



NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER (PHEOC), ETHIOPIA

COVID-19 PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN ETHIOPIA

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Epi-Week- 30 (July 26 – August 01, 2021)

BULLETIN №: 66

I. HIGHLIGHTS

- The total laboratory samples tested for COVID-19 in Ethiopia surpassed three million.
- A total of 38,934 laboratory samples were tested in the Epi-Week-30 bringing the total number of samples tested to 3,023,600.
- A total of 2,022 new confirmed COVID-19 cases and 21 COVID-19 related deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-30 bringing the total cases and death to 280,565 and 4,390 respectively.
- A total of 208,154 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been managed at Home Based Isolation and Care so far; 936 of these were enrolled in the Epi-Week-30.
- The number of COVID-19 cases, critical cases and the number of positive samples among the tested samples have shown increment in this week.

II. Subjects in Focus:

a) Third wave of COVID-19 pandemic in Ethiopia

- There are signs that the third wave of COVID-19 pandemic is beginning in Ethiopia. According to the reports from various sources, the third wave of the pandemic has been reported from various countries around the world. The Delta variant of SARS-COV-2 is cited as the main reason for this third wave.
- An alarming increment of COVID-19 cases and deaths is occurring in Ethiopia. Three weeks back, the number of confirmed cases for COVID-19 was low by that time on average 70 cases were reported in day. However, in the last two weeks there was an alarming increment in the number of COVID-19 cases. There were 476 COVID-19 cases on July 29, 2021 which is the highest number since the end of the second wave. The positivity rate of the samples tested has also increased to seven percent as of July 29, 2021, which was in a range of one to two before two weeks. On the other hand, the number of COVID-19 patients in severe condition was in average 124 before three weeks which doubled in number being 240 as of August 01, 2021.
- As a result, after the end of the second wave, there are signs that a third wave may occur due to poor adherence to PHSM in the community as well as the improper implementation of the COVID prevention and control measures. We urge service providers, health professionals, educators and other stakeholders to take ownership and responsibility in the prevention and control of COVID-19; proper hand hygiene, face mask use and physical distancing, as well as vaccination against COVID-19.

b) SARS-COV-2 new variants

- The new variants of SARS-COV-2 (Variants of Concern and Variants of Interest) are being detected in new countries and territories. Below are the incidence of the four variants of concern detected in various countries as of August 01, 2021.
 - Globally, cases of the Alpha variant have been reported in 182 countries, territories or areas, while 132 countries (one new country) reported cases of the Beta variant; 81 countries (one new country) reported cases of the Gamma variant; 135 countries (three new countries) reported cases of the Delta variant.
- Among the SARS-COV-2 Variants of Concern Alpha and Beta variants were detected in Ethiopia by the genomic sequencing conducted so far in Ethiopia and at Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI). The report regarding the new variants is already disclosed on July 13, 2021. Activities regarding genomic sequencing for other new variants, like Delta variant, are under way in Ethiopia

III. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

a. Global Situation

- Globally, over 5 million new cases are reported in the last week (Figure 1) which is a 10% increase as compared to the previous week.
- More than 103 thousand new deaths (an equivalent increment compared to previous week) are reported globally in the Epi-week-30.
- As of August 01, 2021, a total of 193,719,603 COVID-19 cases and 4,038,357 deaths (CFR=2.08%) have occurred globally. Of the total cases and deaths reported since the beginning of the outbreak, 5,646,975 cases and 103,864 deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-30.
- Generally, the United States of America (USA) reported the highest number of cases followed by India.
- The highest numbers of new cases in the last seven days were reported from the United States of America (972,354 new cases), India (591,827 new cases), Brazil (544,868 new cases), Indonesia (286,295 case) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (223,955 new cases).
- In Africa, as of August 01, 2021, a total of 6,736,600 cases and 169,011 deaths were reported across the continent (CFR=2.51%). Of these 385,468 cases (6% increase compared to previous week) and 8,766 deaths (8% increase compared to previous week) were reported during the Epi-Week-30.
- In Africa, South Africa reported the highest number of cases followed by Morocco.
- Ethiopia reported the highest number of COVID-19 confirmed cases in East Africa. See the summary dashboard below.

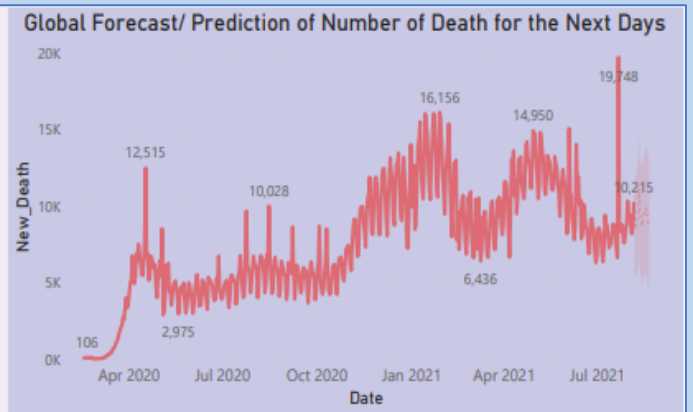
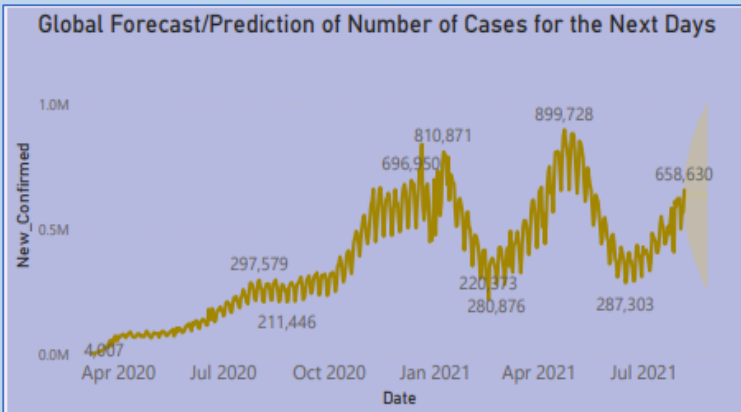
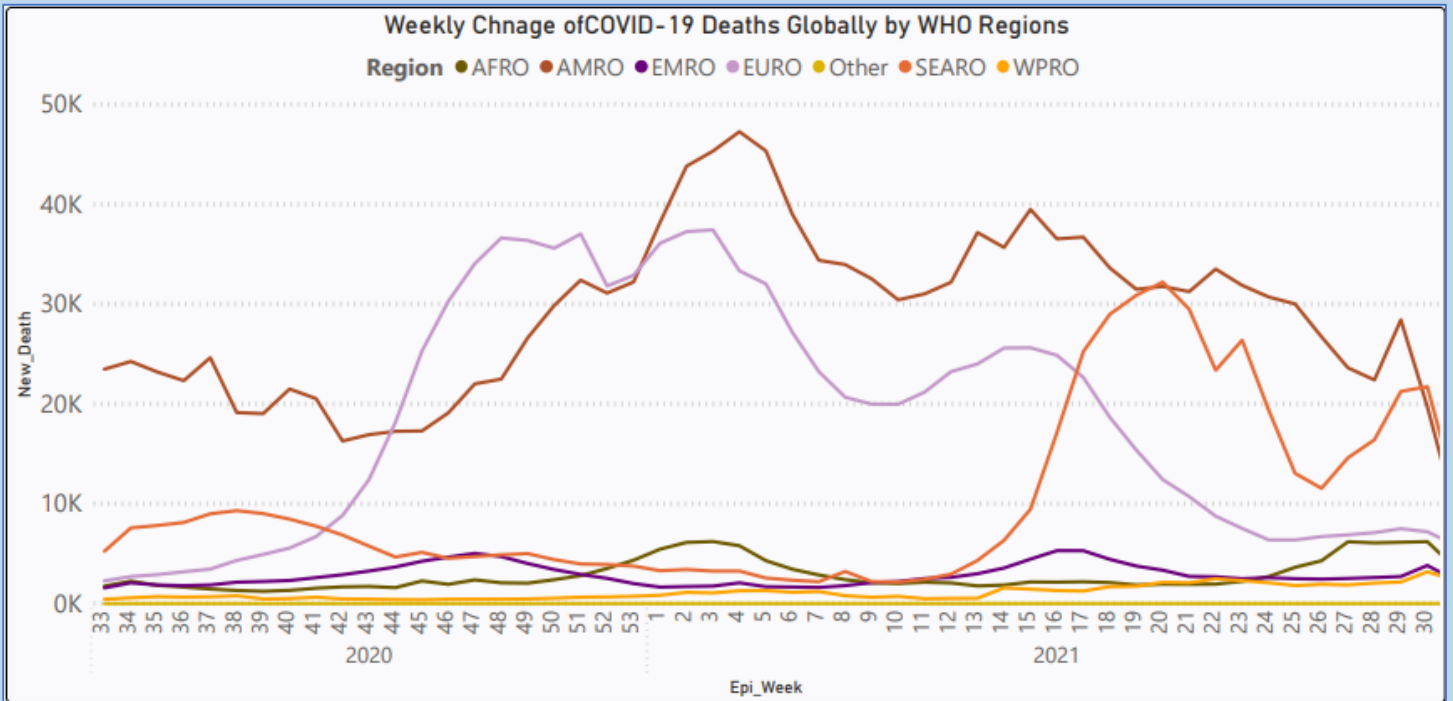
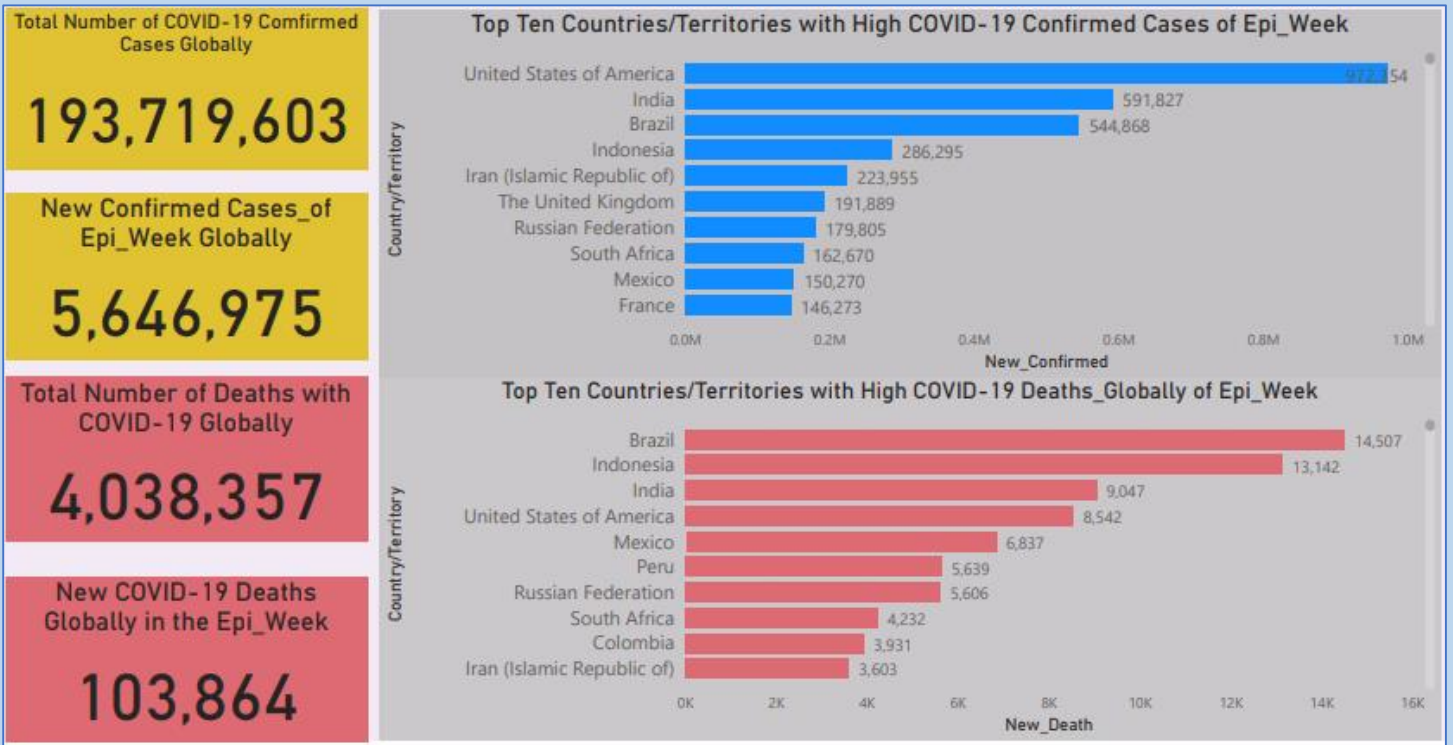


