



NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER (PHEOC), ETHIOPIA

COVID-19 PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN ETHIOPIA

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Epi-Week- 39 (September 27 – October 03, 2021)

BULLETIN No. 75

I. HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 55,545 laboratory samples were tested in the Epi-Week-39 bringing the total number of samples tested to 3,497,799.
- A total of 6,955 new confirmed COVID-19 cases and 321 COVID-19 related deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-39 bringing the total cases and death to 348,669 and 5,722 respectively.
- On October 03, 2021, there are 771 cases in severe condition which is lower than the maximum number of daily cases in severe condition in the previous week (798).
- A total of 266,388 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been managed at Home Based Isolation and Care so far; 5,347 of these were enrolled in the Epi-Week-39.
- The number of deaths due to COVID-19 has shown increment for the last consecutive nine weeks.
- Discussion has been held on COVID-19 prevention and control during *Irecha* celebration.



Figure 1: Discussion on COVID-19 prevention and control during *Irecha* celebration, September 29, 2021, Addis Ababa

II. Subjects in Focus:

a) 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 October 03, 2021.
 - Globally, cases of the Alpha variant have been reported in 195 countries (two new countries), while 145 countries (three new countries) reported cases of the Beta variant; 99 countries (four new countries) reported cases of the Gamma variant (1 report of the Gamma variant from last week being discarded upon sequencing); 192 countries (seven new countries) reported cases of the Delta variant.

b) Vaccination against COVID-19 in Ethiopia

- In Ethiopia, a total of 3,740,160 doses of COVID-19 vaccine (either AstraZeneca, Sinopharm or Johnson and Johnson) are administered so far. Out of these, 204,831 doses are administered in this week. Among the vaccinated individuals 1,489,302 (40%) people are fully vaccinated.

