



NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER (PHEOC), ETHIOPIA

COVID-19 PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN ETHIOPIA

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Epi-Week- 38 (September 20 – 26, 2021)

BULLETIN №: 74

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I. HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 57,940 laboratory samples were tested in the Epi-Week-38 bringing the total number of samples tested to 3,442,254.
- A total of 8,753 new confirmed COVID-19 cases and 271 COVID-19 related deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-38 bringing the total cases and death to 341,714 and 5,401 respectively.
- On September 26, 2021, there are 798 cases in severe condition which is higher than the maximum number of daily cases in severe condition in the previous week (784).
- A total of 261,041 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been managed at Home Based Isolation and Care so far; 7,864 of these were enrolled in the Epi-Week-38.
- The number of deaths due to COVID-19 and critical cases have shown increment in this week.

II. Subjects in Focus:

a) Vaccination against COVID-19 in Ethiopia

- In Ethiopia, a total of 3,535,329 doses of COVID-19 vaccine (either AstraZeneca, Sinopharm or Johnson and Johnson) are administered so far. Out of these, 516,459 doses are administered in this week. Among the vaccinated individuals 1,489,302 (42%) people are fully vaccinated.

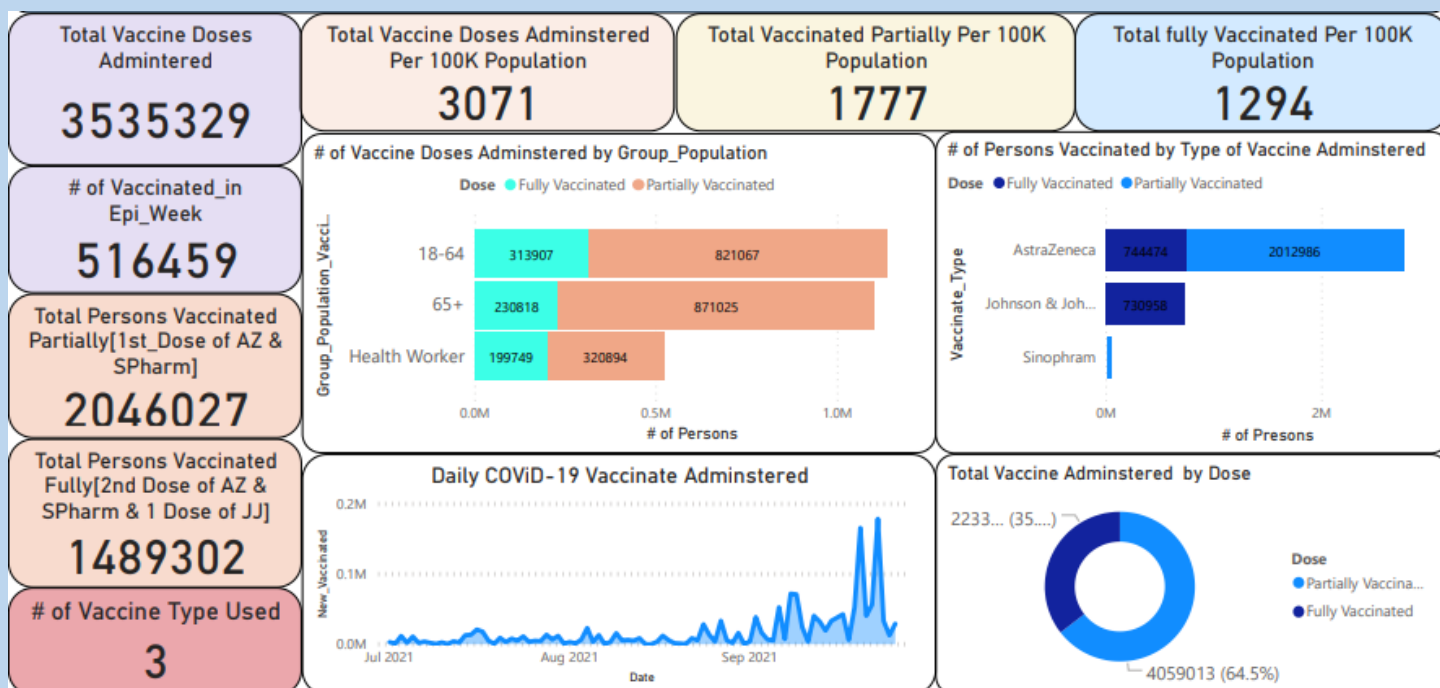


Figure 1: Summary of vaccination against COVID-19 in Ethiopia as of September 26, 2021

b) SARS-COV-2 new variants

- Alpha, Beta and Delta SARS-COV-2 Variants are detected in Ethiopia so far.
- The new variants of SARS-COV-2 (Variants of Concern and Variants of Interest) are also being detected in new countries and territories. Below are the incidence of the four variants of concern detected in various countries as of September 26, 2021.
 - Globally, cases of the Alpha variant have been reported in 193 countries (no new country added since last two weeks), while 142 countries (no new country) reported cases of the Beta variant; 96 countries (no new country) reported cases of the Gamma variant; 187 countries (two new countries) reported cases of the Delta variant.

III. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

a. Global Situation

- Globally, the numbers of weekly COVID-19 cases and deaths continued to decline.
- Over 5.2 million new cases and over 88,000 new deaths were reported during the week of 20 – 26 September 2021, decreases of 10% as compared to the previous week for both cases and deaths (Figure 2).
- As of September 26, 2021, a total of 225,010,916 COVID-19 cases and 4,521,126 deaths (CFR=2.01%) have occurred globally. Of the total cases and deaths reported since the beginning of the outbreak, 5,239,432 cases and 88,854 deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-38.
- 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 (978,975 new cases), India (850,845 new cases), Brazil (460,416 new cases), the United Kingdom (255,678 new cases) and Turkey (204,491 new cases).
- In Africa, as of September 26, 2021, a total of 8,186,516 cases and 205,214 deaths were reported across the continent (CFR=2.51%). Of these, 120,283 cases (36% decrease compared to previous week) and 3,385 deaths (25% decrease compared to previous week) were reported during the Epi-Week-38.
- 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.

Total Number of COVID-19 Confirmed Cases Globally

225,010,916

New Confirmed Cases_of Epi_Week Globally

5,239,432

Total Number of Deaths with COVID-19 Globally

4,521,126

New COVID-19 Deaths Globally in the Epi_Week

88,854

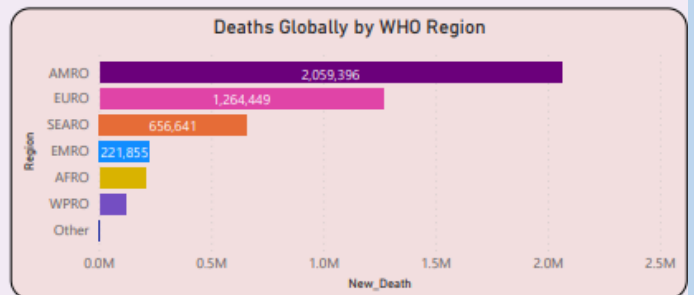
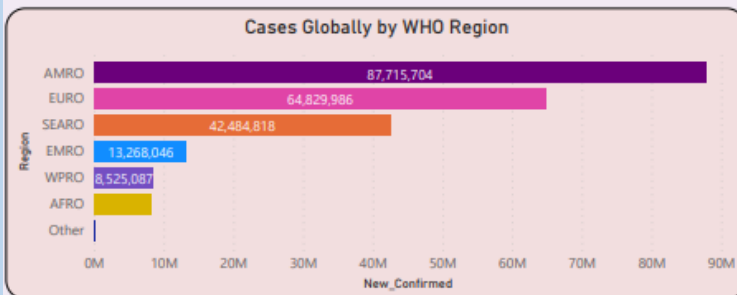
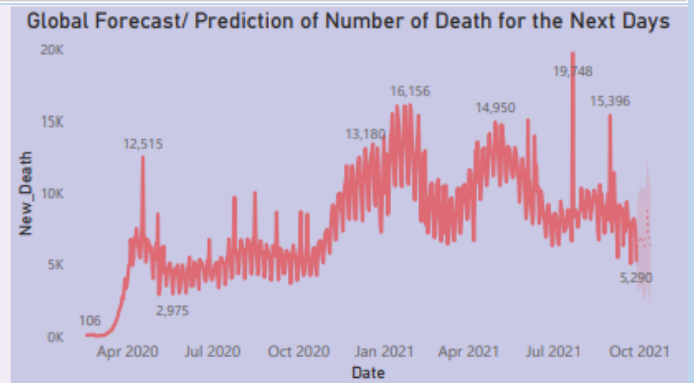
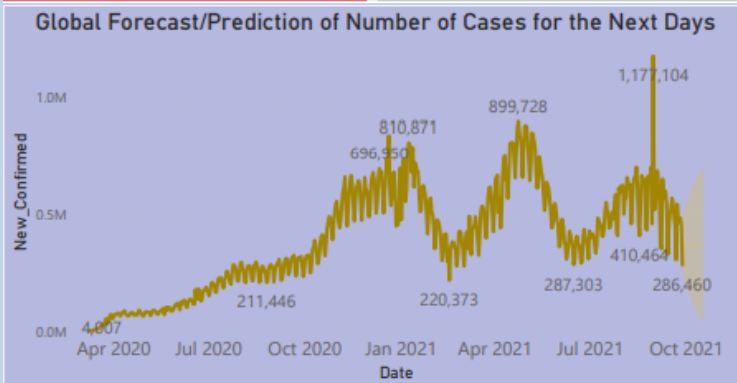
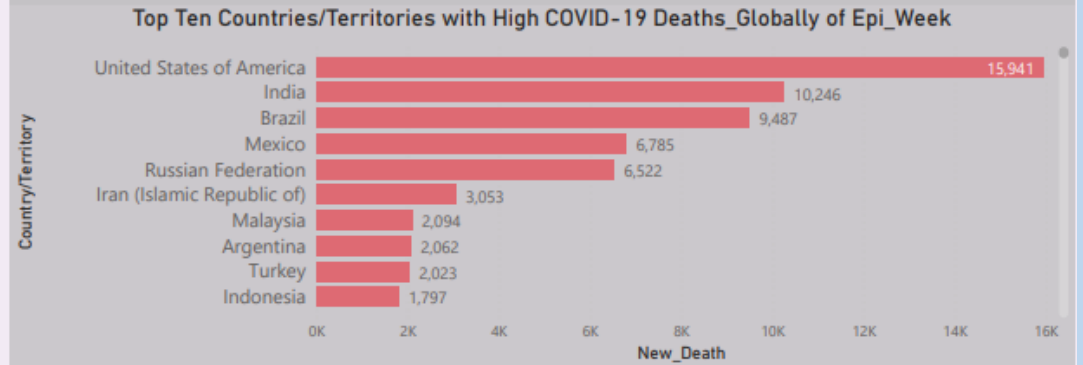
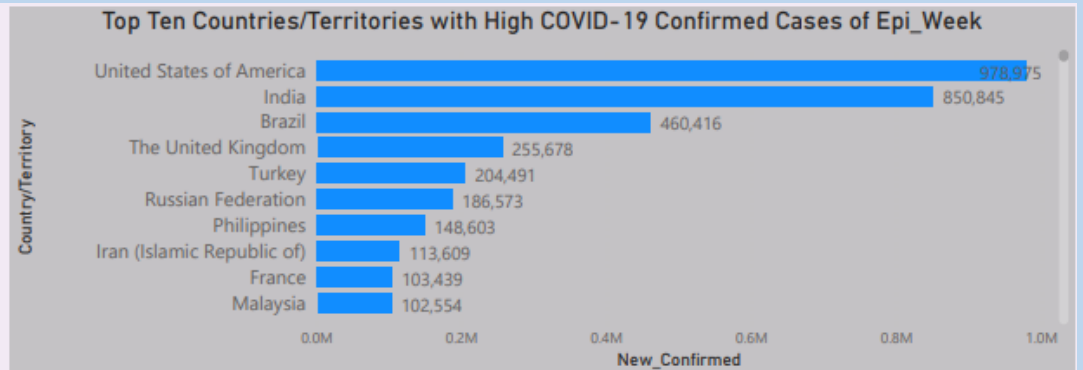