Figure 1: COVID-19 Global Situation Update as of August 01, 2021 (Source: WHO)

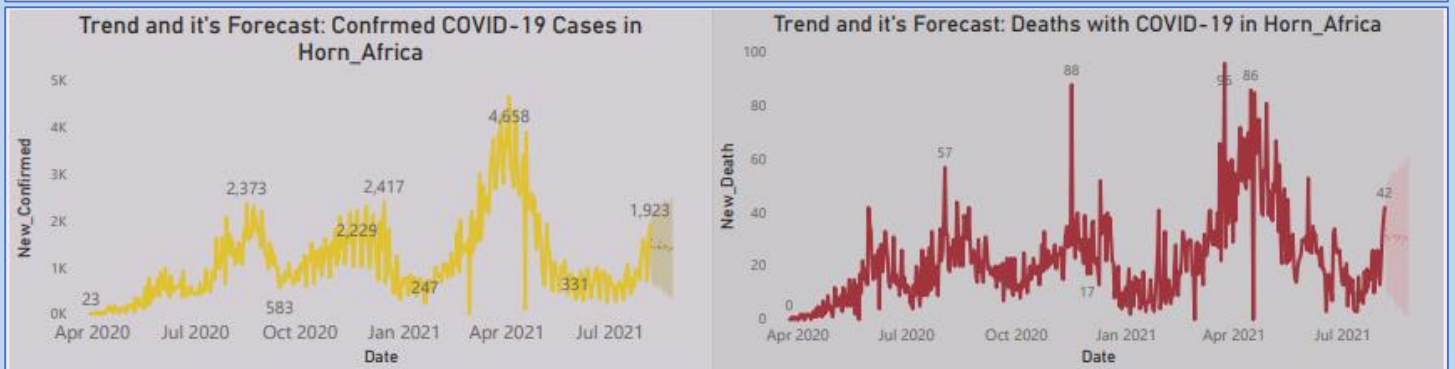
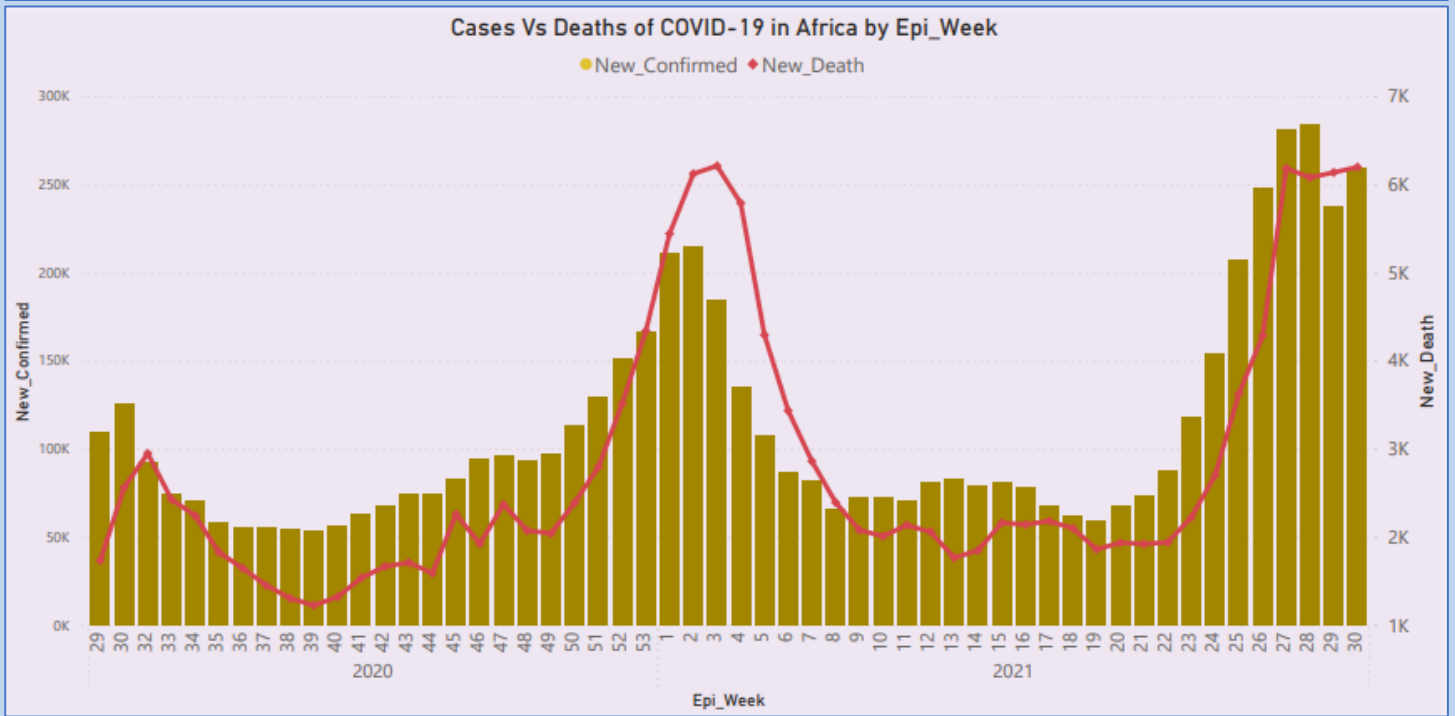
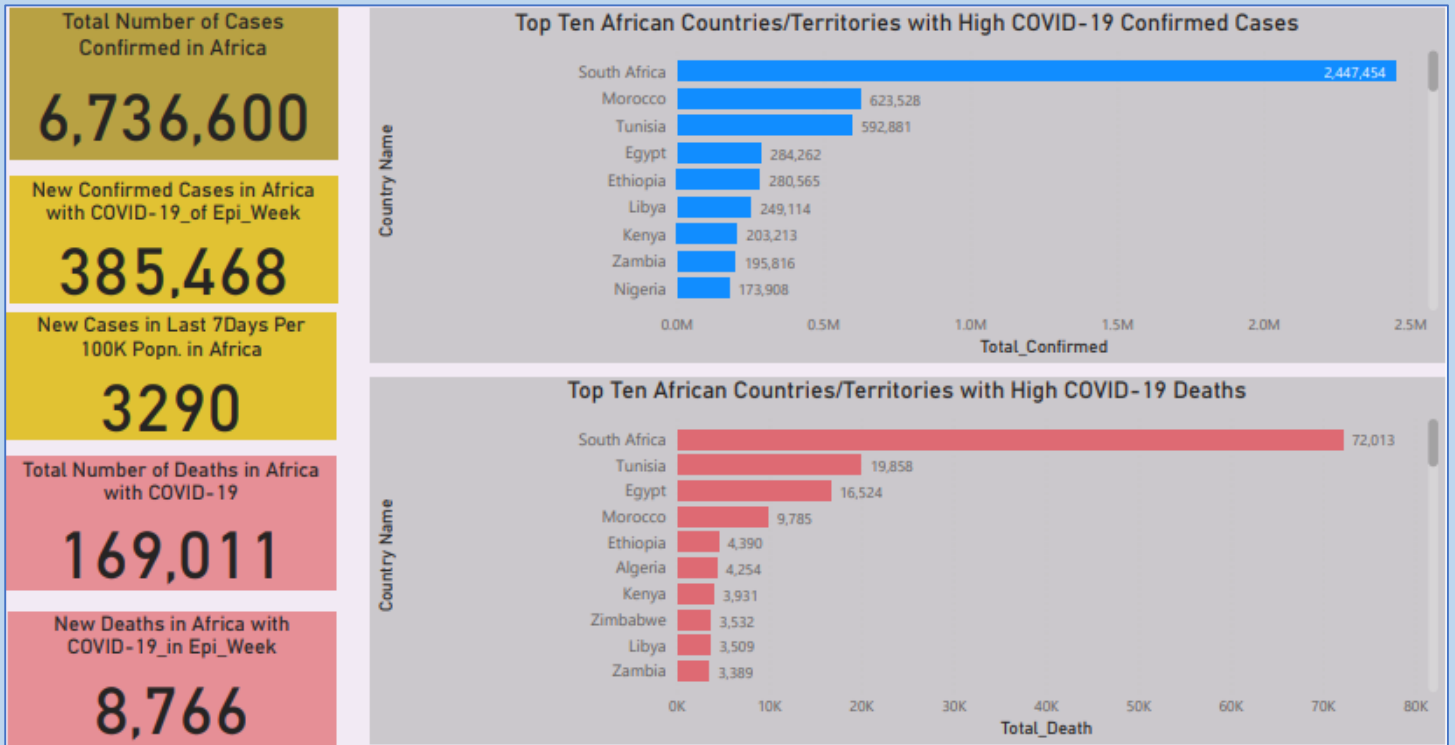


