

Volume 2.

Know COVID-19 Nigeria Report

Update on the
Coronavirus
Pandemic

June 2020

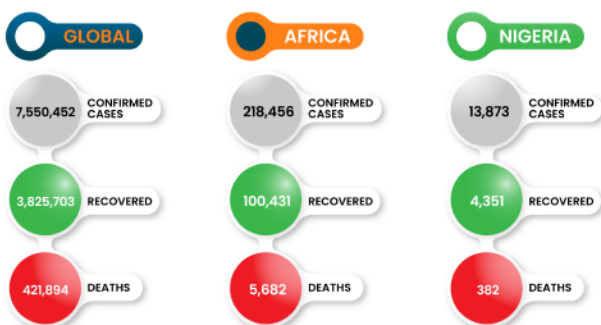
BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

As of 11 June 2020, the number of COVID-19 confirmed cases have surpassed 7.5million globally, with over 421,000 fatalities and 3.8million recoveries. In Africa alone, there are about 218,456 confirmed cases, over 100 thousand recoveries and about 5,682 deaths. Nigeria has recorded about 14,4554 confirmed cases, 4,494 recoveries and about 387 deaths.

FACT CHECK:

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020
10:00pm

COVID-19 STATISTICS



Source: www.worldometers.info/coronavirus

know
covid19
NIGERIA

knowcovid19 knowcovid19 knowcovid-19

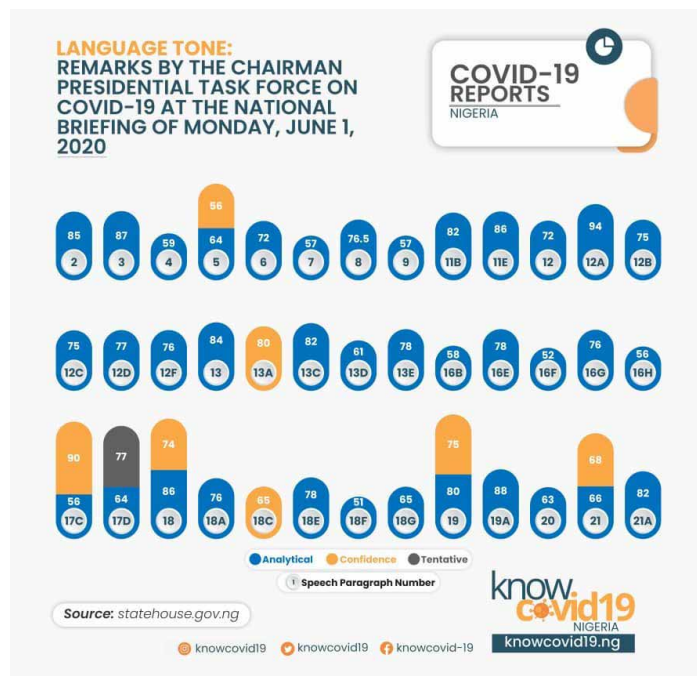
knowcovid19.ng

Since 30 March 2020, Lagos, Ogun and the Federal Capital Territory, the initial concentration centres of the virus and major economic hubs in the country, had been locked down. However, after four weeks, with major economic impacts on the country, the Federal Government eased the lockdown in these states. By this time, states in the North like Kano, Katsina, Borno, Gombe and others were beginning to record more cases of the virus.

The lockdown had severe implications. Businesses are required to close or scale back operations, resulting in millions of job loss, loss of livelihoods, inadequate income. Schools have shut down with children and youths out of school and without alternatives. There is a heightened need for care for the elderly, pregnant and vulnerable people – despite the healthcare system being overstretched and overwhelmed.

Unfortunately, Nigeria, with about 200 million people, had conducted only 12,000 tests as of April 26. Botswana, with a

population around one (1) per cent of Nigeria, had conducted over 5,000 tests as of April 23, and South Africa, with a quarter of Nigeria's population, had conducted around 185,000 as of April 28.¹ With this reality, we may never know the true impact of COVID-19 in the country as many of its victims may die before they are diagnosed and recorded accordingly.



