

COVID-19 Rwanda response updates March 14 – April 25, 2020

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INTRODUCTION

As of March 2020, WHO declared the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a global pandemic [1], and on March 14 2020, Rwanda reported its first COVID-19 confirmed case [2]. In response and to effectively contain COVID-19, the government of Rwanda activated the national joint task force- a multidisciplinary team to lead all activities pertaining to COVID-19 in the epiCentre as well as at district levels [3].

Rwanda has maintained and implemented the following measures [3,4]:

- » To encourage the population to regularly wash hands using clean water and soap or alcohol based hand sanitizers.
 - » To avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth and handshakes.
 - » Wear masks in public areas.
 - » Avoid contact with others and stay home if experiencing fever, cough, sneezing shortness of breath.
 - » Clean and disinfect surfaces around your home and work,
 - » To cover mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
 - » To limit unnecessary travel to within and across cities.
 - » To recognize COVID-19 key symptoms : fever, dry cough and sore throat and use a set hotline (114) to seek help or report any suspect cases.
 - » Rwanda has suspended international travels for an initial one month period from March 2020.
 - » The country has been organizing cluster based screening as an active case finding strategy.
 - » The country has declared a national lockdown from March 21- April 30, 2020.
- In addition to prevention measures, the Government is quarantining and isolating asymptomatic cases in pre-set and prepared sites; the majority of people in these sites are recent travelers quarantined upon arrival at Kigali International Airport [3,4,7].

RWANDA COVID-19 CURRENT KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- » Total cumulative number of cases: 183 (As of 25 April 2020)
- » About 75% of all confirmed cases were recent travellers, majority of which were quarantined immediately upon arrival.
- » Total Recoveries/ Discharged: 88
- » No death.

SURVEILLANCE

The Rwanda Biomedical Centre established health screening points at 31 entry points (Kigali International Airport and 30 land and water border entries) using surveillance screening documents pre-prepared and distributed early this year [8].

LABORATORY

The national Reference Laboratory (NRL) has

REFERENCES

- [1] S. P. Adhikari et al., “Epidemiology , causes , clinical manifestation and diagnosis , prevention and control of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) during the early outbreak period : a scoping review,” pp. 1–12, 2020.
- [2] Ministry of Health, “Rwanda standard operating procedures for covid-19 outbreak preparedness,” pp. 1–84.
- [3] Prime Ministry Rwanda, “Public Notice from the Office of the Prime Minister on Coronavirus Disease 2019.pdf.”
- [4] “Statement on New Measures to Prevent COVID-19 Coronavirus Transmission,” no. 114, p. 2020, 2020.

been upgraded to test for COVID-19 since early February, 2020 in partnership with Robert Koch Institute (RKI), Germany; The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization [5].

RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

National awareness campaigns continue to be widely implemented using different communication channels available such as radio, TV, meetings, social media channels and drones [2,5].

COVID-19 awareness and prevention messages are also being sent through SMS [6].

LOGISTICS

Hospital capacities for holding, quarantine sites and case isolation are constantly being upgraded [2].

- [5] RBC, “Weekly Bulletin,” vol. 2019, no. March, pp. 1–2, 2020.

- [6] Ministry of Health Rwanda “Instructions on Covid-19 screening at points of entry.pdf.” .

- [7] Ministry of Health Rwanda, “Updates on COVID-19 Rwanda-25 April 2020.pdf.”

- [8] Ministry of Health Rwanda, “Rwanda Ministry of Health Coronavirus Disease 2019 National Preparedness Response Plan March-August 2020.”