Figure 2: COVID-19 Global Situation Update as of September 26, 2021 (Source: WHO)

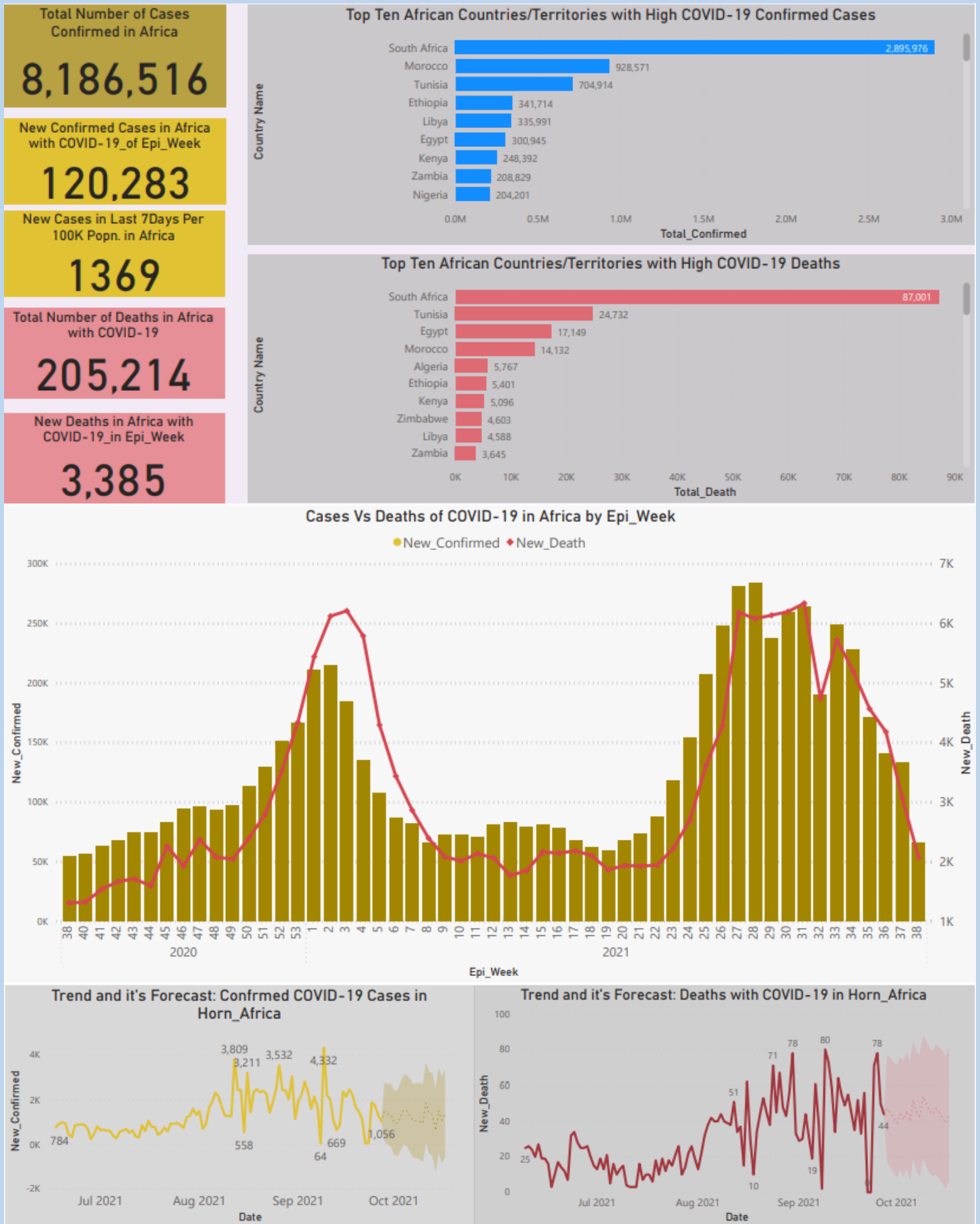


Figure 3: COVID-19 Situation Update in Africa as of September 26, 2021 (Source: WHO)

b. National COVID-19 situation:

- As of September 26, 2021, a total of 341,714 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 5,401 deaths were recorded in the country with a case fatality rate of 1.58%. This puts Ethiopia in the fourth position by the number of confirmed cases and in the six position by the number of deaths due to COVID-19 in Africa.
- Eight-thousand-seven-hundred-fifty-three (8,753) newly confirmed COVID-19 cases and 271 COVID-19 related deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-38.
- In this week, there is 11% decrease in the number of COVID-19 confirmed cases.
- There is, however, a 35% increase in the number of deaths due to COVID-19 compared to the previous week.
- 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-38 of 2021

Regions	New_Tested	New_Case	New_HF_Admission	New_Deaths	Positivity Rate	# of Recovery
Addis Ababa	41354	5557	576	175	13.1	5831
SNNPR	5377	1299	195	18	23.7	990
Oromia	4496	1000	180	45	22.3	420
Sidama	1274	357	21	3	29.4	180
Gambella	1271	1	0	0	0.0	0
Dire Dawa	1255	228	22	2	19.8	240
Amhara	926	202	48	25	21.3	28
Afar	900	20	0	0	2.0	0
Benishangul G	471	15	6	1	3.8	2
Harari	412	48	5	2	9.0	18
Somali	204	26	0	0	14.4	2
Tigray	0	0	0	0		0
Total	57940	8753	1053	271	14.7	7711