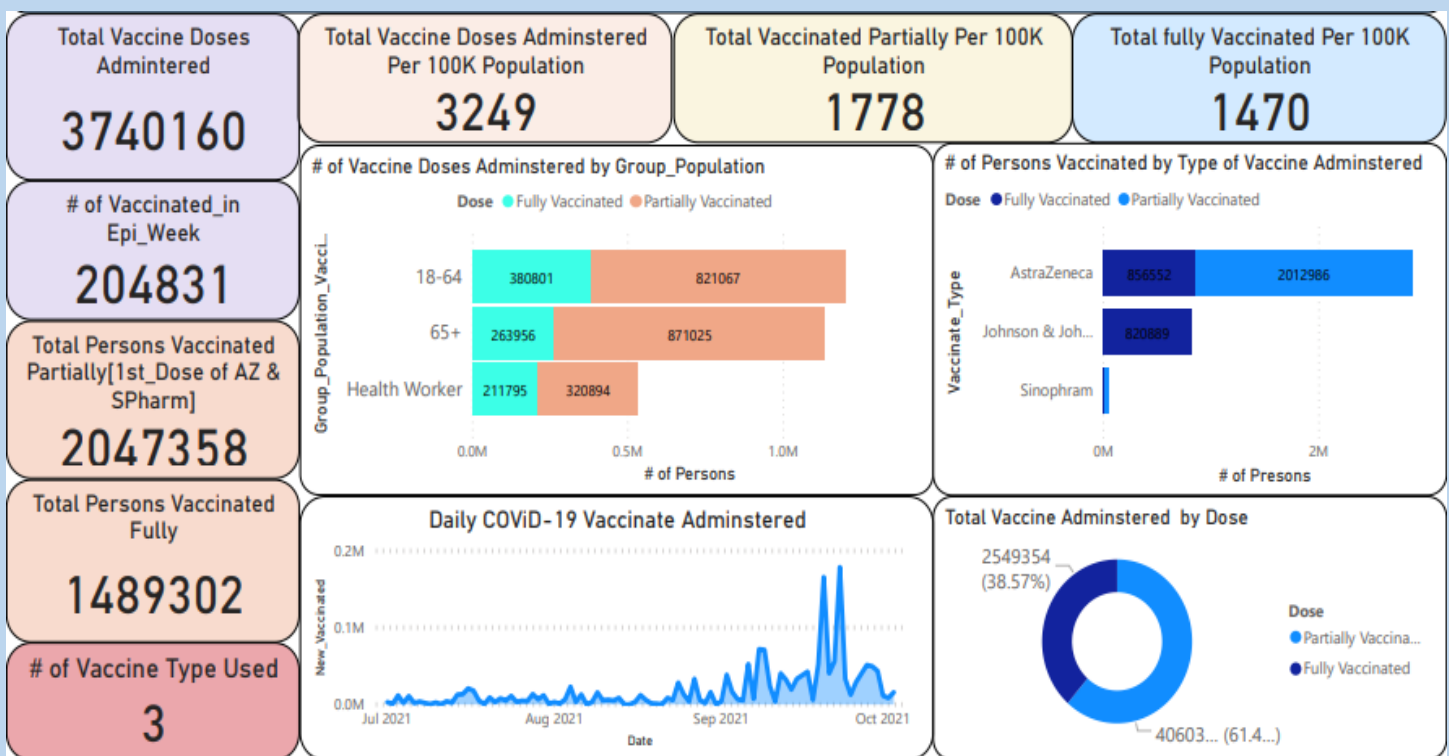


Figure 2: Summary of vaccination against COVID-19 in Ethiopia as of October 03, 2021

III. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

a. Global Situation

- Globally, the numbers of weekly COVID-19 cases and deaths continued to decline. This is a trend that has been observed since August.
- Over 4.8 million new cases and over 84,000 new deaths were reported during the week of 27 September – 03 October 2021. Cases this week decreased by 9% as compared to the previous week, while the number of deaths remained similar to that of the past week.
- As of October 03, 2021, a total of 227,539,260 COVID-19 cases and 4,563,502 deaths (CFR=2.01%) have occurred globally. Of the total cases and deaths reported since the beginning of the outbreak, 4,868,901 cases and 84,529 deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-39.
- 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 (813,120 new cases), India (753,071 new cases), Brazil (325,931 new cases), the United Kingdom (278,700 new cases) and Russian Federation (213,662 new cases).
- In Africa, as of October 03, 2021, a total of 8,246,861 cases and 207,383 deaths were reported across the continent (CFR=2.51%). Of these, 120,052 cases (equivalent increase compared to previous week) and 3,385 deaths (9% increase compared to previous week) were reported during the Epi-Week-39.
- 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.

