

RAPID ALERT

RESPONDING TO THE SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19 IN AFRICA



The number of new COVID-19 cases being reported daily in the months of July and August in Africa declined rapidly. This trend reversed during the month of October with many countries now experiencing either their first major increase in the number of new COVID-19 cases or their second wave of the pandemic.

As the pandemic continues to evolve across Africa, there is a need for African Union Member States to **re-evaluate, re-strategize,** and **re-invigorate** their COVID-19 response activities across the continent to ensure their countries are prepared to handle an inevitable second, and potentially third wave of cases.

In an effort to limit transmission and achieve pandemic control on the continent, Africa CDC is proposing the following measures to be taken by all Member States:



Remain vigilant

Countries should adapt or adopt best practices, strategies, guidelines and recommendations proposed by the Africa CDC and World Health Organization (WHO), aimed at limiting transmission. Measures taken should strike a balance between saving lives and minimizing the impact of the pandemic on the economy and social wellbeing of citizens. In doing so, countries should:

1. **Strengthen surveillance systems** to rapidly identify and isolate new cases as well as monitor trends to inform response efforts;
2. **Generate additional evidence and science** necessary for making informed decisions and reallocate resources to where they are most needed. These efforts could include implementing rapid mortality surveillance, sero-survey studies, and other systematic and implementation health research;
3. **Enhance the implementation of Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT)** by ensuring that tests are conducted, cases are isolated and cared for, and contacts are traced;
4. **Continue to strengthen the health systems** to address all public health challenges, especially provision of essential health services; and
5. **Review and evaluate** the public health and social measures that were used during earlier waves of transmission to better understand which were effective, how they impacted other critical health care delivery systems, and their acceptability and level of compliance by the public. Plans and triggers for re-instating these should be reassessed.



1 For Member States experiencing an increase in the number of new cases

Countries experiencing an increase in new cases should critically evaluate the implementation status of all infection prevention and physical distancing measures in place, address barriers to their implementation, and support institution of additional restrictive measures where and when needed in place as guided by data from surveillance programs. These measures include:

- 1. Continued widespread testing by introducing rapid antigen tests** that can give results in 15-30 minutes, especially in hotspots;
- 2. Ensure** access to personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing supplies;
- 3. Improve and increase active case search** for improved case identification, isolation and care, and tracing of contacts;
- 4. Reinforce field investigation to identify hotspots** and specific drivers of infection spread for targeted intervention; and
- 5. Increase public health messaging campaigns** including risk communication, to reinforce public health and social measure adherence.



2 For Member States seeing the number of new cases level off

Countries should continue to implement infection prevention and control policies, public health and social measures and guidelines that they found effective in curtailing the pandemic. Specifically, Member States should:

1. **Continue with expansion of access to testing services** until positivity rate falls below 5% and maintaining test-per-case ratio is above 10 at all times
2. **Sustain active case search** for improved case identification, isolation and care, and tracing of contacts;
3. **Generate additional data and evidence** to guide the adjustment of existing public health measures and improve the public health response.
4. **Continue public health messaging campaigns** including risk communication, to reinforce public health and social measure adherence.



3 For Member States experiencing a **decline in the number of new cases**

1. **Continue to ensure access to testing** to make sure the positivity rate is below 5% and maintain test-per-case ratio is above 10 at all times.
2. **Ensure close monitoring** of trends in the number of new cases reported even when **intensify active case search** and field investigation **to sustain** the down-trending of cases. Cases should be promptly isolated and cared for, and contacts traced.
3. Generate additional data and evidence studies such a **sero-surveys and rapid mortality surveillance**
4. **Continue public health messaging campaigns** including risk communication, to reinforce public health and social measure adherence.

For additional resources to aid the continental COVID-19 response, please see below and/or visit:

africacdc.org/covid-19/covid-19-resources/:

▶ **Partnership for Evidence-based Response to COVID-19 (PERC)**

[PERC Dashboard](#)

[Country and regional reports](#)

▶ [Recommendations for Stepwise response to COVID-19](#)

▶ [Guidance on Community Physical Distancing During COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

▶ [Guidance on easing lockdown](#)

▶ [African Medical Supplies Platform \(AMSP\)](#)

▶ [COVID-19 Trusted Travel Platform](#)

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