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

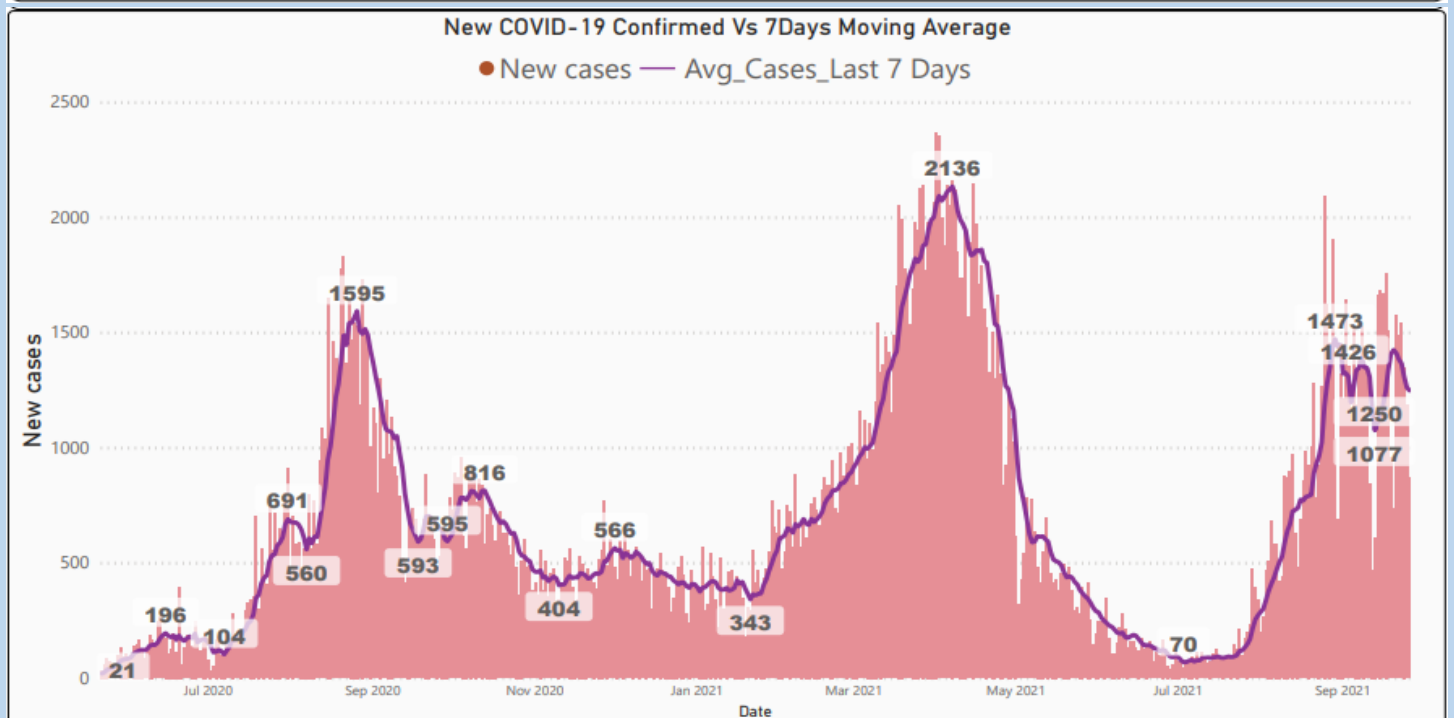
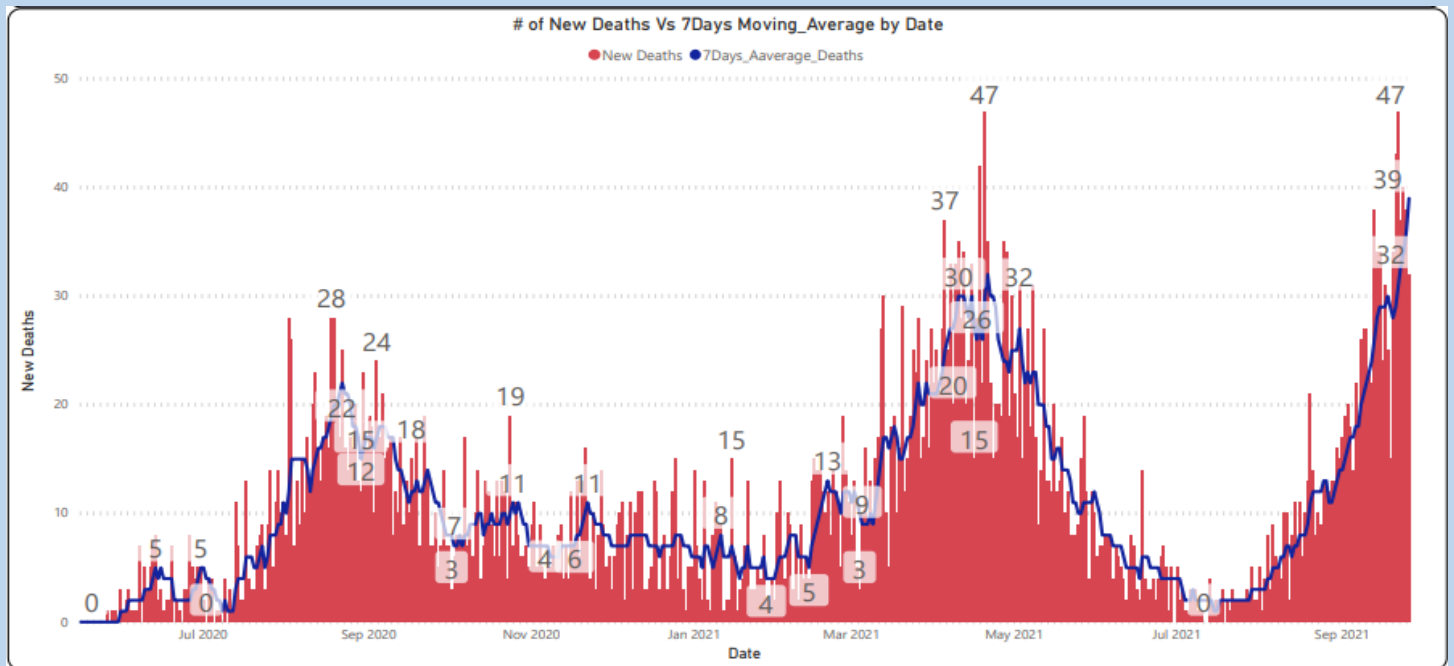
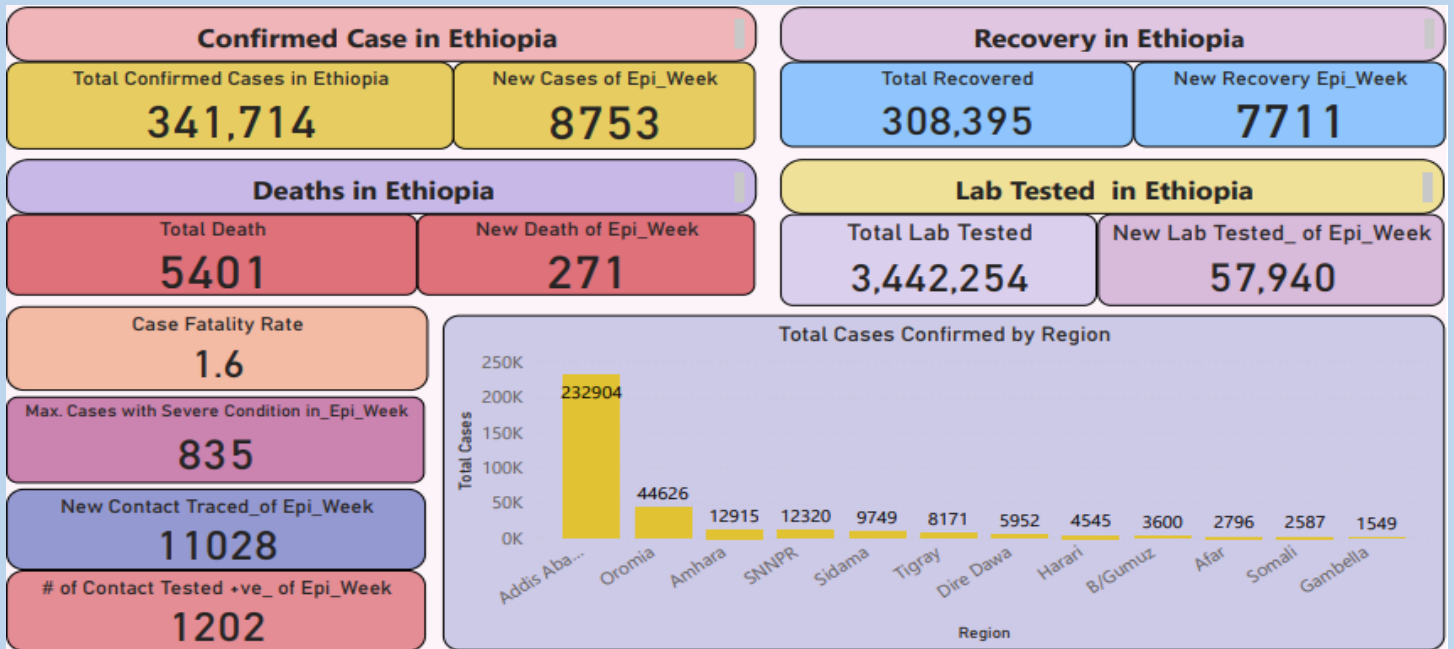


Figure 4: Summary of the COVID-19 situation in Ethiopia as of September 26, 2021, Ethiopia