Notably, the Federal Government has been proactive in introducing several measures to stem the adverse effects on the economy. This includes the #15billion² to support the national COVID-19 response as well as an economic stimulus and social protection packages for the most vulnerable people. Also, the country had received funding from CACOVID – N20billion, European Union – £50Million,³ among others.

The novel Coronavirus is a game-changer; people are learning to be adaptable and accepting the new normal, leveraging on technology, innovation and other capabilities while the struggle for a vaccine continues.

1. [at https://www.cfr.org/blog/how-nigeria-has-responded-covid-19-so-far](https://www.cfr.org/blog/how-nigeria-has-responded-covid-19-so-far)

2. www.cnbc.com/africa-press-office/2020/03/27/coronavirus-nigeria-federal-government-releases-10-billion-naira-grant-to-lagos-state

3. nairametrics.com/2020/04/14/european-union-donates-e50m-to-nigeria-to-fight-coronavirus/

CHALLENGES

In the process of sourcing for data and information, the KnowCovid19 team evaluates the credibility of sources. We noticed an increase in the surge of fake news, even among popular national dailies and other publishing houses. This demanded the team to do more to get useful and verifiable information.

Another challenge is sourcing data from NCDC. On more than one occasion, the agency has recorded errors in the updates and reports. These errors, due to the recording of repeated tests and error in cases recorded, raise questions around the credibility and reliability of the information from NCDC. This also affects organisations like Know COVID-19 Nigeria that rely solely on NCDC as the recognizable credible source for information – the team has to edit and take down posts to adjust for these errors.

Due to the central role of NCDC, the agency must remain a credible and reliable source.

Know COVID-19 Nigeria calls that all data and reports are evaluated and certified via an in-house process before publishing to prevent errors.

This will help Know COVID-19 team to continue to address the infodemic around COVID-19 in Nigeria.

Great news! Carona virus vaccine ready. Able to cure patient within 3 hours after injection. Hats off to US Scientists.

Right now Trump announced that Roche Medical Company will launch the vaccine next Sunday, and millions of doses are ready from it !!!



DISTRUST, LOSS OF FEAR FOR CORONAVIRUS SPIKE

In April 2020, when Coronavirus was still in its hundreds, there was heightened tension and fear about the pandemic. This was evident in the continuous trending of COVID-19 related hashtags. However, by the time the government lifted the ban on movement, the rise in hunger, increase in the cost of goods and currency devaluation had crept into the economy devastatingly.

Community transmission had risen but the populace had lost trust in government and the figures being reported daily. Distrust in figures was exacerbated due to poor communication of issues related to the virus by the government.

Citizens demanded pictures and videos of isolation centres, victims and testimonies. However, there were fewer testimonies compared to the numbers of cases reported daily. Interestingly, there was more distrust in the number of reported confirmed cases after the World Health Organisation announced that asymptomatic patients can rarely spread the virus.⁴ Also, poor accountability and transparency in spending COVID-19 related funds have encouraged politicization of the pandemic.

Despite the increase in the numbers of cases recorded, people continue to go about their daily activities. While some few individuals and organisations are taking precautions by ensuring the use of face mask, hand-washing and considerable social distancing (though inadequate to the WHO standards), there is a considerably large size of the population acting normal as before.

4. <http://www.cnn.com/2020/06/08/asymptomatic-coronavirus-patients-arent-spreading-new-infections-who-says.html>

NCDC POOR DATA MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

In the wake of the Coronavirus Pandemic in Nigeria, it's been said that information and statistics are one of the best tools to fight the pandemic successfully. Thus, Nigerians have relied on the daily updates by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and their respective States government response Teams for genuine information about confirmed, active, recovered and death cases in the country.