Figure 2: COVID-19 Situation Update in Africa as of August 01, 2021 (Source: WHO)

b. National COVID-19 situation:

- As of August 01, 2021, a total of 280,565 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 4,390 deaths were recorded in the country with a case fatality rate of 1.56%. This puts Ethiopia in the fifth position by the number of confirmed cases and by the number of deaths due to COVID-19 in Africa.
- Two-thousand-twenty-two (2,022) newly confirmed COVID-19 cases and 21 COVID-19 related deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-30.
- In this week, there is nearly 140% increase in the number of COVID-19 confirmed cases and there is a 75% (9 in number) increase in the number of deaths due to COVID-19.
- For detail, see the summary dashboard below.

NB: Data from Tigray regional state is as of June 28, 2021.

Table 1: Summary of National COVID-19 situation in the Epi-Week-30 of 2021

Regions	New_Tested	New_Case	New_HF_Admission	New_Deaths	Positivity Rate	# of Recovery
Addis Ababa	33112	1869	179	20	5.6	586
Oromia	2043	107	3	0	6.3	93
Afar	885	1	0	0	0.1	0
Amhara	742	7	9	1	2.1	19
Somali	718	0	0	0	0.0	0
Benishangul G	379	8	14	0	1.2	4
SNNPR	378	23	7	0	7.0	2
Dire Dawa	350	6	2	0	1.6	3
Harari	216	0	2	0	0.0	0
Sidama	111	1	6	0	1.4	2
Gambella	0	0	0	0		0
Tigray	0	0	0	0		16
Total	38934	2022	222	21	**** 2.7	725

**** Positivity Rate is the Averages of Regional Distributions

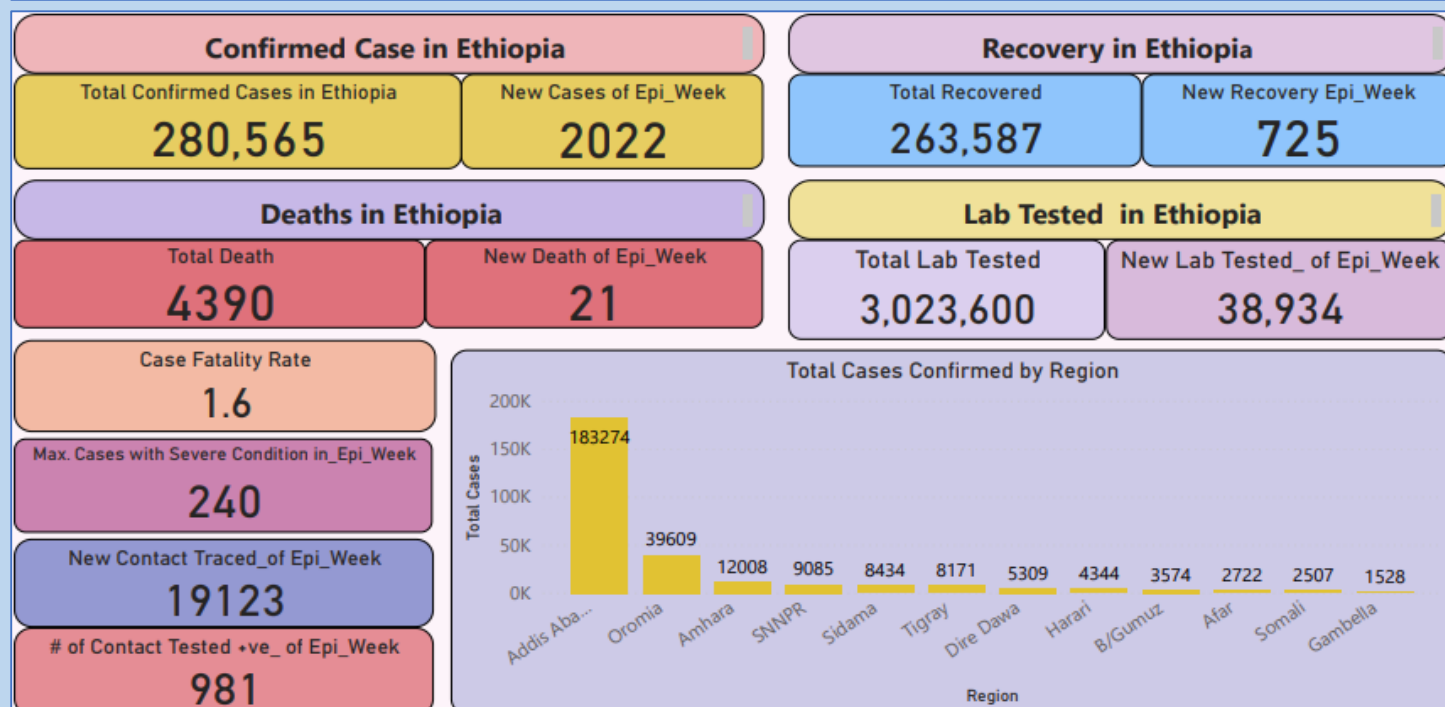


Figure 3: Weekly summary of the COVID-19 situation in Ethiopia as of August 01, 2021, Ethiopia

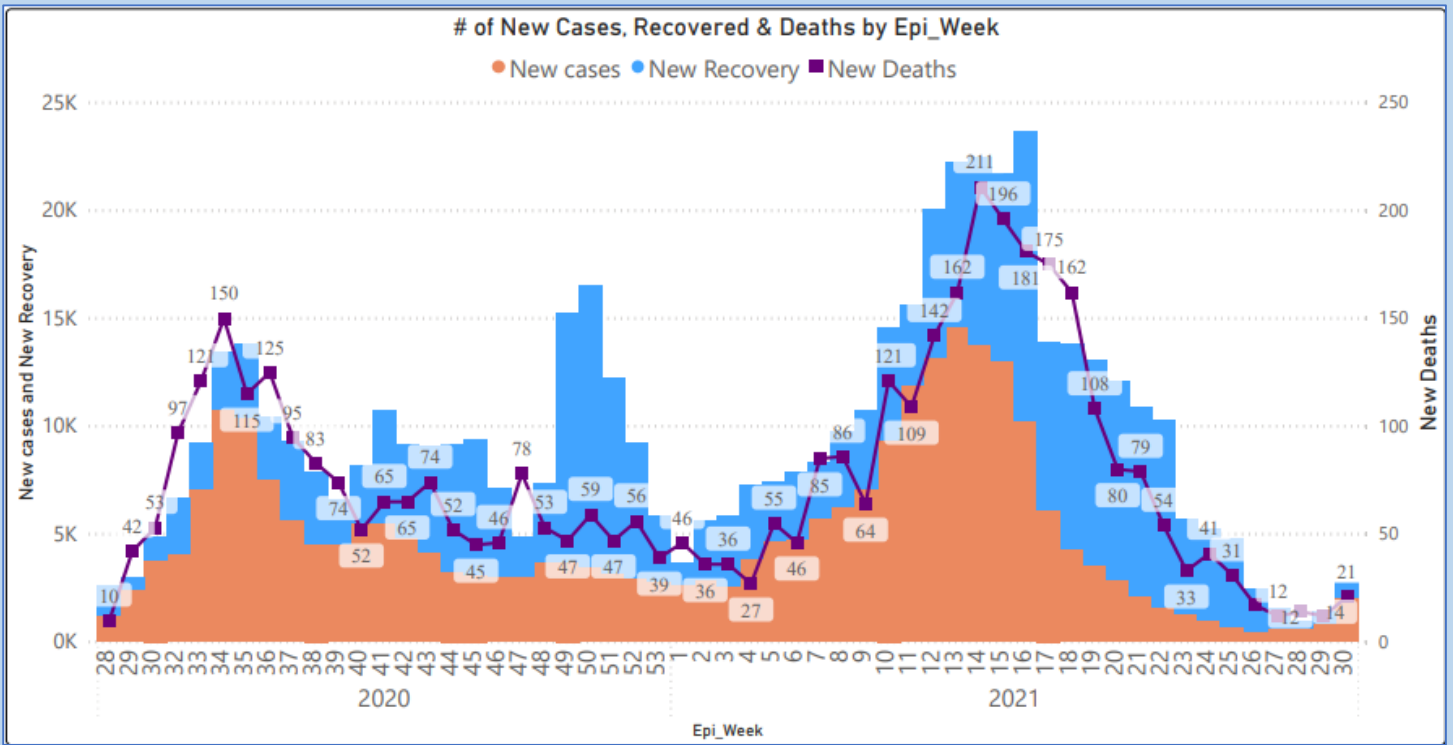


Figure 4: COVID-19 confirmed cases, recovery and death by Epi-Week as of August 01, 2021, Ethiopia

c. Other Epi-Surveillance Related Activities

There is ongoing travelers' health screening at point of entries (POEs), follow-up of international travelers, rumor collection, verification, investigation and information provision via toll free call center, active case detection by house to house search, contact listing, tracing and follow-up of persons who had contact with confirmed cases. There is also laboratory investigation of suspected cases, contacts of confirmed cases, SARI/pneumonia cases and community members, surveillance and assessment in school and congregated setting communities.