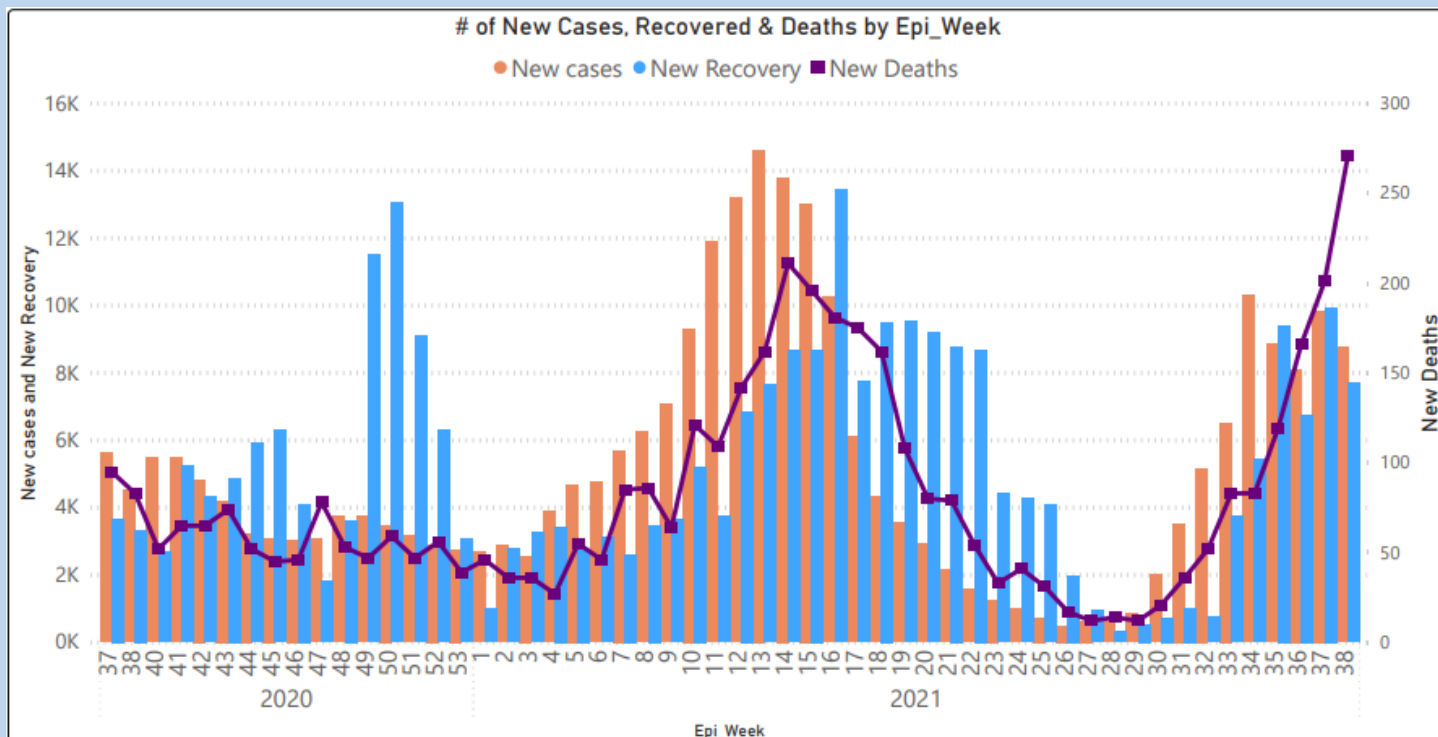


Figure 5: COVID-19 confirmed cases, recovery and death by Epi-Week as of September 26, 2021, Ethiopia

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.

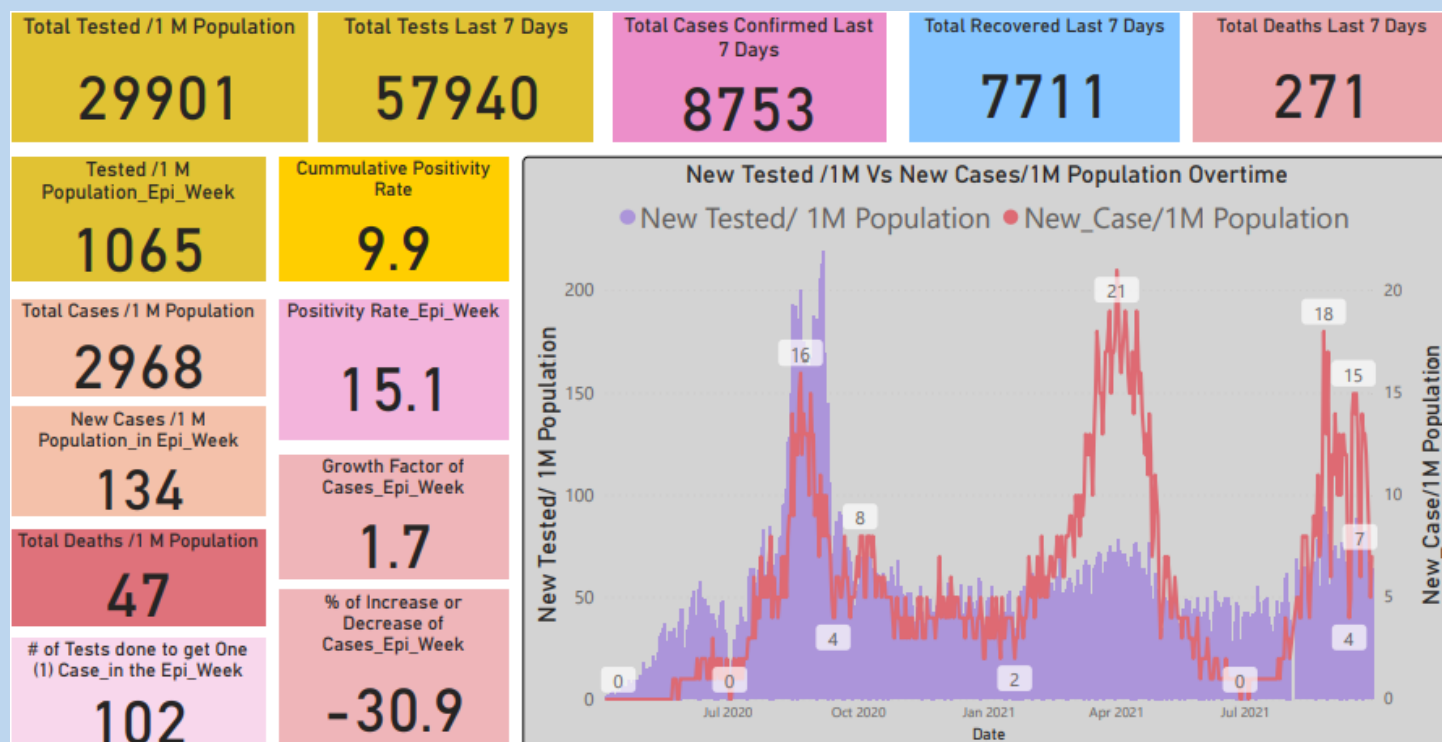


Figure 6: Summary of COVID-19 confirmed cases in Ethiopia as of September 26, 2021.

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 and thus should be enhanced.
- As of September 26, 2021:
 - A total of 419,565 contacts of confirmed cases have been identified. Of these, 3,513 contacts were identified in the Epi-Week-38.
 - Of total contacts, 341,493 (81.39%) have completed follow-up, while 8,825 contacts are still on follow-up.
 - All the contacts traced are from Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa city administration and SNNPR; no contact tracing activity is reported from other regions.
- Overall, 44,173 (10.52%) of the contacts (symptomatic plus asymptomatic) have been tested positive.
- Contacts of the confirmed cases contributed for the 12.93% of the total cases. However, when there is transmission of the disease at community level, it is known that an individual acquires the disease from unknown/unidentified contacts.

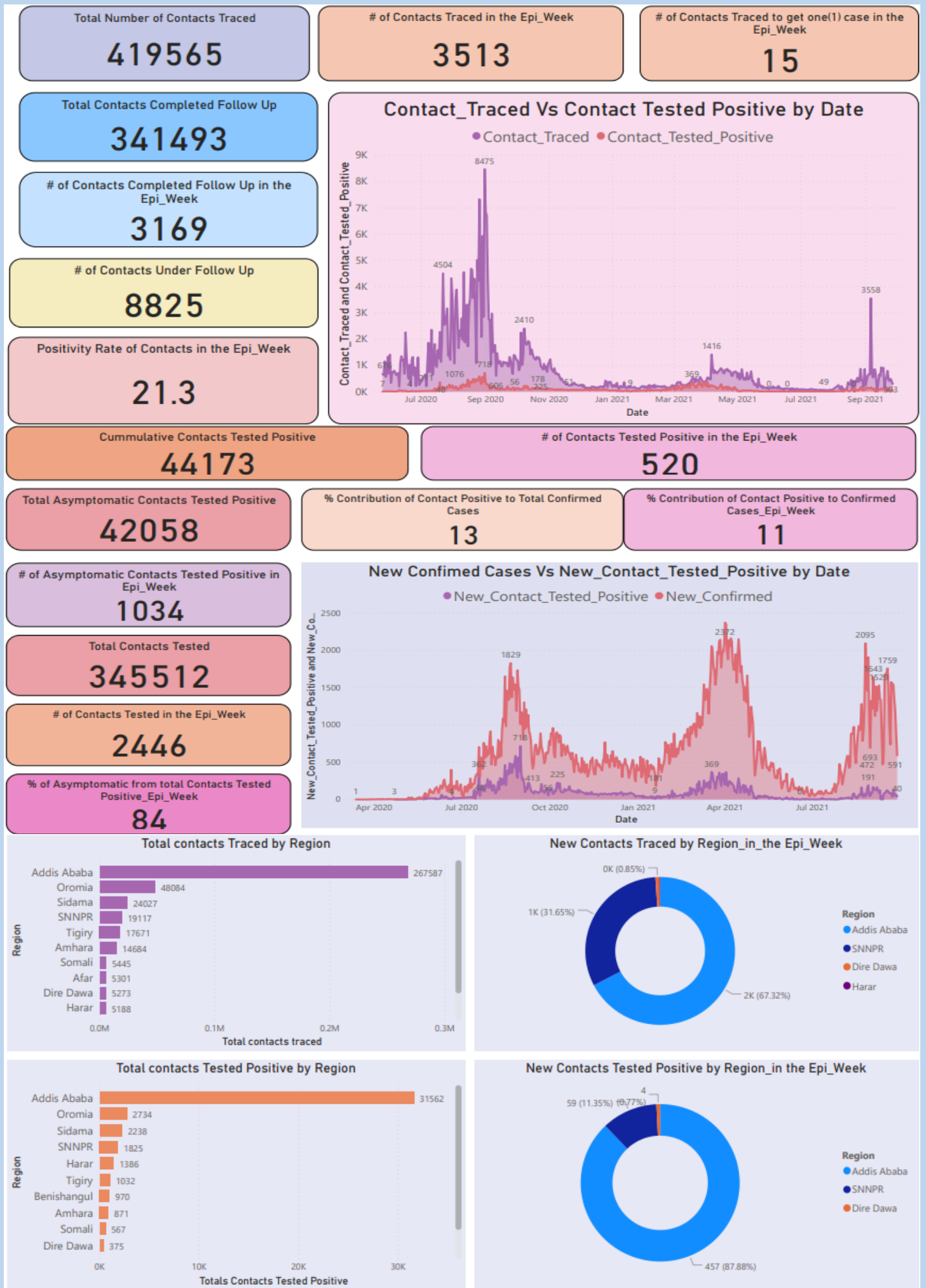


Figure 7: Summary of COVID-19 contact tracing as of September 26, 2021, Ethiopia.