However, there have continuously been series of discrepancies and errors in the report given by NCDC and some state government. For instance, NCDC may report a case already announced by a state government on a different date or vice versa. Also, NCDC, sometimes, will not update the public on transferred cases from one state to another. Some states government also fail to confirm NCDC reports while others give a different report and statistics that contradict the NCDC reports. This lack of coordination has created a lot of preventable discrepancies in the COVID-19 data management system in Nigeria. Some evident examples of these misnomer in data reporting include:

1. Kastina State Government announced the discharge of 4 patients from their facility on 25th of April. This was duly reported in the NCDC report on 25th and 26th of April but has been deleted from their report since 27th of April.⁵
2. Ondo state government confirmed five new cases between Saturday and Sunday, 25-26th of April 2020. The Governor made this known in a statement he gave to reporters on the 27th of April stating that two persons were confirmed in the state on 25th of April and three persons on the 26th of April. However, NCDC did not report the confirmed cases on the 25th of April for the state but the confirmed cases of 26th were reported. Meanwhile, the number of confirmed cases in Ondo state increased in the NCDC report without the announcement of new cases by the state or the NCDC from 28th to 30th of

5. <http://saharareporters.com/2020/04/25/just-four-coronavirus-patients-discharged-katsina>

April.⁶

3. On the 26th of April, NCDC reported that six persons were discharged from Lagos State Infectious Disease Facility. Meanwhile, the state government always announce all developments in the state. However, no announcement was made by the state on that date to corroborate NCDC's announcement. Thereafter, NCDC has been having an additional six figures to the total number of discharged persons reported by the state government. For instance, the total number of discharged persons reported by the Lagos State government as at 2nd of May, 2020 was 247 but it was 253 in the NCDC update.⁷
4. On May 16th, Kwara state total confirmed cases, according to NCDC and Kwara state COVID-19 Response Team, was 58. On May 18th, the Kwara response team reported five (5) new cases while NCDC reported Seven (7) new cases for Kwara, bringing the total to 63 on Kwara state database and 65 on NCDC database respectively. According to Kwara State Spokesperson, Abdulrafiu Ajakaye, NCDC was notified that there were only five (5) new cases and the remaining two (2) were repeated cases. However, On 20th NCDC recorded one (1) new case for Kwara, bringing the total to 66, Kwara COVID-19 Response Team, on the other hand, recorded Three (3) new cases, which brought the total number of cases to 66 (adding two new cases that were omitted on May 18). Since May 2020, NCDC has always endeavoured to correct their mistakes and apologise to states government when they made mistakes (as evident in the case of Nasarawa, Zamfara and Kaduna, however, no apology was made to Kwara state (and Kwara demanded none) suggesting that the state government added figures without proper announcement and clarification.

Dating is very important in data collection,

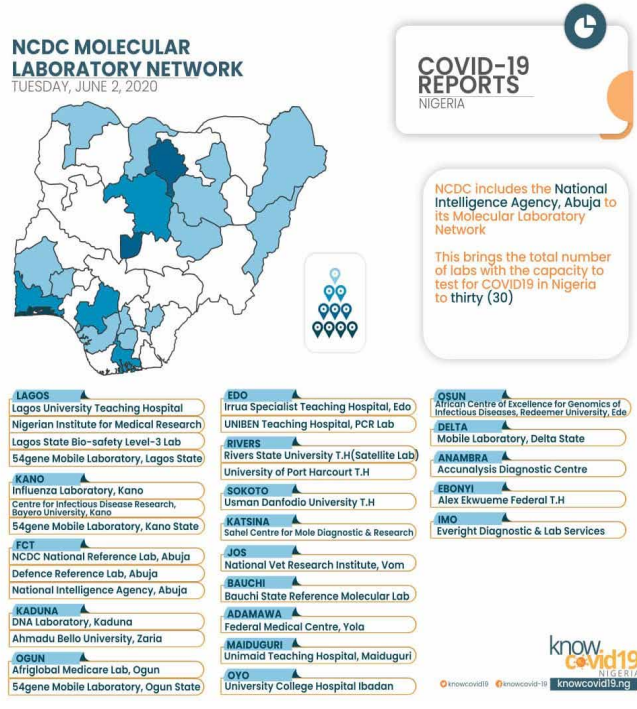
6. <https://dailypost.ng/2020/04/27/gov-akeredolu-gives-update-on-ondos-five-new-covid-19-patients/>