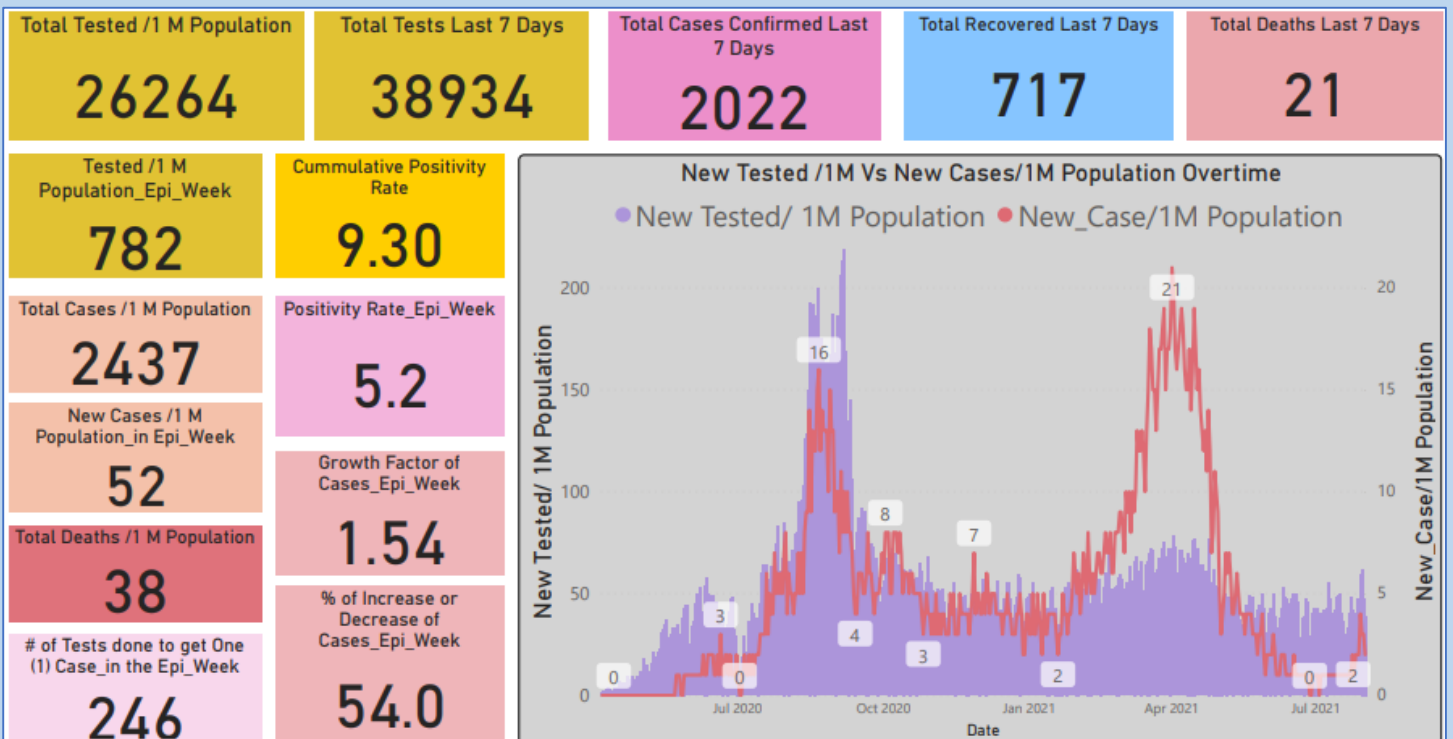
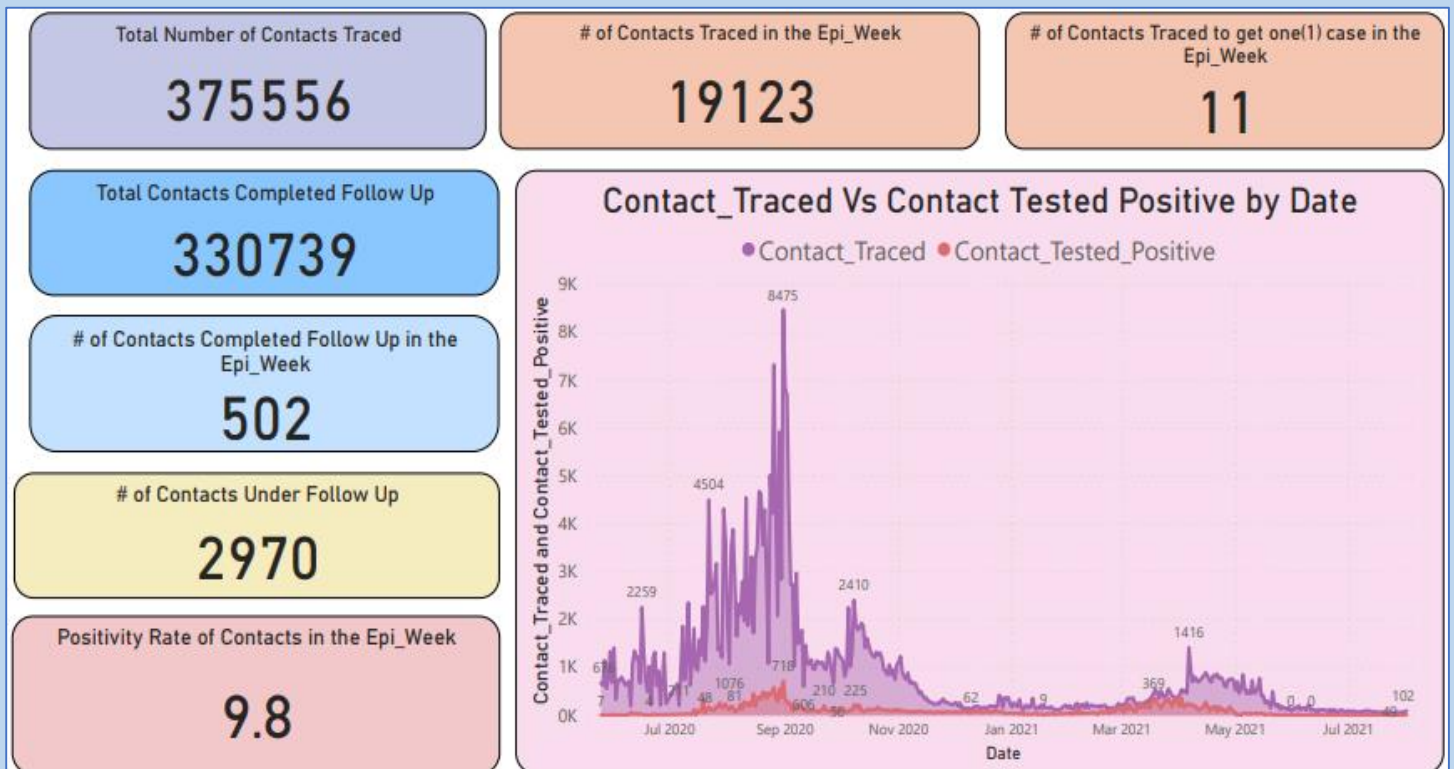


Figure 5: Summary of COVID-19 confirmed cases in Ethiopia as of August 01, 2021.

i. Contact tracing and follow-up:

- Contact tracing is a key strategy for interrupting chains of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and reducing COVID-19-associated mortality.
- As of August 01, 2021:
 - A total of 375,556 contacts of confirmed cases have been identified. Of these, 19,123 contacts were identified in the Epi-Week-30.
 - Of total contacts, 330,739 (88.06%) have completed 14 days follow-up, while 2,970 contacts are still on follow-up.
 - All the contacts traced are from Addis Ababa city administration and no contact tracing activity is being conducted in other regions.
- Overall, 42,287 (11.26%) of the contacts (symptomatic plus asymptomatic) have been tested positive.
- Contacts of the confirmed cases contributed for the 15.07% of the total cases.



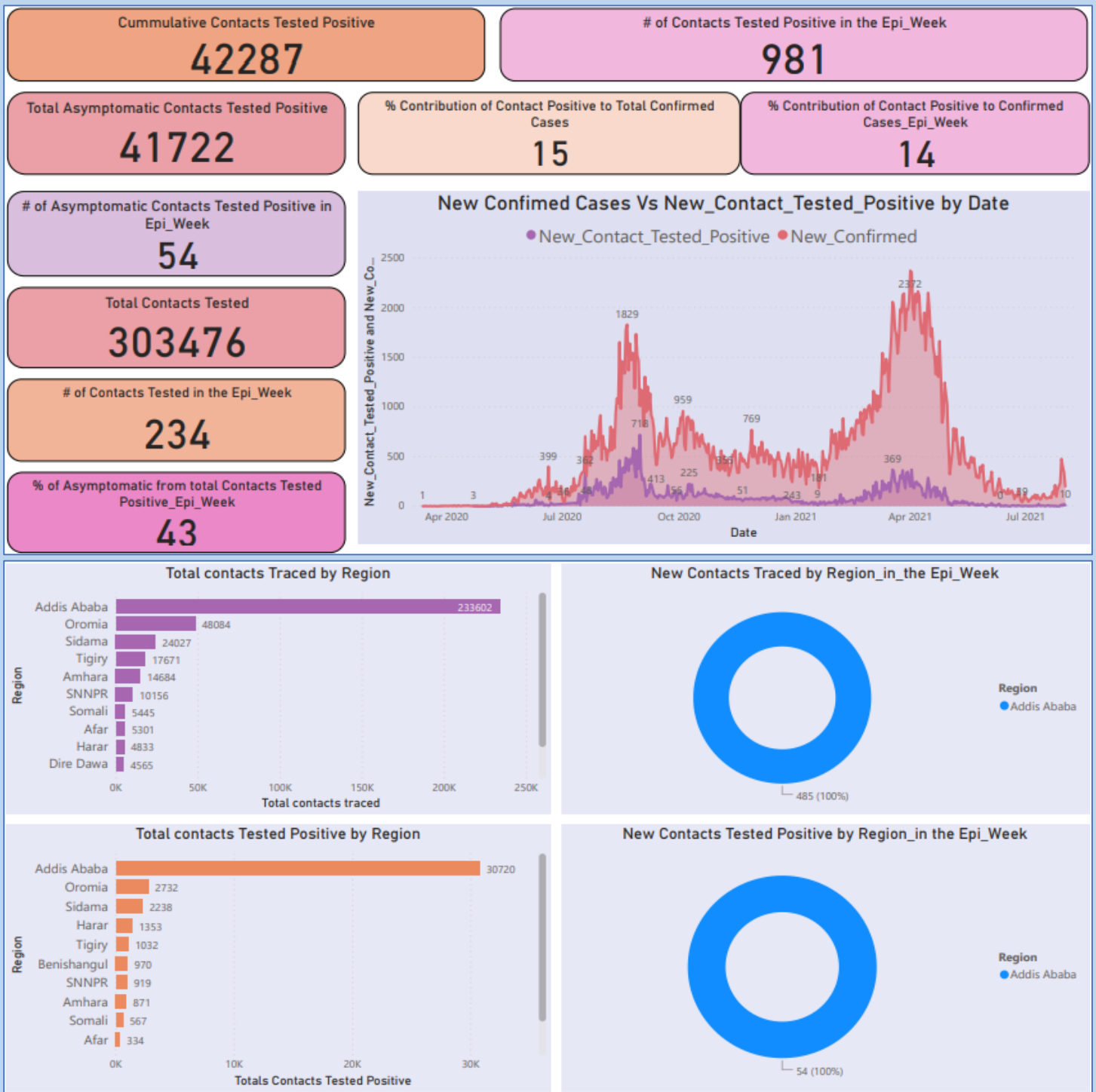


Figure 6: Summary of COVID-19 contact tracing as of August 01, 2021, Ethiopia.