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 September 26, 2021:
 - 392,987 rumors/alerts have been received and investigated. Of these, 13 rumors were reported in the Epi-Week-38.
 - 279,089 (71.02%) of the rumors/alerts have fulfilled the suspected case definition.
- 13,763 COVID-19 related calls are received through call centers in this Epi-week.

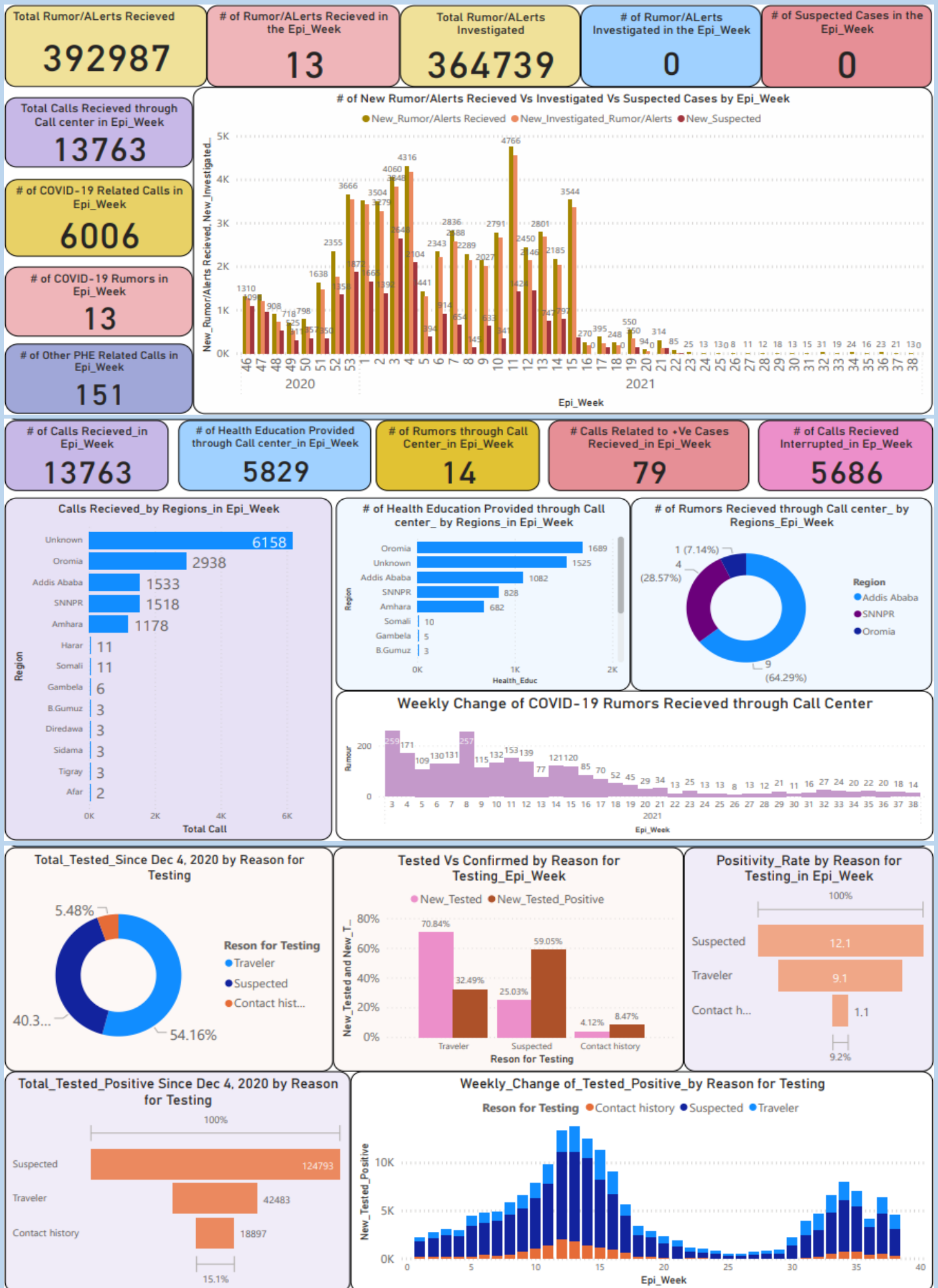


Figure 8: Summary of COVID-19 rumor/alert investigation as of September 26, 2021, Ethiopia.

iii. Point of entry and Quarantine related activities

- Since the start of the outbreak, 2,711,183 passengers have been screened at the Point of Entries of Ethiopia and 828,228 (31%) of them were screened at Bole International Airport.
- Of the total passengers screened, 23,339 were screened for COVID-19 in the Epi-Week-38.
- As of September 26, 2021, among the passengers coming with COVID-19 PCR test result certificates 58 (none in Epi-week-38) passengers with PCR positive certificates were identified during health screening. A total of 95 (one in week-38) 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 being done at Bole International Airport for returnees. So far, 4,608 tests (1,662 in week-38) are conducted among which 93 positive cases (five in week-38) are detected as of September 26, 2021.
- A total of 64,330 returnees were received through Bole International Airport since April 28, 2021. A total of 2,056 returnees were received in the Epi-week-38. The returnees are admitted to Wosen, Kotebe, Gurdsholla, Megenagna, Kirkos, Nifasilk Lafto, Gerji and Entoto returnee centers. 62,648 (97%) returnees are discharged and there are 1,682 returnees currently in returnees' centers as of September 26, 2021.

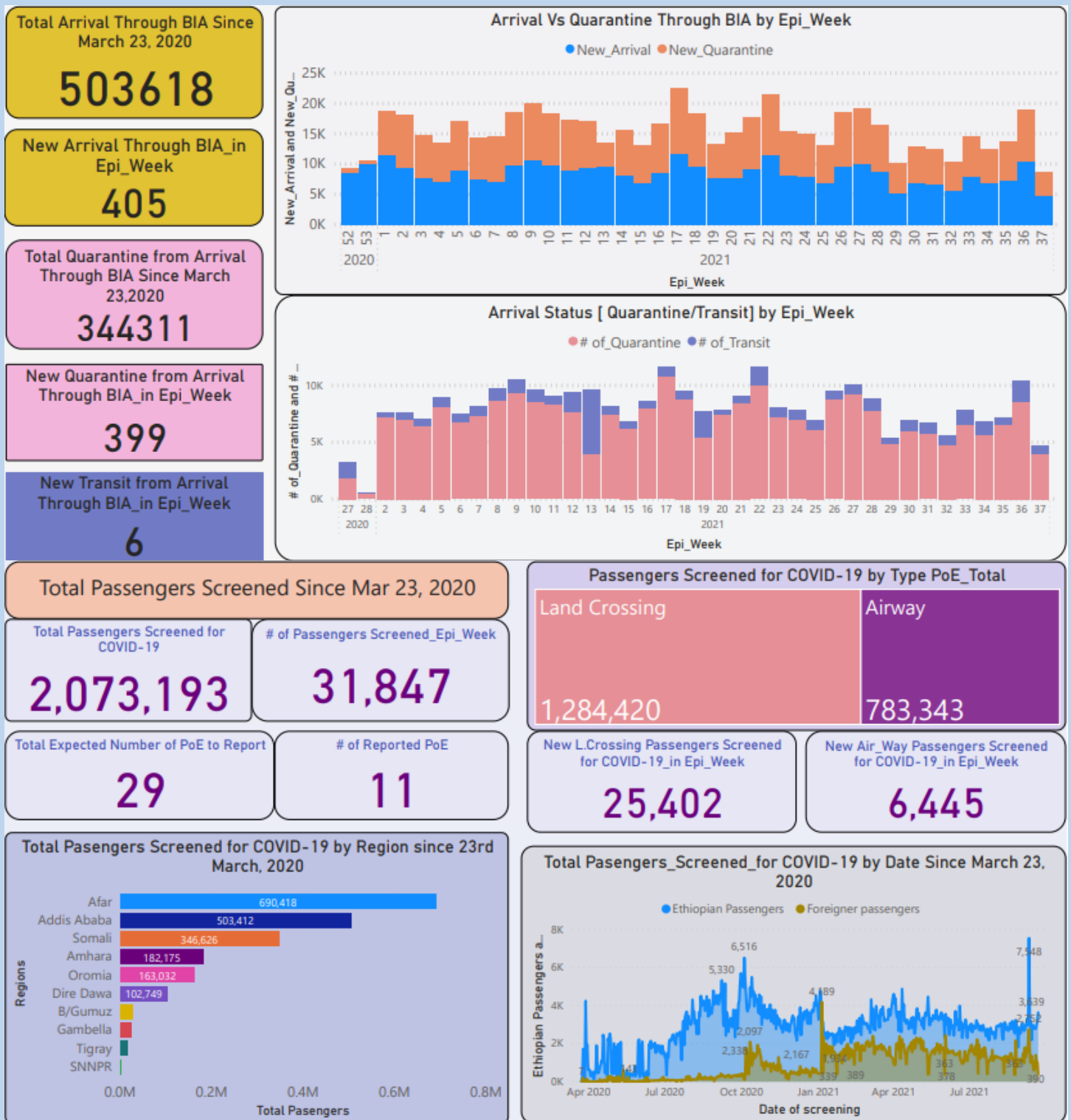


Figure 9: Summary of Passengers screening for COVID-19 as of September 26, 2021, Ethiopia.