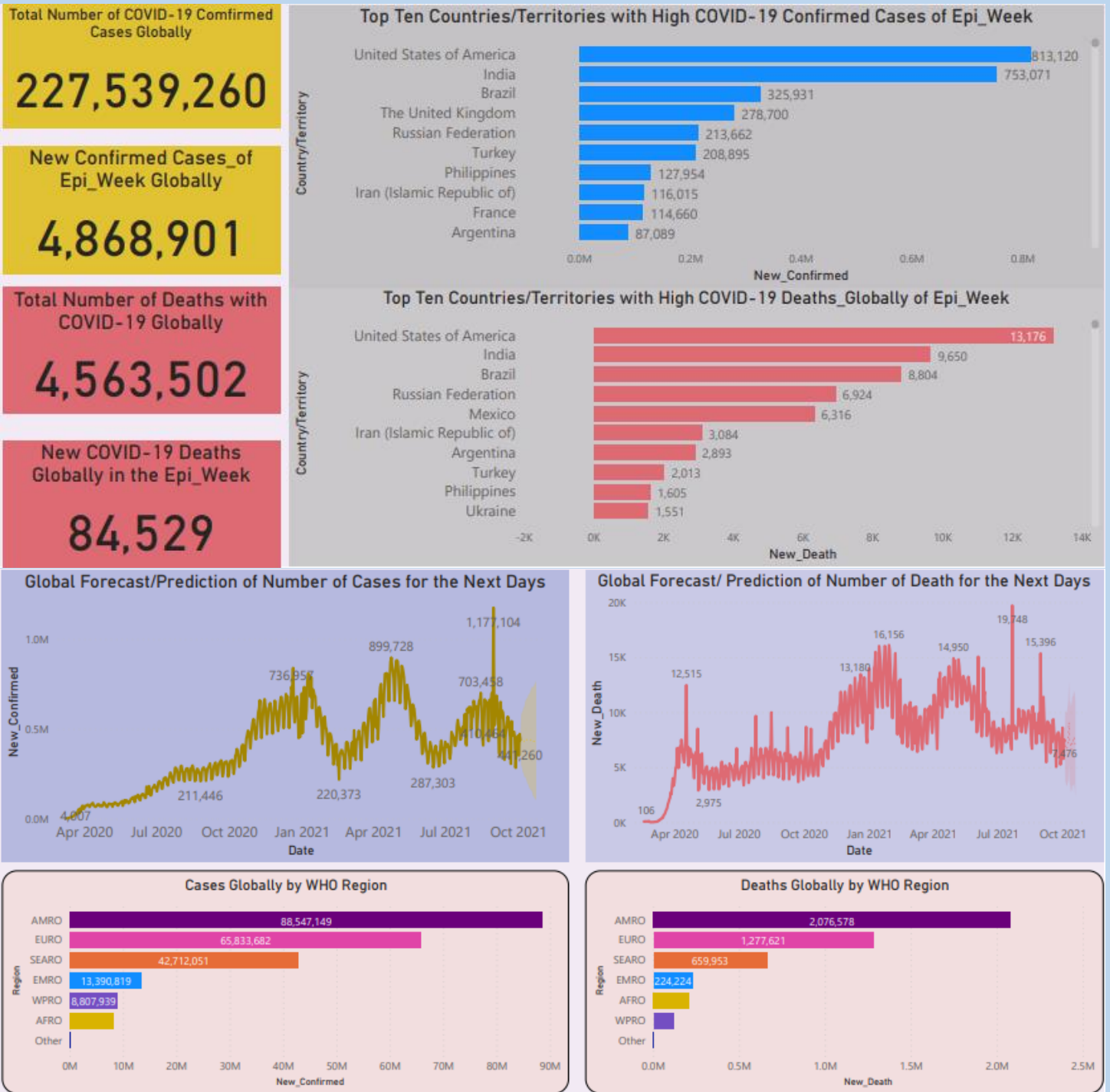


Figure 3: COVID-19 Global Situation Update as of October 03, 2021 (Source: WHO)