7. NCDC twitter handle and Lagos State Government Twitter Handle.

collation, management and use. With discrepancies in the number of cases being reported by NCDC and states Response Teams, the credibility of data is diminished. It becomes expedient for NCDC to be a central coordinating agency and should be able to manage case reportage both at federal and state levels. Therefore, NCDC requires more capacity development to execute their tasks and mandate.

INCREASE TESTING CAPABILITIES

Across various countries and climes, the increase in testing capacities has been very crucial in the fight against the COVID 19 pandemic. Since the start of the outbreak, there have been supports from all angles to provide testing kits, training of health workers and strengthening surveillance in the communities, to improve early detection capabilities.

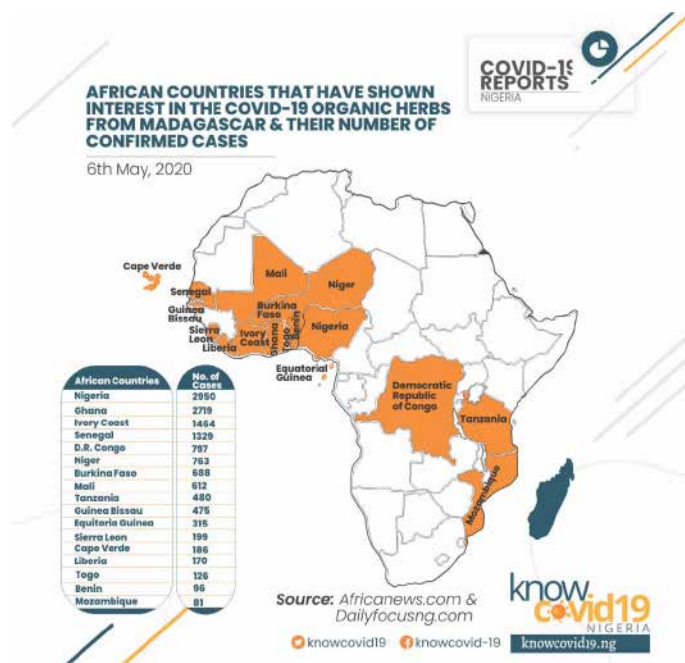


Further increase in testing capabilities has increased the number of confirmed cases. Within May 2020 (1-31 May), with a total of 29 molecular labs, about 48,123 tests were conducted and 8,230 cases were confirmed. By 31 May 2020, the NCDC has carried out a total of 63,882 tests and recorded a total of 10,162 confirmed cases.

As of 11 June 2020, with a total of 33 molecular laboratories, the NCDC has carried out a total of 88,432 tests, and about 14,554 cases have been confirmed in Nigeria. With the ongoing transmission of the virus in local communities, only intensified testing and isolation can help in containing the spread of the virus.

AFRICA AND RACE FOR COVID-19 VACCINE

COVID-19 is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus resulting in acute respiratory distress syndrome. There are no drugs currently approved for the preventive or curative management of the virus.



The outbreak of COVID-19 in Nigeria led to the creation of more molecular laboratories with testing capabilities across the country. This has been efficient because the increase in testing across the country led to an increase in the number of positive cases in Nigeria. As of 15 April 2020, Nigeria had only 13 functional testing facilities in 10 states. These facilities can conduct a minimum of 1,500 tests per day in Lagos and 1,000 tests per day in FCT and other states. By the end of April, about 15,759 tests had been carried out with only about 1,932 confirmed cases.