ii. Rumors collection and verification from all sources

- COVID-19 related rumors are received from different sources: Call centers, Health facilities, Contact follow up, Self-report, Travelers follow up, Point of Entry (PoE), Community surveillance and Special Settings.
- As of August 01, 2021:
 - 392,825 rumors/alerts have been received and investigated. Of these, 3,413 rumors were reported in the Epi-Week-30.
 - 279,089 (71.05%) of the rumors/alerts have fulfilled the suspected case definition.
- 32,944 COVID-19 related calls are received through call centers in this Epi-week.

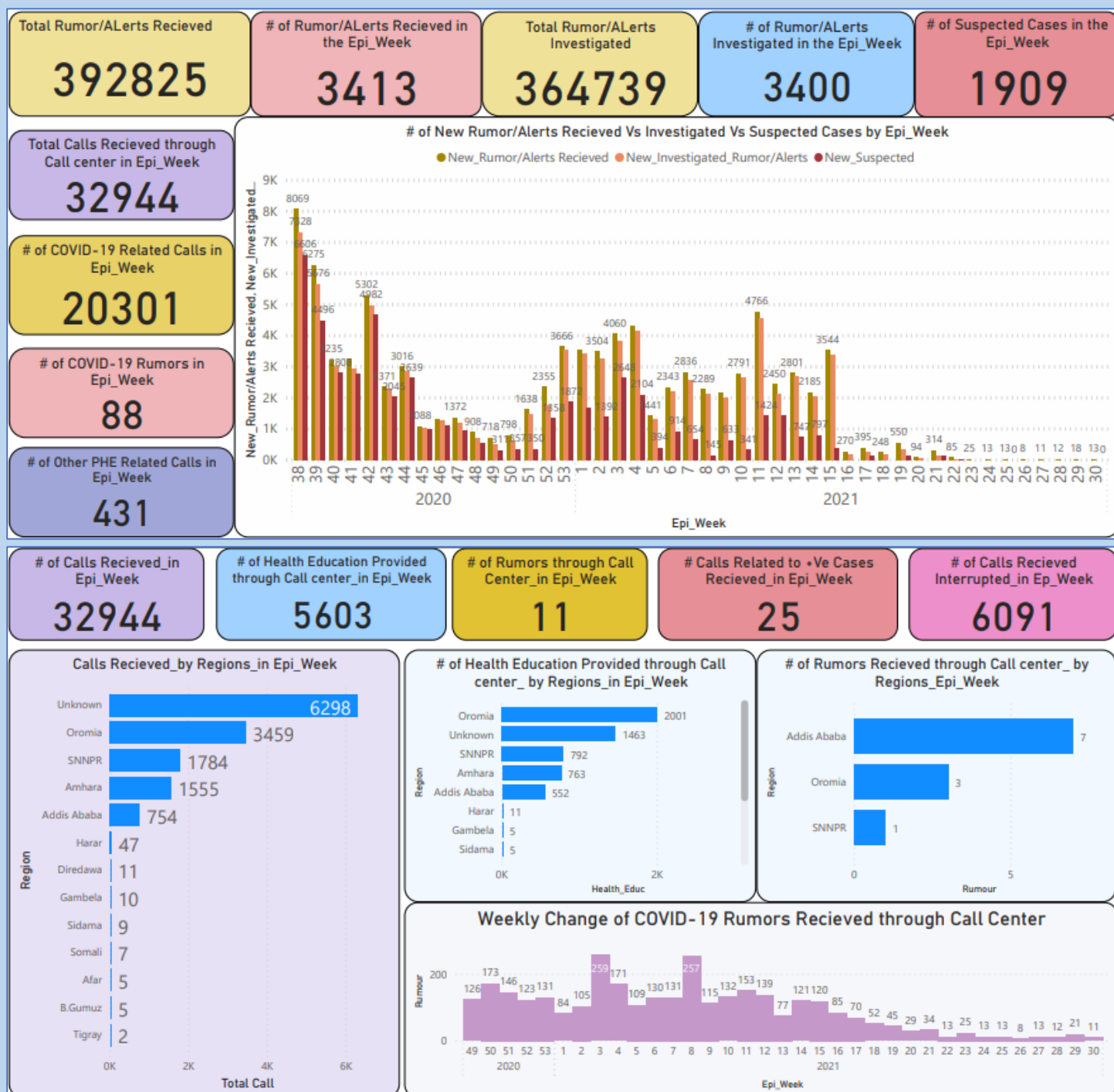


Figure 7: Summary of COVID-19 rumor/alert investigation as of August 01, 2021, Ethiopia.

iii. Point of entry and Quarantine related activities

- Since the start of the outbreak, 2,487,986 passengers have been screened at the Point of Entries of Ethiopia and 774,588 (32%) of them were screened at Bole International Airport.
- Of the total passengers screened, 26,893 were screened for COVID-19 in the Epi-Week-30.
- As of August 01, 2021, among the passengers coming with COVID-19 PCR test result certificates 51 (none in Epi-week-30) passengers with PCR positive certificates were identified during health screening. A total of 91 SARS-COV-2 positive cases have been detected by RT-PCR after arrival laboratory test.
- Antigen Rapid Diagnostic Test (Ag-RDT) for COVID-19 is also started at Bole International Airport for returnees. The Ag-RDT was started on July 07, 2021. So far, 516 tests are conducted among which 39 positive cases are detected as of August 01, 2021.

- A total of 55,719 returnees were received through Bole International Airport since April 28, 2021. No returnee was received in the Epi-week-30. The returnees are admitted to Wosen, Kotebe, Gurdsholla, Megenagna, Kirkos, Nifasilk Lafto, Gerji and Entoto returnee centers. All the returnees are discharged and there is no returnee currently in returnees' centers as of August 01, 2021.

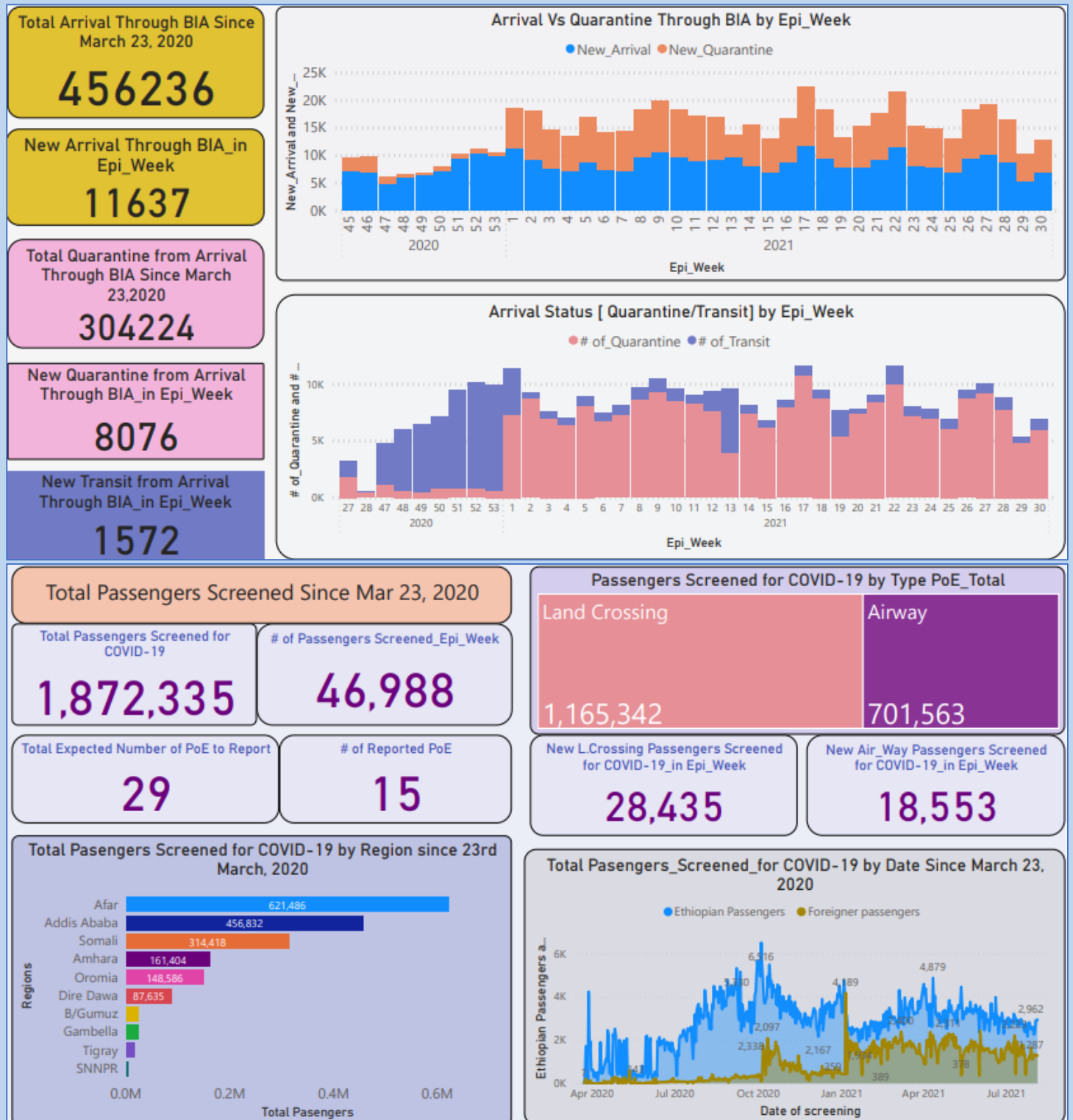


Figure 8: Summary of Passengers screening for COVID-19 as of August 01, 2021, Ethiopia.