Total Number of Cases Confirmed in Africa

8,246,861

New Confirmed Cases in Africa with COVID-19 of Epi_Week

120,052

New Cases in Last 7Days Per 100K Popn. in Africa

1269

Total Number of Deaths in Africa with COVID-19

207,383

New Deaths in Africa with COVID-19 in Epi_Week

3,692

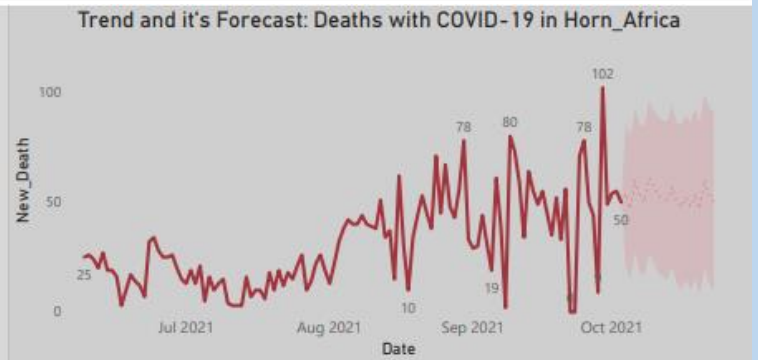
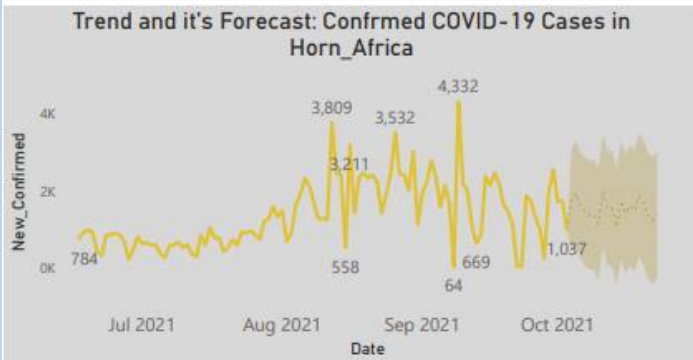
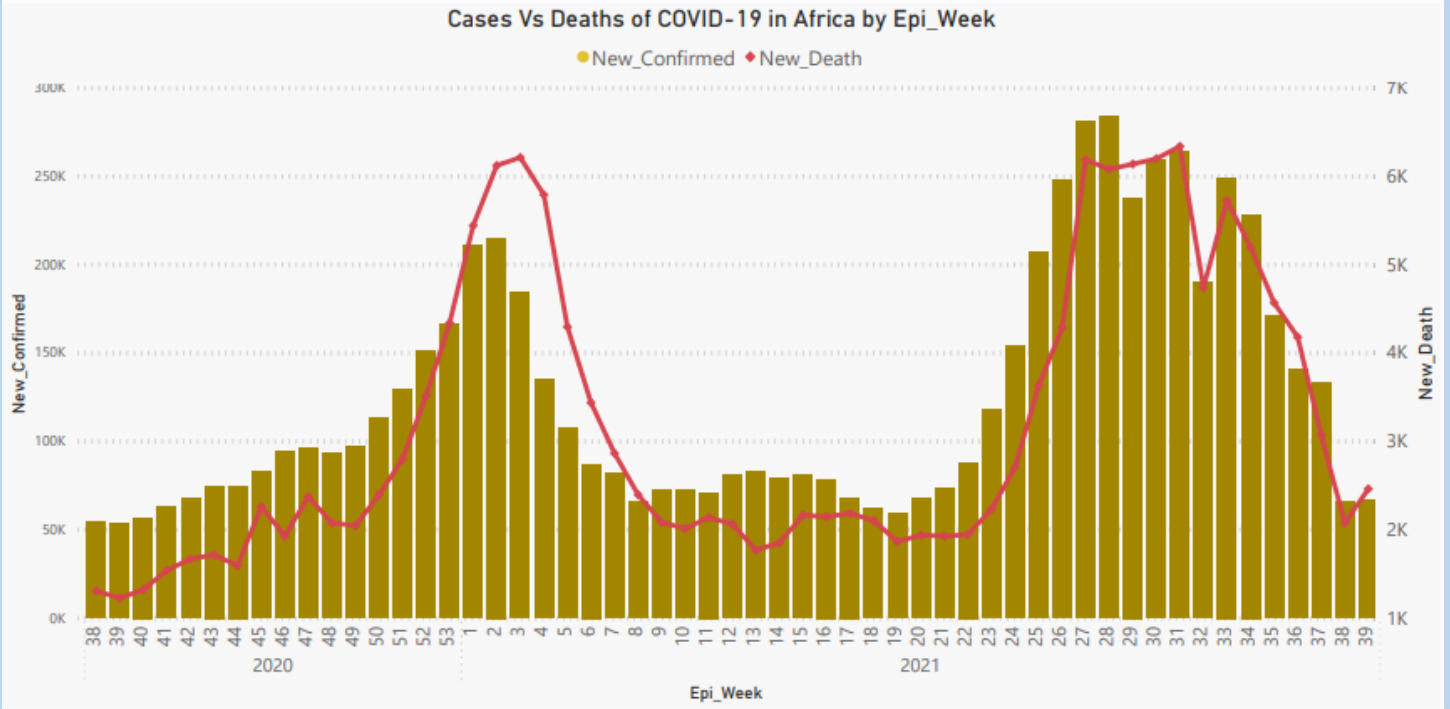
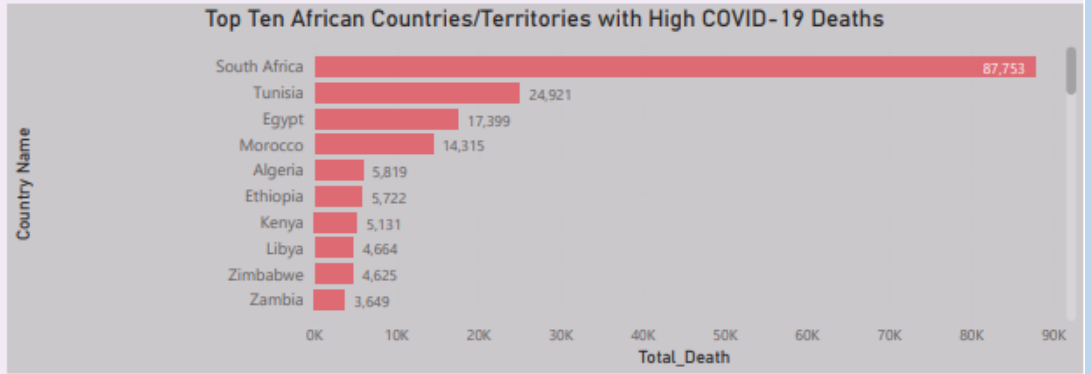
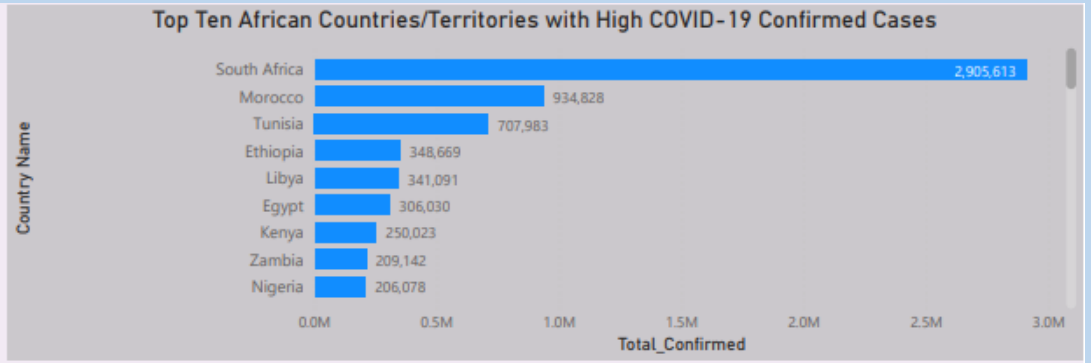