Finding a cure for is a priority target as a drug may shorten the time spent being sick with the disease as well as reduce potential complications associated with the disease.

The vaccine would be critical to preventing and controlling the pandemic. A vaccine would prime the body's defence system such that a later infection by the virus can be dealt with appropriately. Several vaccine candidates are in the pipeline and with the accelerated programs by

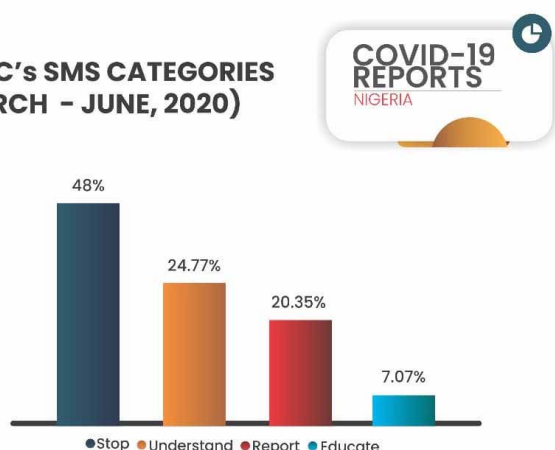
regulatory agencies, a vaccine is likely to be ready for mass vaccinations within 12 months.

What role can/should Africa play in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine? In a survey of over 800 African researchers and policymakers conducted by the African Academy of Science, the ethical and scientific conduct of vaccine clinical trials was identified as a top priority by over 80% of respondents.

Thus, Africa should take an active role in global efforts towards the development of a vaccine. This inevitably would involve partaking in clinical trials which are the gold standard for evaluating the safety and efficacy of drugs and vaccines and are required before regulatory approval for widespread public use.

It would be beneficial that Africans are studied in Phase II a/b clinical studies that evaluate both the safety and efficacy of candidate vaccines in populations representative of Africans. Vaccines elicit immune responses that may be subject to genetic influences. Furthermore, these vaccines would be received within the context of communicable diseases that preferentially affect Africans.

NCDC's SMS CATEGORIES (MARCH - JUNE, 2020)



Source: NCDC's SMS on COVID-19, 2020



clinical trials as they provide opportunities for improving individual and institutional capacity in conducting such studies that may be required later when they develop and evaluate their own locally derived solutions. The presence of such scientists may provide an internal mechanism to further protect the interests of Africans.

Rather than advocating total abstinence from clinical trials, African governments, regulatory scientists and agencies such as the WHO should be involved in overseeing the conduct and reporting of such studies to ensure adherence to highest ethical standards required in the conduct of such studies. With this guaranteed, the benefits accruing to the African populace is secured.

ADAPTING TO THE NEW NORMAL (FACE MASK EVERYWHERE)

All over the world, the phrase, "New Normal" is a common cliché. It depicts new behaviours that are soon becoming normal standards as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. One of these is the wearing of face masks in the public, which is a mandatory measure to help reduce the spread of the virus.

Initially, it was mostly doctors, nurses and others in healthcare settings that wore the masks. However, it has become a prerequisite at any gathering. As more people wear the mask, some people are seeing what they are not used to, most especially, in the rural communities.