IV. Laboratory related activities

- The total laboratory samples tested for COVID-19 in Ethiopia surpassed three million.
- As of 01 August 2021, a total of 3,023,600 samples have been tested for COVID-19 by laboratories across the country.
- 38,934 laboratory tests were processed during the Epi-Week-30 which is a 34% (9,803 in number) increase compared to number of tests performed in the previous week. The high number of Rapid Diagnostic Tests done by Ag-RDT may have a great contribution for this increment in the number of laboratory tests.
- The laboratory test positivity rate for the Epi-Week-30 is 5.19%, which is higher than that of the preceding week (2.22%).
- SNNP, Oromia and Addis Ababa regional states have reported positivity rates higher than the national weighted average (figure 10 below). There is no report from Tigray regional state since June 29, 2021. The last report from the region was received on June 28, 2021.
- COVID-19 Antigen Rapid Diagnostic Test (Ag-RDT) is also being performed nationally. Among the total COVID-19 laboratory tests performed in Ethiopia, a total of 98,029 laboratory tests are performed by Ag-RDT among which 8,337 is performed in the Epi-week-30 (figure 9 below).

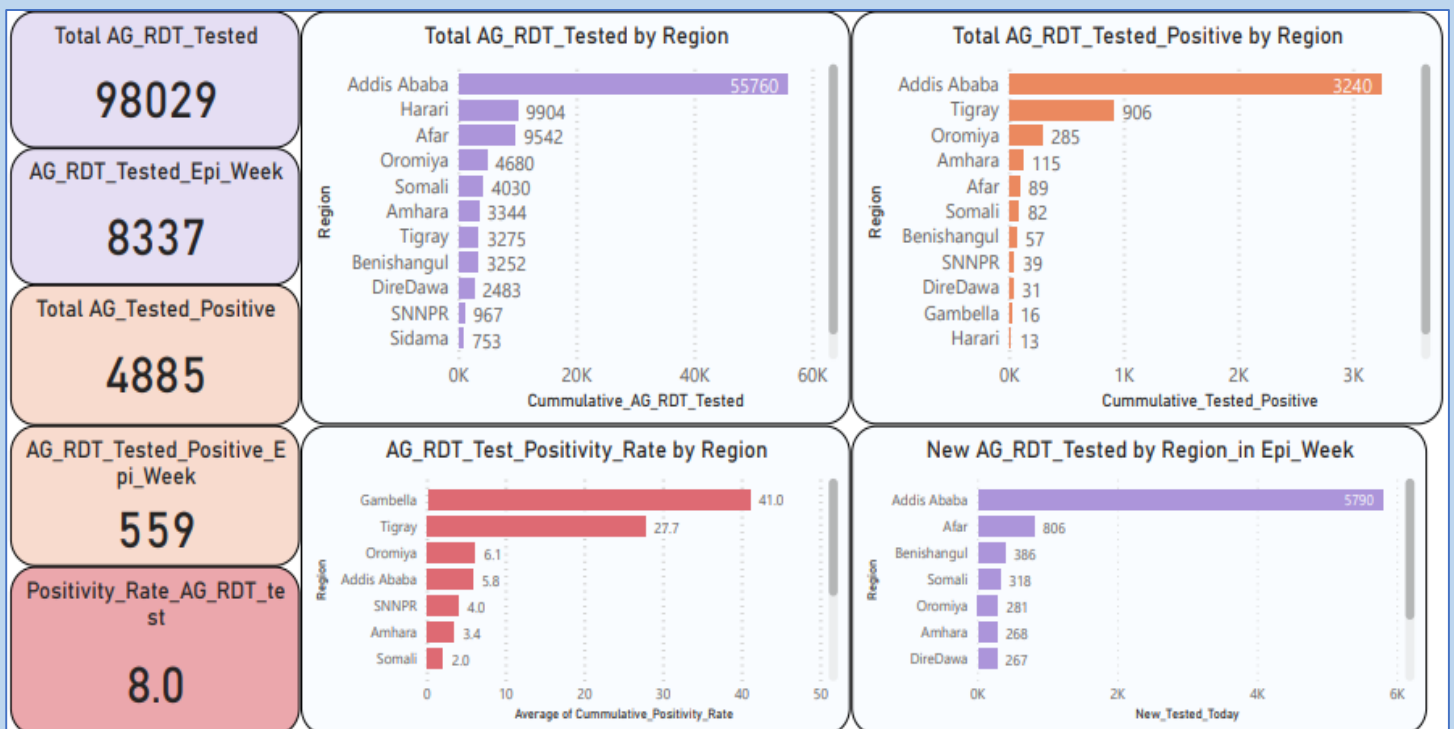
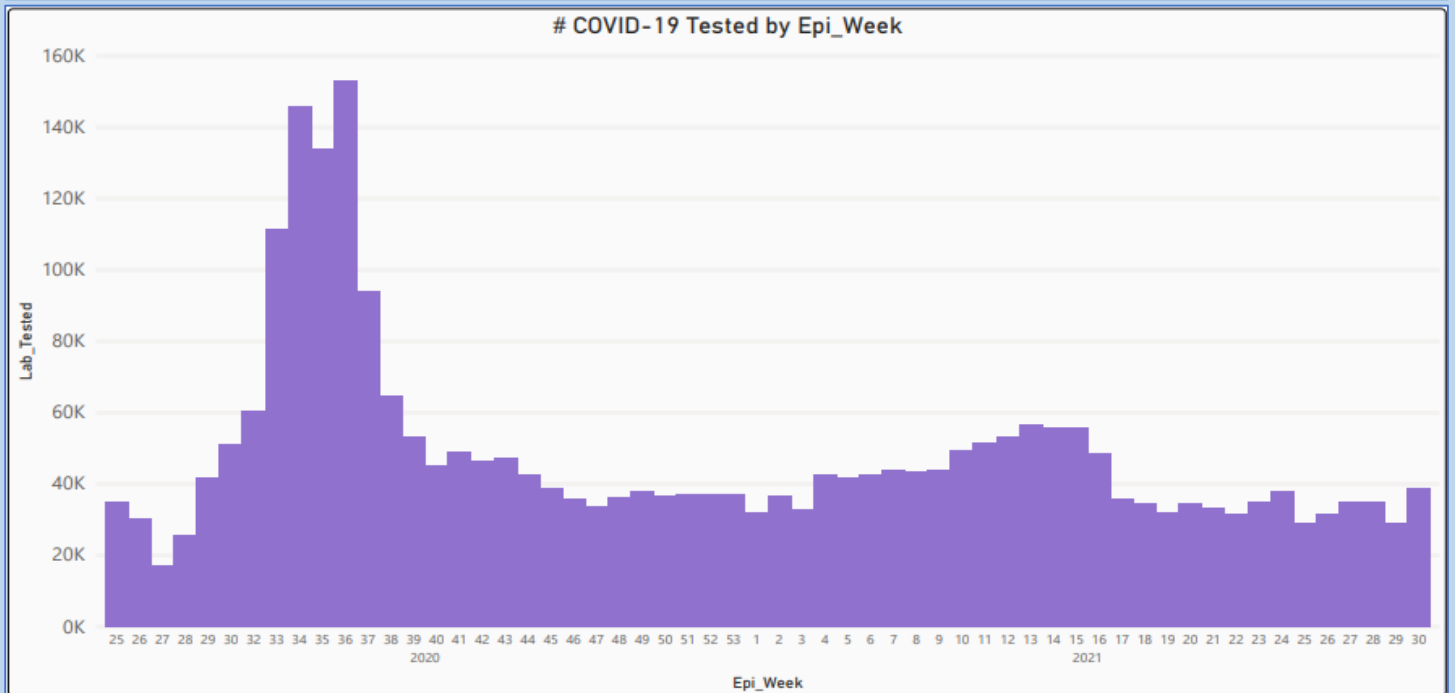
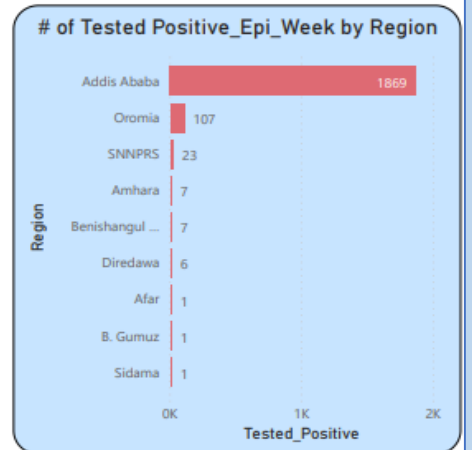
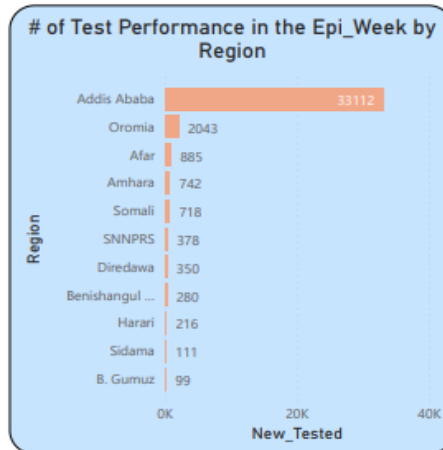
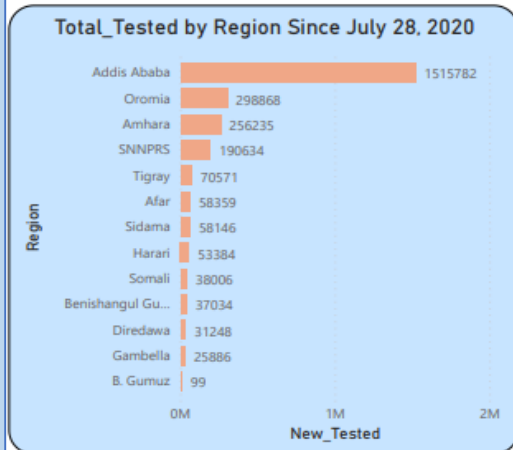
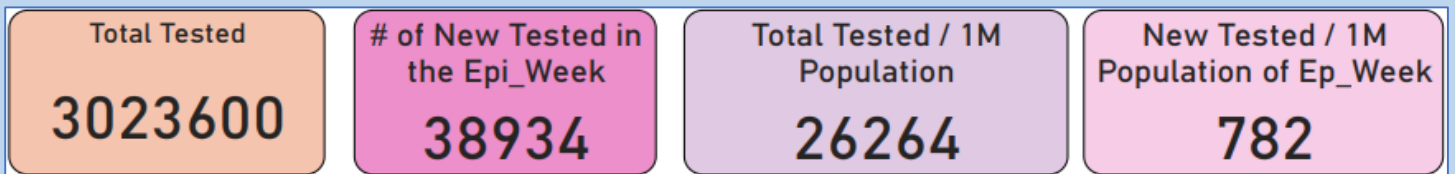