IV. Laboratory related activities

- As of 26 September 2021, a total of 3,442,254 samples have been tested for COVID-19 by laboratories across the country.
- 57,940 laboratory tests were processed during the Epi-Week-38 which is a 2% decrease compared to number of tests performed in the previous week.
- The laboratory test positivity rate for the Epi-Week-38 is 15.11%, which is lower than that of the preceding week (16.72%).

- Sidama, SNNPR, Oromia, Amhara regional states and Dire Dawa city administration have reported positivity rates higher than the national weighted average (figure 11 below). There is no report from Tigray regional state since June 29, 2021.
- Among the total COVID-19 laboratory tests performed in Ethiopia, a total of 321,962 laboratory tests are performed by Ag-RDT among which 19,105 is performed in the Epi-week-38 (figure 10 below).

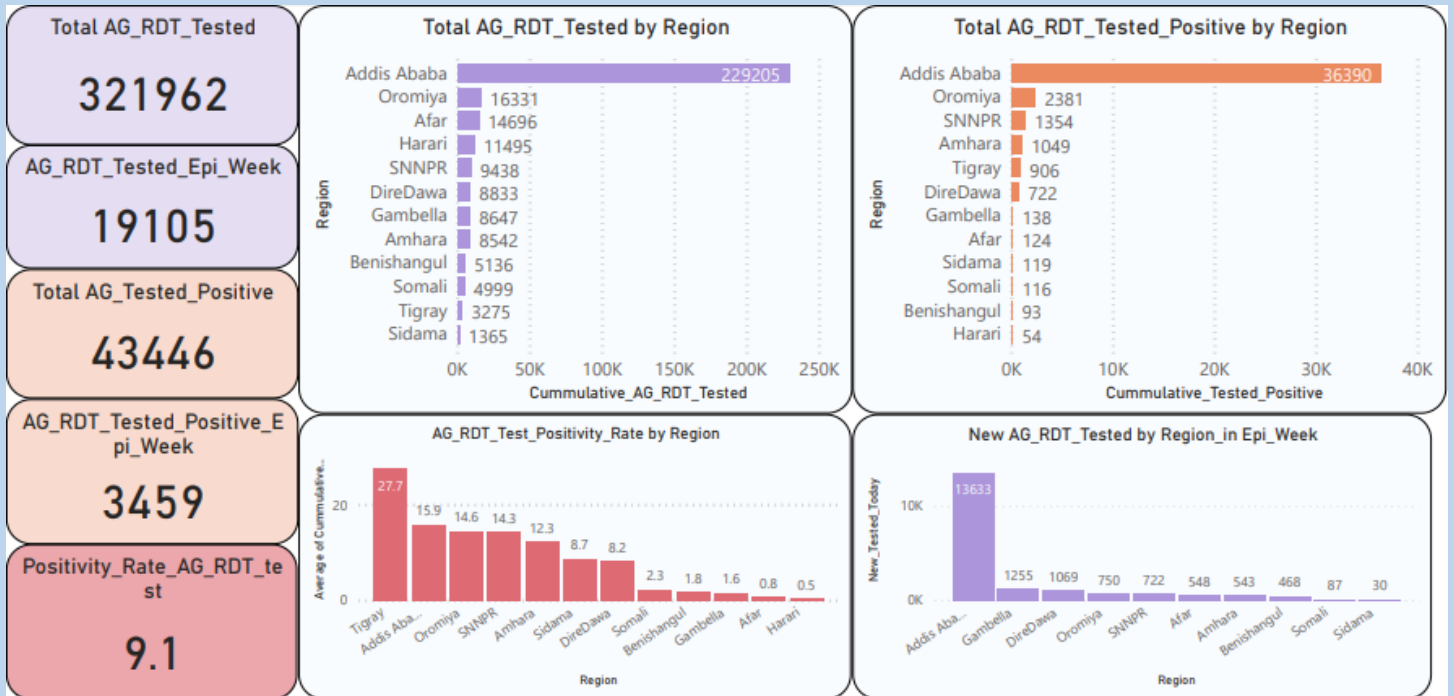
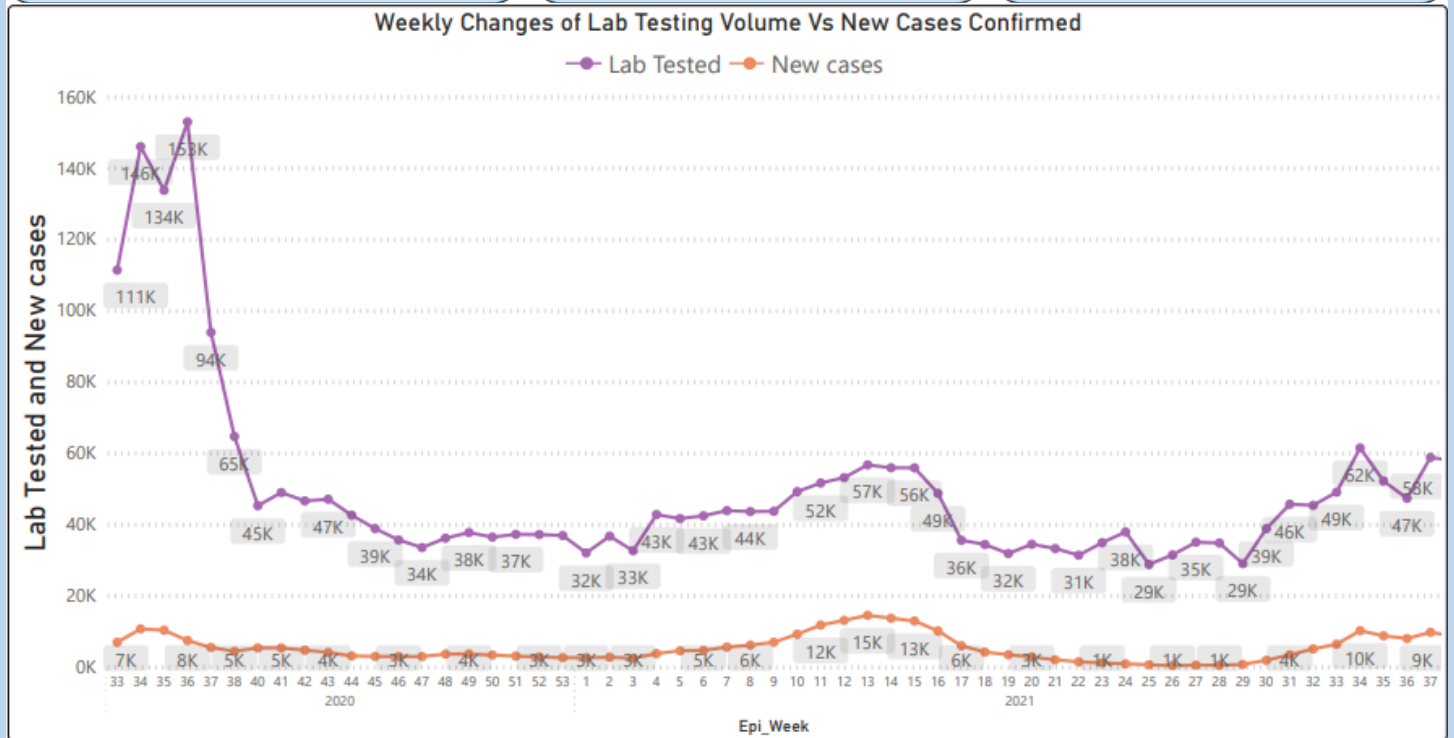
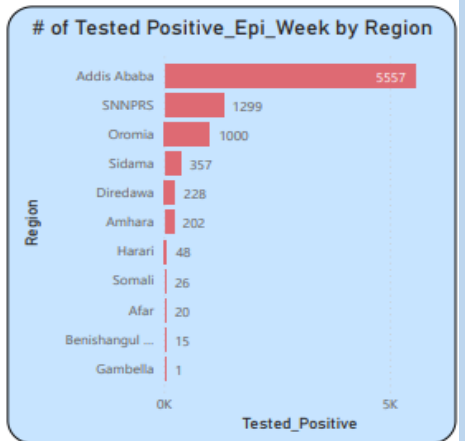
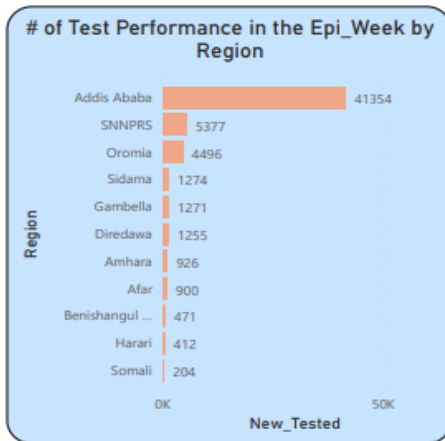
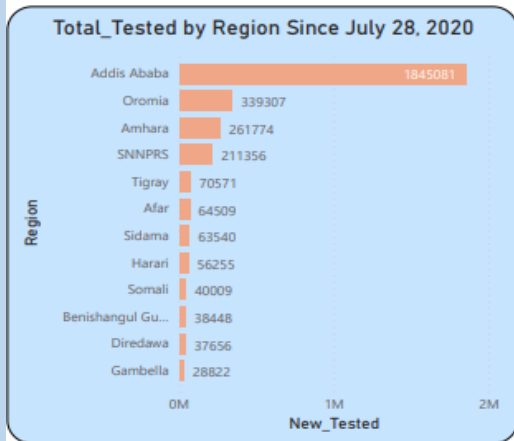
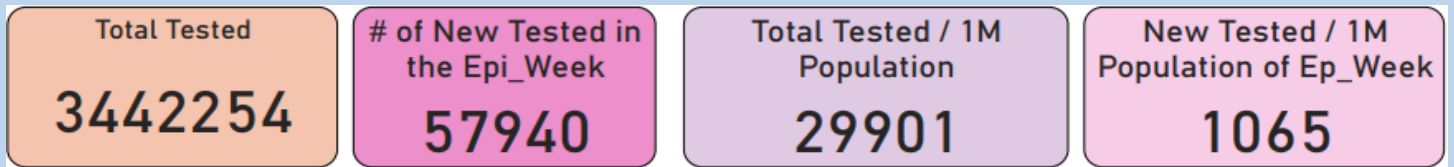