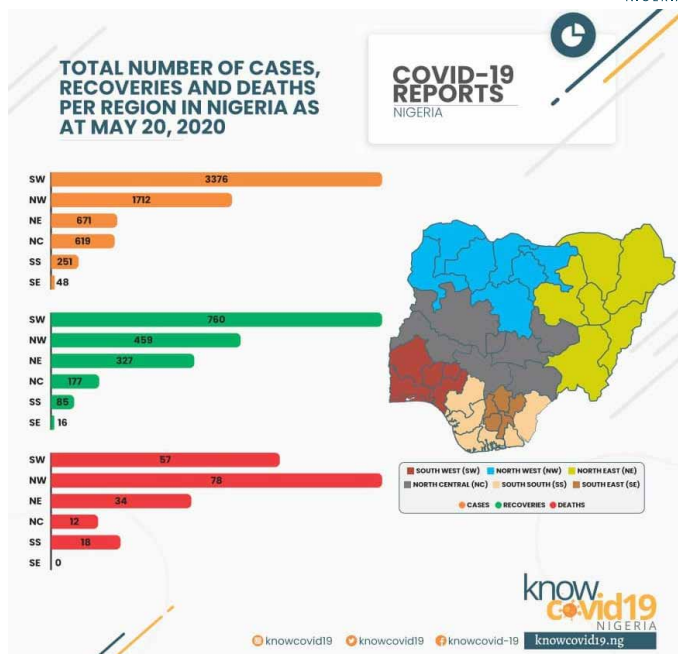
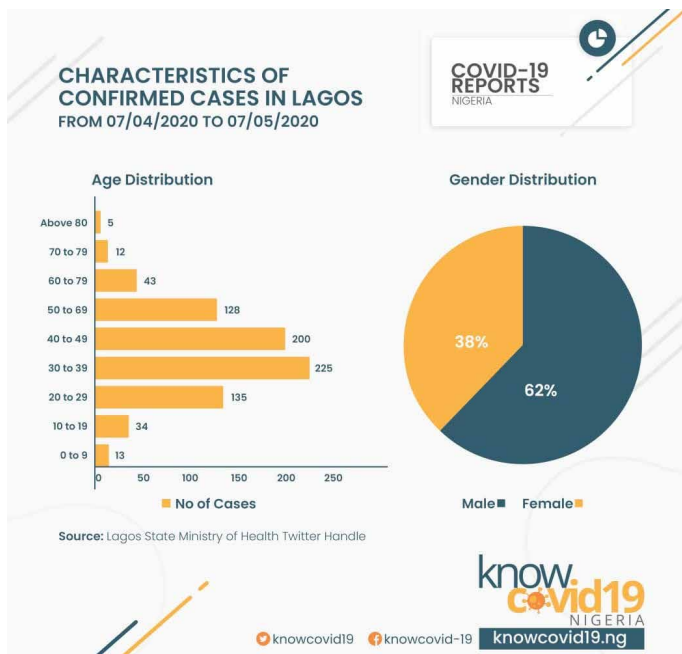
For them, it can be strange or a little scary especially if they have to put on the masks too.⁸ Also, children might be indifferent seeing other people in masks. However, as long as adults use simple words to explain why people are wearing masks, give them time to look, watch and get used to the new normal, they will adapt.⁹

Thus, evaluating vaccines in a representative African population would be highly necessary.

Secondly, African scientists would benefit from participating in the conduct of such

8 <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200609-how-face-masks-affect-our-communication>


9 <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-masks.html>



However, with the rate at which the coronavirus is spreading without undermining the effectiveness of face masks, social distancing and good hygiene remain the most preventive measures from contracting the deadly virus. Though many Nigerians have come to terms with the use of face masks, there is limited adherence to social distancing which have resulted in the rise in the number of new cases recorded by NCDC in the country.

Though there have been unconfirmed claims that prolonged use of face masks can become detrimental to personal health.¹⁰ Some have also complained about not being able to have proper communication with the masks on as it makes their word sound muffled. Nevertheless, Coronavirus is a game-changer; new social behaviours are becoming normal and people must adapt to these behaviours to avert the continuous spread of the virus.

¹⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200609-how-face-masks-affect-our-communication>



A report produced by the Know
COVID-19 Nigeria Team.

For more information, reach us
at: hello@knowcovid19.ng, @
[knowcovid19](#) on Twitter, @
[Knowkovid19](#) on Instagram, [www.
knowcovid19.ng](http://www.knowcovid19.ng)

**Call us: +2347068775529 or
+2348168235737**

© Know Covid-19 Nigeria

know.
covid19
NIGERIA