Figure 9: Update on laboratory tests performed by Ag-RDT, as of August 01, 2021



Region/City Admn	New_Tested	Tested_Positive	New_Deaths	Positivity_Rate
Addis Ababa	33112	1869	20	5.5
Oromia	2043	107	0	6.4
Afar	885	1	0	0.1
Amhara	742	7	1	2.2
Somali	718	0	0	0.0
SNNPRS	378	23	0	7.0
Diredawa	350	6	0	1.5
Benishangul Gumuz	280	7	0	1.2
Harari	216	0	0	0.0
Sidama	111	1	0	1.4
B. Gumuz	99	1	0	1.0
Gambella	0	0	0	
Tigray	0	0	0	
Total	38934	2022	21	2.7

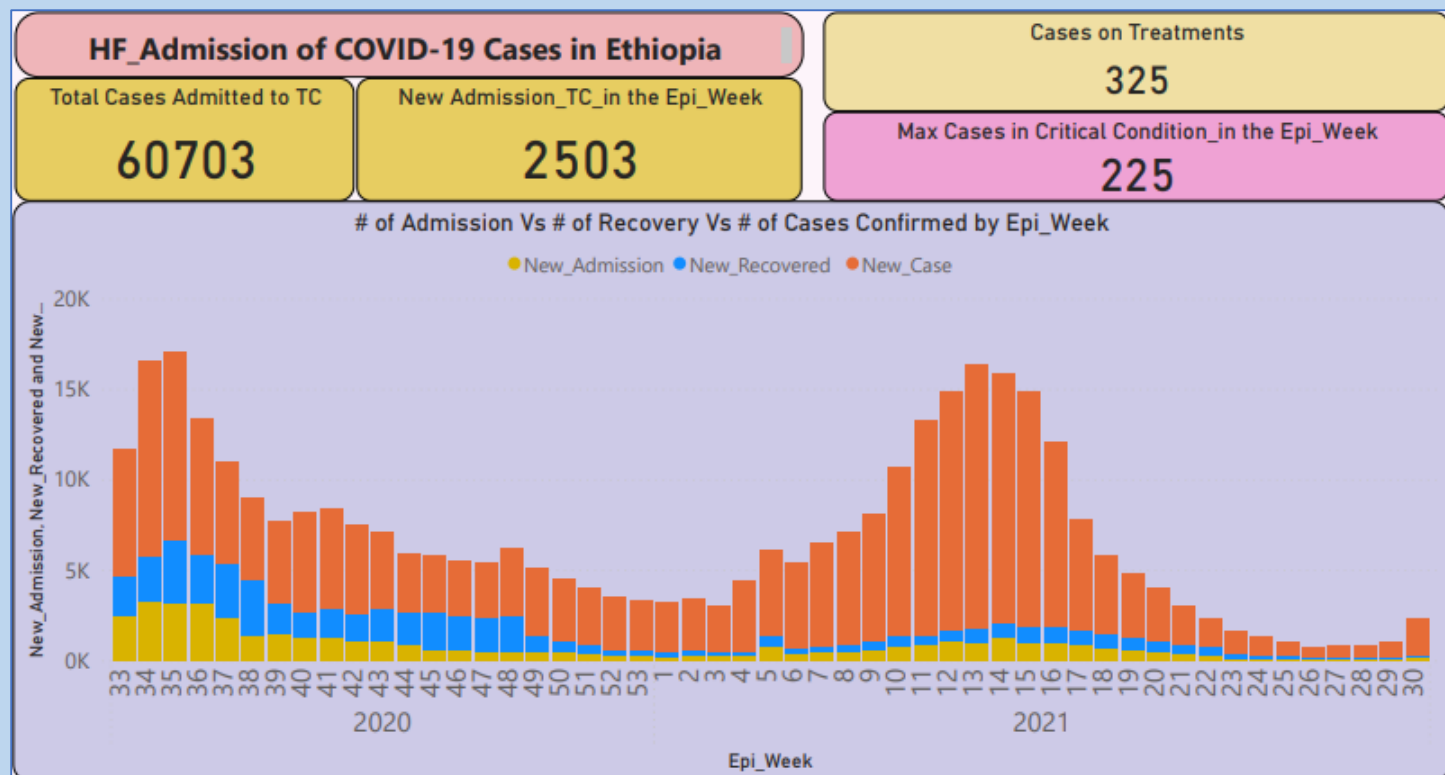
***** Positivity Rate is average of Regional Distn of Rates

Figure 10: Summary of COVID-19 laboratory testing as of March August 01, 2021, Ethiopia.

V. Case Management and Facility Readiness

a. COVID-19 treatment center

- There were total of 725 newly recovered COVID-19 cases during the Epi-Week-30, bringing the total number of recovered cases to 263,587 (both from COVID-19 treatment center and from HBIC). This brings the overall recovery rate to 94%.
- The number of cases in severe condition has begun increasing after weeks of decrement. On August 01, 2021, there are 240 cases in severe condition which is higher than the maximum number of daily cases in severe cases in the previous week (195).



HF=Health Facilities TC=Treatment Center

Figure 11: Summary of COVID-19 cases in Health Facilities/Treatment centers, as of August 01, 2021.

Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 cases at treatment centers as of August 01, 2021

Regions	Total_Case	New_Case	Total_Admission	New_Admission	Total_Death	Total_Recovered	On_Treatment	Critical_Case
Addis Ababa	183274	181	30188	43	2337	26558	285	225
Oromia	39609	16	7296	1	531	6770	10	9
Amhara	12008	1	4567	0	256	4292	8	5
SNNPR	9085	1	4398	0	147	4278	9	0
Sidama	8434	0	3436	2	158	3212	2	0
Tigray	8171	0	5290	0	59	5222	0	0
Dire Dawa	5309	1	1184	0	67	1113	2	0
Harari	4344	0	1278	0	152	1121	1	1
Benishangul G	3574	0	898	1	19	867	8	0
Afar	2722	0	826	0	5	812	0	0
Somali	2507	0	660	0	56	601	0	0
Gambella	1528	0	682	0	8	649	0	0

b. Home Based Isolation and Care (HBIC):

- So far, 209,090 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been on HBIC. Of them 208,202 (99.58%) have recovered and 34 (0.017%) died.
- Of these, 938 cases have been enrolled to HBIC, 626 cases have recovered and one case died in the Epi-Week-30.
- As of August 01, 2021, there are 1,573 cases on HBIC.
- So far, 1,633 of the cases have been transferred from treatment centers to HBIC after improvement.
- So far, 913 (eight in the Epi-week-30) of the cases have been transferred from HBIC to treatment centers for better care.

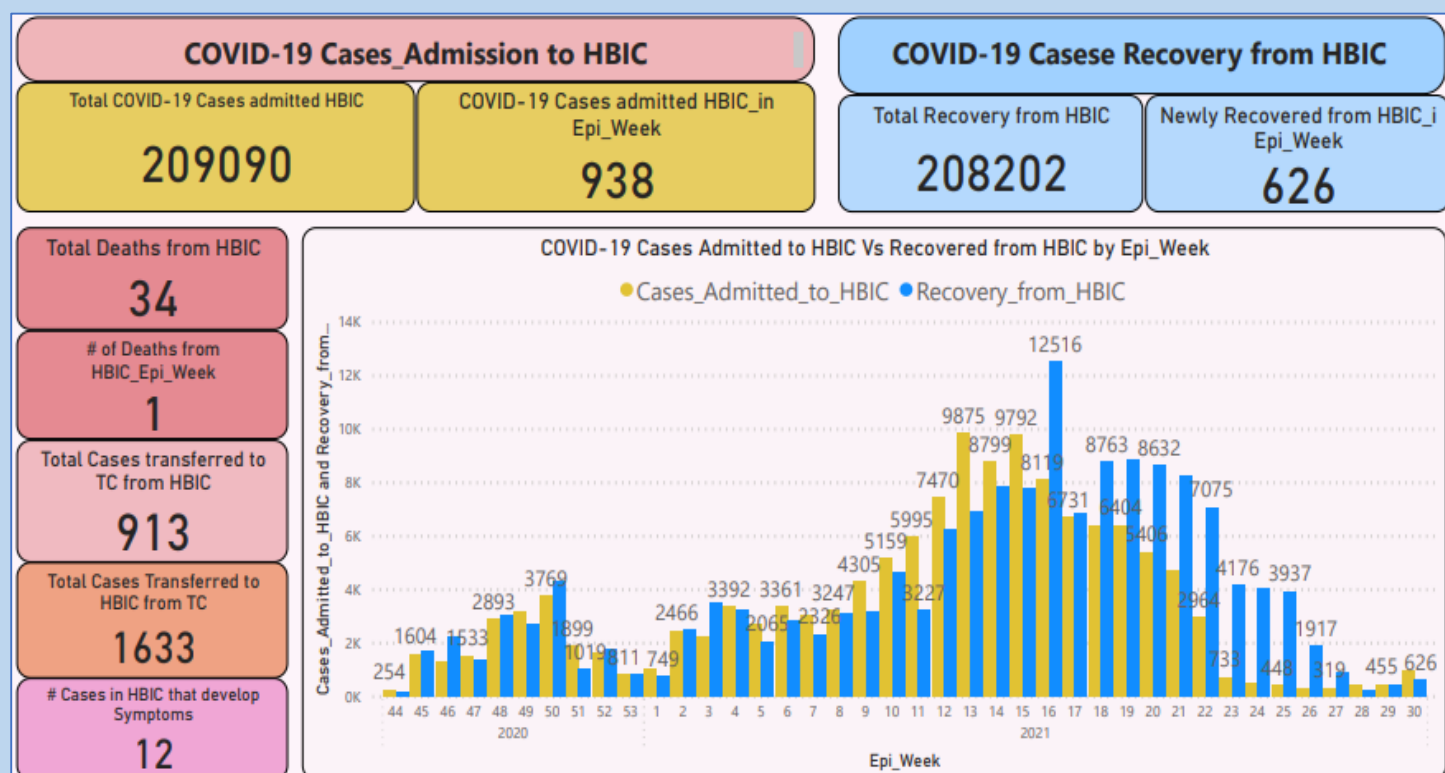


Figure 12: Summary of COVID-19 Home Based Isolation and Care in Ethiopia, as of August 01, 2021.

