based surveillance and contact tracing in two regions.
- Ethiopia has finalized and shared a draft point of entry assessment report and recommendations to the Public Health Emergency Operations Committee; PPE has been distributed in the Addis Ababa region.

## 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.

## 6. Conclusion

The African Region has observed a levelling in both COVID-19 cases and deaths since epidemiological week 30, 2020. However, we registered a 2% increase in case incidence during the past seven days, although with a 20% decrease in deaths for the same period.

This increase in case count is partially attributed to the 21 countries reporting an increase in cases compared to 14 countries for the previous week, with the top two countries; South Africa (15%) and Ethiopia (30%) recording a significant increase. Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa recorded a 27%, 25% and 21% decrease in deaths, respectively; while the number of deaths in Algeria increased by 27%.

WHO continues to advise Member States not to be complacent but rather observe all the preventive measures and also urges continued implementation of proven public health and social measures against the ongoing COVID-19 crisis through a multi-sectoral approach.

### Annex 1. Global and Regional time line for COVID-19 as of 23 August 2020