Figure 10: Update on laboratory tests performed by Ag-RDT, as of September 26, 2021



Region/City Admn	New_Tested	Tested_Positive	New_Deaths	Positivity_Rate
Addis Ababa	41354	5557	175	13.3
SNNPRS	5377	1299	18	23.7
Oromia	4496	1000	45	22.3
Sidama	1274	357	3	29.4
Gambella	1271	1	0	0.1
Diredawa	1255	228	2	19.9
Amhara	926	202	25	21.3
Afar	900	20	0	2.0
Benishangul Gumuz	471	15	1	3.9
Harari	412	48	2	9.1
Somali	204	26	0	14.4
Tigray	0	0	0	
Total	57940	8753	271	14.7

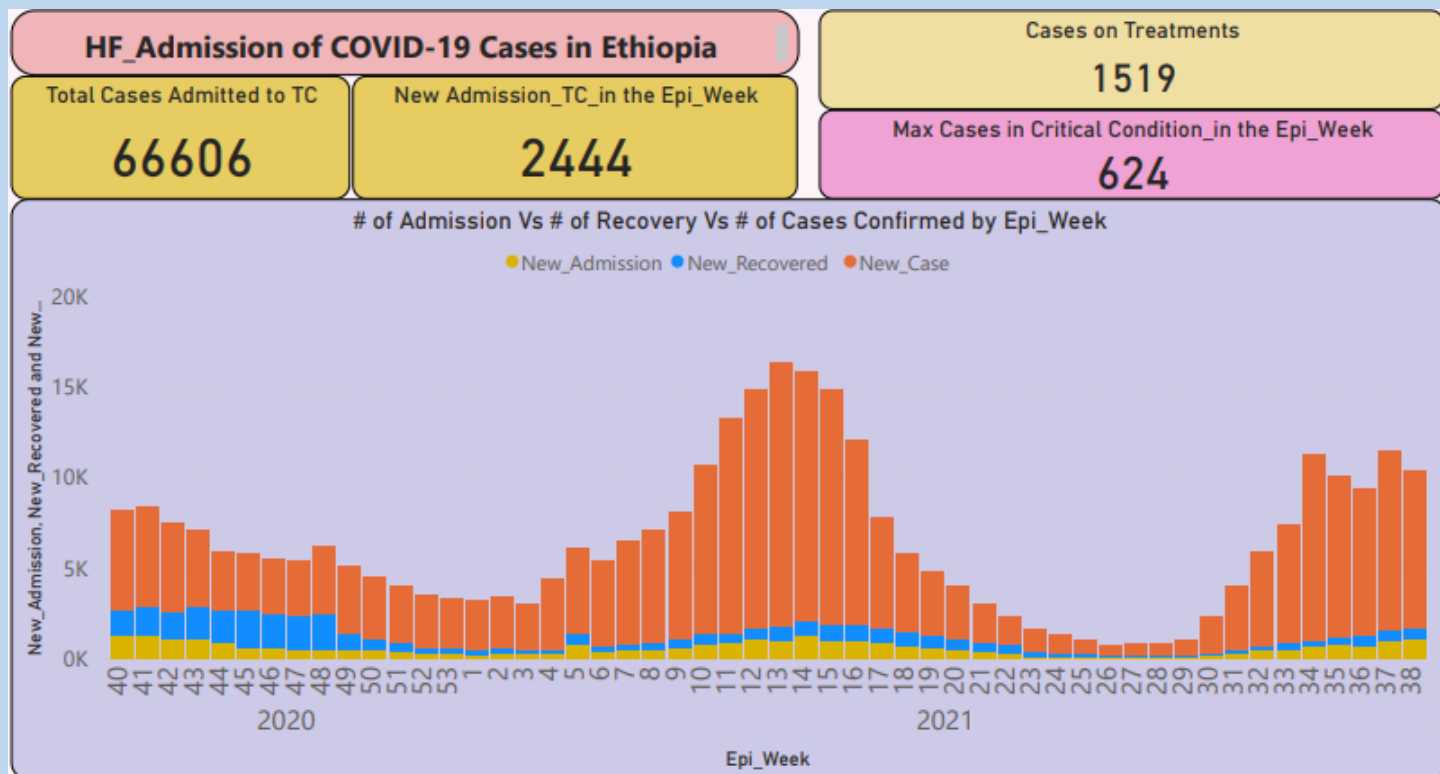
***** Positivity Rate is average of Regional Dstn of Rates

Figure 11: Summary of COVID-19 laboratory testing as of September 26, 2021, Ethiopia.

V. Case Management and Facility Readiness

a. COVID-19 treatment center

- There were total of 7,711 newly recovered COVID-19 cases during the Epi-Week-38, bringing the total number of recovered cases to 308,395 (both from COVID-19 treatment center and from HBIC). This brings the overall recovery rate to 90%.
- The number of cases in severe condition is increasing for the last nine consecutive weeks. On September 26, 2021, there are 798 cases in severe condition which is higher than the maximum number of daily cases in severe cases in the previous week (784).



HF=Health Facilities TC=Treatment Center

Figure 12: Summary of COVID-19 cases in Health Facilities/Treatment centers, as of September 26, 2021.

Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 cases at treatment centers as of September 26, 2021

Regions	Total_Case	New_Case	Total_Admission	New_Admission	Total_Death	Total_Recovered	On_Treatment	Critical_Case
Addis Ababa	232550	576	34270	72	3290	29053	813	544
Oromia	44569	122	8047	20	651	7087	311	162
Amhara	12882	16	4824	3	308	4445	60	33
SNNPR	12195	94	4837	14	336	4459	233	37
Sidama	9717	27	3556	2	186	3273	33	9
Tigray	8171	0	5290	0	59	5222	0	0
Dire Dawa	5952	34	1245	4	114	1146	21	6
Harari	4542	0	1302	0	164	1131	7	7
Benishangul G	3599	0	914	0	25	883	8	0
Afar	2796	0	826	0	5	812	0	0
Somali	2581	0	665	0	58	604	0	0
Gambella	1549	0	682	0	8	649	0	0

b. Home Based Isolation and Care (HBIC):

- So far, 261,041 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been on HBIC. Of them 249,636 (95.63%) have recovered and 38 (0.015%) died.
- Of these, 7,864 cases have been enrolled to HBIC and 7,031 cases have recovered in the Epi-Week-38.
- As of September 26, 2021, there are 12,673 cases on HBIC.
- So far, 2,359 (223 in the Epi-week-38) of the cases have been transferred from treatment centers to HBIC after improvement.
- So far, 1,053 (18 in the Epi-week-38) of the cases have been transferred from HBIC to treatment centers for better care.

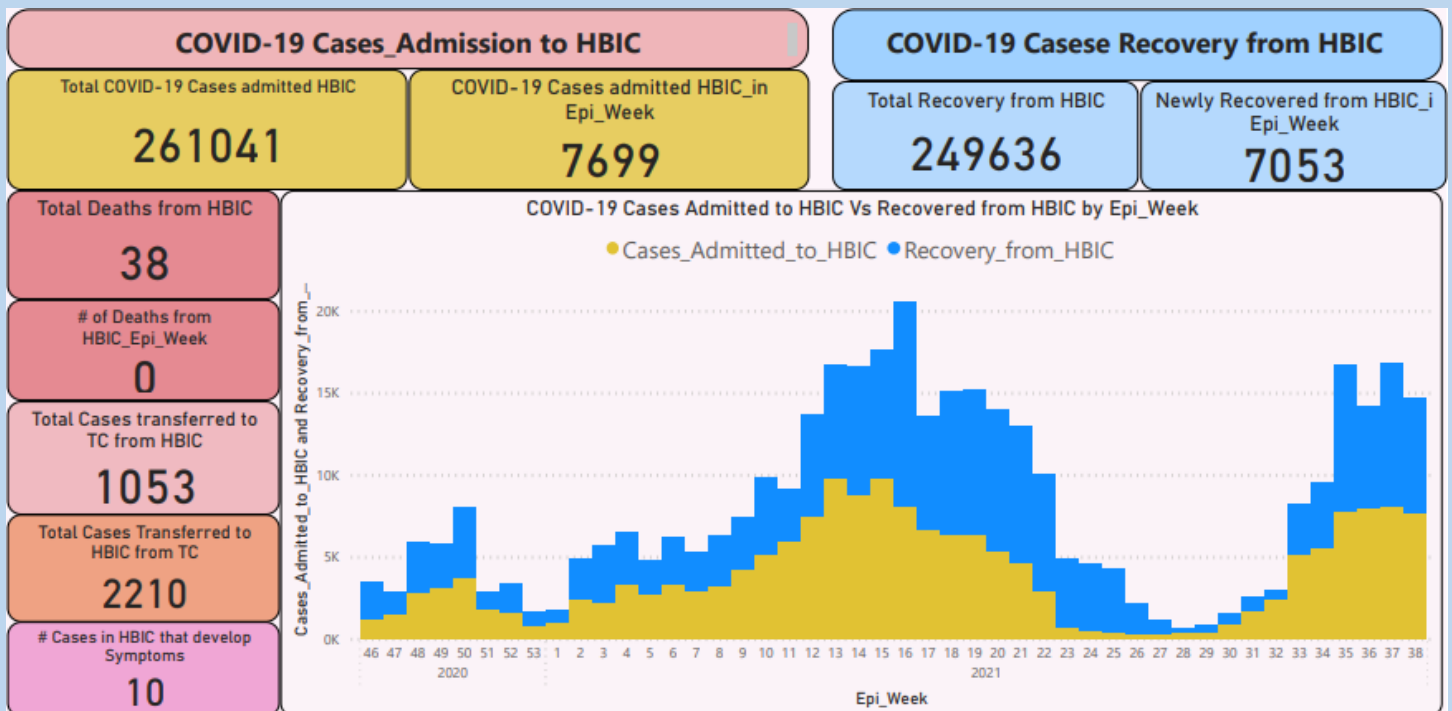


Figure 13: Summary of COVID-19 Home Based Isolation and Care in Ethiopia, as of September 26, 2021.