VI. Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- Media (mass media and social media) monitoring on COVID-19 related information is ongoing.
- Text messages regarding COVID-19 prevention and control was sent to all subscribers of Ethio telecom.
- Panel discussions and interviews in national radio and televisions has been conducted regarding current COVID-19 situation and news variants of SARS-COV-2.
- COVID-19 related key messages and updates shared on social media.

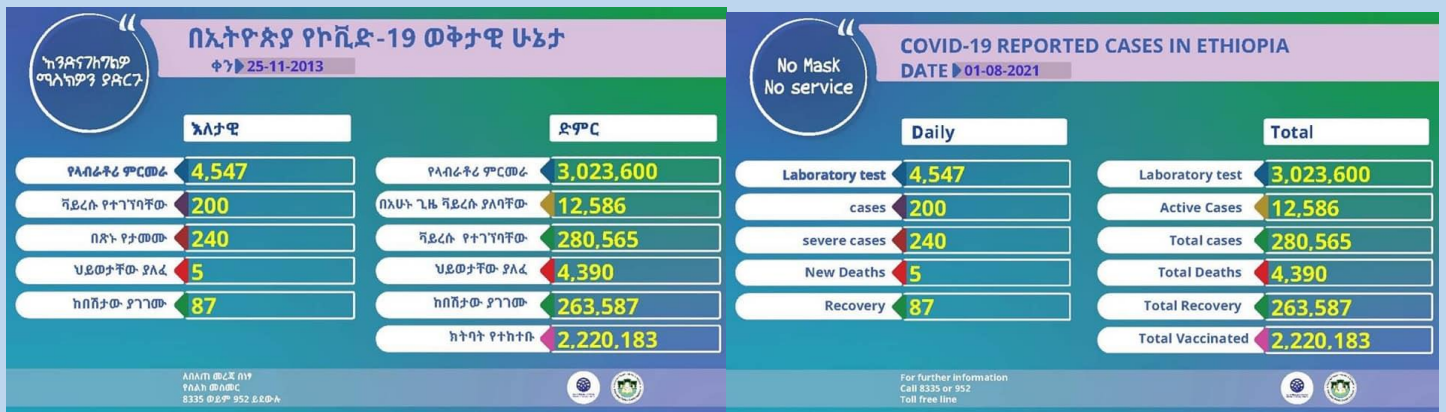


Figure 13: COVID-19 situation update as of August 01, 2021 shared on social media.

VII. Coordination and Leadership

- The national PHEOC is collaboratively working with stakeholders: government agencies, partner organizations, UN agencies, embassies, hospitals, Industrial parks and others.
- Morning briefing of IMS is being conducted every day by core IMS staffs and key partners' representatives.
- Weekly leadership and strategic virtual meeting, chaired by the H.E MOH Minister, is being conducted to oversee and guide the response efforts.
- Weekly joint meeting is ongoing, every Tuesday, among the national and regional Emergency Operations Centers COVID-19 response IMS (incident management system) to evaluate weekly COVID-19 situations, progress of response strategies, challenges faced and way forwards.
- The weekly virtual meeting of Joint Steering Committee encompassing MOH, Agencies and RHB top leadership under the leadership of H.E Minister of Health is ongoing.

VIII. Challenges and Way Forward

a. Challenges

- Poor adherence to the public health and social measures by public figures and leaders.
- Poor attention given to COVID-19 at all levels by all responsible bodies.
- Weak law enforcement efforts to enhance adherence to COVID-19 prevention and control measures.
- COVID-19 vaccine related misinformation and hesitancy.
- Wide spread mass gathering.
- Very low utilization of Antigen-Rapid Diagnostic Test kits by facilities despite its distribution to all regions and capacity building activities.

b. Way Forward

- Enhancing law enforcement to enhance public health and social measures by all responsible bodies.
- Continuing the COVID-19 vaccination.
- Initiating sequencing for the variant of concern/interest and genomic surveillance.
- Intensifying risk communication and community engagement activities.
- Strengthening collaboration and coordination with key stakeholders and partners.
- Facility readiness for severe and critical case management capacity.
- Advocating and strengthening Home Based Isolation and Care (HBIC).
- Conducting intensive testing of high-risk population group and contacts of confirmed cases for COVID-19.
- Enhancing technical support, coordination and timely and accurate information sharing at all levels.
- Enhancing active surveillance for COVID-19 such as house-to-house case search and detection in the community.
- Intensification of a capacity building trainings/refreshments and orientation including through virtual/online platforms.
- Strengthening and sustaining other essential health services besides COVID-19.
- Enhancing performance and follow up on Antigen Rapid Diagnostic Test Kits from regional COVID-19 testing sites.
- Conduct '*I have a stake*' Initiatives at selected sector offices and launch the theme '*I have a stake to prevent further impacts and spread of new variants*' in each sectors based on organizational structure and culture.

IX. Public Health Policy Recommendation

Advice for the Public:

- For any individual confirmed to have COVID-19 and who is candidate for Home Based Isolation and Care:
 - Properly isolate from other family members.
 - Take full responsibility in prevention of transmission
 - Strictly adhere to the National Directive of Home-Based Isolation & Care.
 - Provide reliable information during regular follow up either by phone or home visit.
 - Report to nearest health facilities/follow up team in case of any emergency, appearance of new symptoms or worsening of existing symptoms.
- It is important to be informed of the situation and act appropriately to protect yourself and your family.
 - Wash hands frequently;
 - Don't touch your mouth, nose or eye by unwashed hands;

- Keep physical distancing; avoid mass gathering and shaking hands;
- Get vaccinated against COVID-19.
- For most people, COVID-19 infection will cause mild illness however, it can make some people very ill and, in some people, it can be fatal.
- Older people, and those with pre-existing medical conditions (such as cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease or diabetes) are at risk for severe disease.
- If anybody had contact with a COVID-19 confirmed patient, he/she should call 8335 or 952 or report to regional toll-free lines or to the nearby health facilities.

National/Regional official websites, social media pages and toll-free hotline for COVID-19 information

MOH/EPHI/Region	Facebook page	Toll-free hotline	Email address (PHEOCs email)
Ethiopian Public Health Institute Main Website	https://www.ephi.gov.et/	8335/952	ephieoc@gmail.com
Ethiopian Public Health Institute COVID-19 Website	https://covid19.ephi.gov.et/		
Ethiopian Public Health Institute Facebook Page	https://www.facebook.com/ephipage/		
Ethiopian Public Health Institute Twitter Page	https://twitter.com/EPHIEthiopia		
Ethiopian Public Health Institute Telegram Channel	https://t.me/EthPHI		
Ethiopian Public Health Institute YouTube Channel	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvTzeY-IJiQfEFBULH9Mkw		
Ministry of Health, Ethiopia Website	www.moh.gov.et	952	
Ministry of Health, Ethiopia Facebook Page	https://www.facebook.com/EthiopiaFMoH/		
Afar Regional Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/afarrhb.org/	6220	afarpheoc@gmail.com
Amhara Regional Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/Amhara-Healthbureau-682065755146948/	6981	aphieoc@gmail.com
Benishangul Gumuz Regional Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/Benishangul-Gumuz-Health-Bureau-1676282159265517/	6016	bgpheoc@gmail.com
Gambela Regional Health Bureau	https://fb.me/gambellaregionhealthbureau	6184	gambellapheoc@gmail.com
Harari Regional Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/Harari-Regional-Health-Bureau-1464182130355007/	6864	hrhbpheoc@gmail.com
Oromia Regional Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/OromiaHealth/	6955	oromiapheoc@gmail.com
Somali Regional Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/srhbdotcom/...	6599	somalipheoc@gmail.com
SNNP Regional Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/snnprhealthbureau/?ref=br_rs	6929	snnppheoc@gmail.com
Tigray Regional Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/tigrayrhb/	6244	tigraypheoc@gmail.com
Sidama PHEM			sidamapheoc@gmail.com
Dire Dawa city Administration Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/Dire-Dawa-Administration-Health-Bureau-1371606266279524/	6407	ddpheoc@gmail.com

Addis Ababa City Administration Health Bureau	https://www.facebook.com/aahb.g ov.et/	6406	aapheoc@gmail.com
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COVID-19 updates and sources of evidence:

Source	Link
WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) dashboard	https://covid19.who.int/
Africa CDC Dashboard, COVID-19 Surveillance Dashboard	https://au.int/en/covid19
WHO COVID-19 daily situation reports	https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel- coronavirus-2019/situation-reports
WHO Academy mobile learning app for health workers, COVID-19 information	Android- https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.who.WH OA Apple- https://apps.apple.com/us/app/who- academy/id1506019873

8335 / 952



Call-Centers
FOR MORE INFO and
ALERT NOTIFICATION on
COVID-19



The above presented Quick Reader (QR) code takes you to a portal that you can access updates and all COVID-19 related information available (<https://covid19.ephi.gov.et/covid-19/>)

DISCLAIMER

This weekly bulletin is produced based on figures pulled from official releases of the World Health Organization and activities and reports of all the sections under the Incident management System.

This Weekly Bulletin series of publications is published by the Ethiopian public health Institute (EPHI), public health emergency operation center (PHEOC). The aim of this bulletin is to inform decision makers within the institute and FMOH, UN agencies and NGOs about COVID-19 preparedness and response activities.

All interested health and other professionals can get this bulletin at the Institute website; www.ephi.gov.et

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