VI. Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- The Ethiopian Public Health Institute wishes all the followers of Christianity a peaceful *Meskel* holiday. All individuals should take precautionary measures to prevent COVID-19 spread during the *Meskel* celebrations, especially in crowded places, keeping distance, using masks properly, washing their hands with soap and water, and using sanitizers.



- Media (mass media and social media) monitoring on COVID-19 related information is ongoing.

- Press release provided by Ministry of Health - Ethiopia on the current situation of COVID-19 pandemic in Ethiopia.



Figure 14: Press release on COVID-19 situation in Ethiopia, September 23, 2021

- COVID-19 related key messages and updates shared on social media.

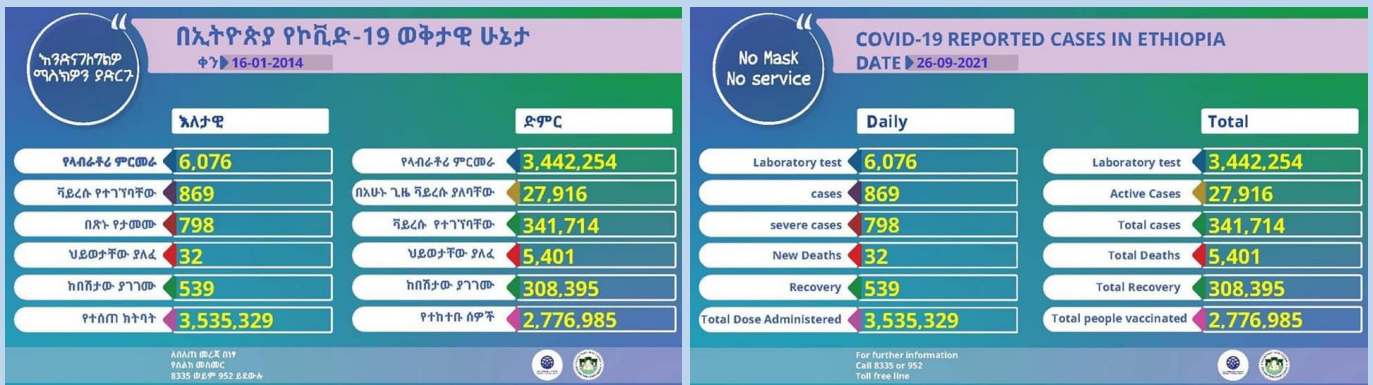


Figure 15: COVID-19 situation update as of September 26, 2021 shared on social media.

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 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 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. COVID-19 timeline

- Various major events and major activities have occurred since the COVID-19 pandemic is declared globally.

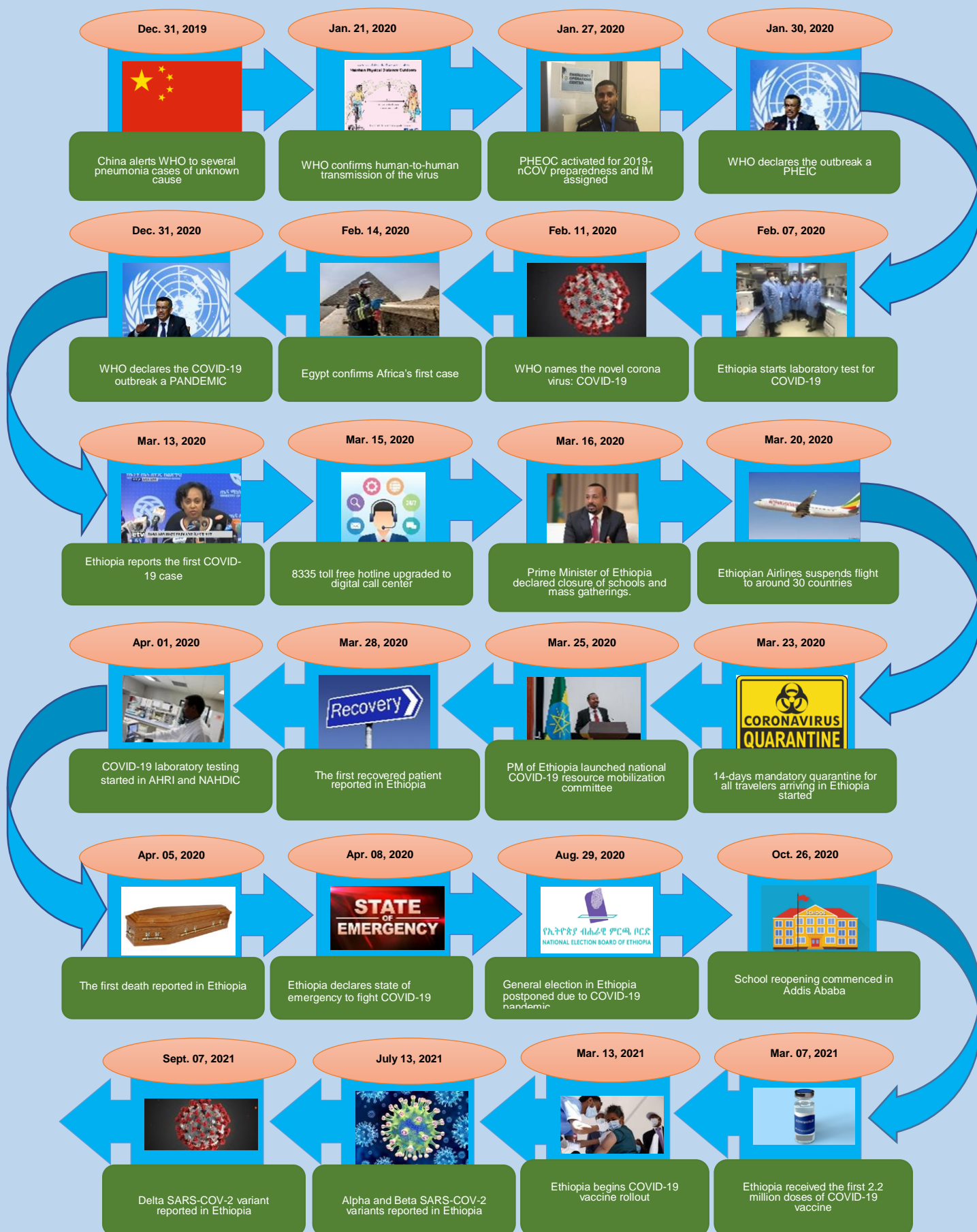


Figure 18: COVID-19 related events and major activities timeline

IX. Challenges and Way Forward

a. Challenges

- Increase in COVID-19 cases resulting in Intensive Care Unit beds and Mechanical Ventilators shortage.
- 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.
- 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.
- Intensifying risk communication and community engagement activities.
- Strengthening collaboration and coordination with key stakeholders and partners.
- 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.
- Intensification of a capacity building trainings 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.

X. Public Health Policy Recommendation

Advice for the Public:

- The community should protect themselves from those who try to supply COVID-19 vaccines and other drugs illegally and report them to the police when they encounter them. We would like to thank the community and the Addis Ababa Police for their involvement in the recent crackdown on the illegal trade in vaccines.
- COVID-19 vaccines should be provided to the public only at public health facilities and free of charge. According to the program developed by the Ministry of Health, COVID-19 vaccines are still being given to priority groups at public health institutions at all levels.

- 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.eph.gov.et/	8335/952	ephieoc@gmail.com
Ethiopian Public Health Institute COVID-19 Website	https://covid19.eph.gov.et/		
Ethiopian Public Health Institute Facebook Page	https://www.facebook.com/ephpage/		
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.gov.et/	6406	aapheoc@gmail.com

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.WHOA Apple- https://apps.apple.com/us/app/who-academy/id1506019873

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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

PREPARED BY

Fantu Lombamo (MD, MPH) – Planning Section, Situation Unit Lead
Negusse Yohannes (PhD in Statistics) – Planning Section, Situation Unit Member

REVIEWED BY

Zewdu Assefa (MPH) – PHE Early Warning and Information System Management P/D/A/Director
Shambel Habebe (MPH) – National PHEOC Manager
Ahimed Mohammed (MD, MPH) - Planning Section Chief
Mikiyas Teferi (MD) - Deputy Incident Manager, Case Management Section Chief
Aschalew Abayneh (RN, BSc, MPH) - DDG-EPHI, Incident Manager

National COVID-19 Response Incident Management system, Emergency Operation Center
FOR MORE INFORMATION and NOTIFICATION

Web: www.ephi.gov.et

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Telegram: <https://t.me/EthPHI>

Call: 8335/952 (TOLL FREE LINE) or 011 276 5340

Email: ephieoc@gmail.com or phemdatacenter@gmail.com