Figure 4: COVID-19 Situation Update in Africa as of October 03, 2021 (Source: WHO)

b. National COVID-19 situation:

- As of October 03, 2021, a total of 348,669 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 5,722 deaths were recorded in the country with a case fatality rate of 1.64%. 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.
- Six-thousand-nine-hundred-fifty-five (6,955) newly confirmed COVID-19 cases and 321 COVID-19 related deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-39.
- There is decrease in the number of case for the last two consecutive weeks. In this week, there is 21% decrease in the number of COVID-19 confirmed cases.
- There is, however, an 18% increase in the number of deaths due to COVID-19 compared to the previous week. The number of deaths has been persistently increasing for the last nine consecutive weeks.
- 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-39 of 2021

Regions	New_Tested	New_Case	New_HF_Admission	New_Deaths	Positivity Rate	# of Recovery
Addis Ababa	38707	3979	466	206	10.1	4898
SNNPR	5989	1077	91	16	20.3	895
Oromia	4144	934	233	55	21.7	296
Dire Dawa	1453	257	31	7	18.8	286
Sidama	1326	295	32	5	24.1	136
Gambella	1140	65	0	0	5.1	6
Afar	1078	27	0	0	2.7	16
Amhara	1009	224	76	31	22.0	107
Harari	363	56	8	1	15.0	47
Somali	196	33	0	0	18.0	89
Benishangul G	140	8	1	0	5.6	0
Tigray	0	0	0	0		0
Total	55545	6955	938	321	14.9	6776

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

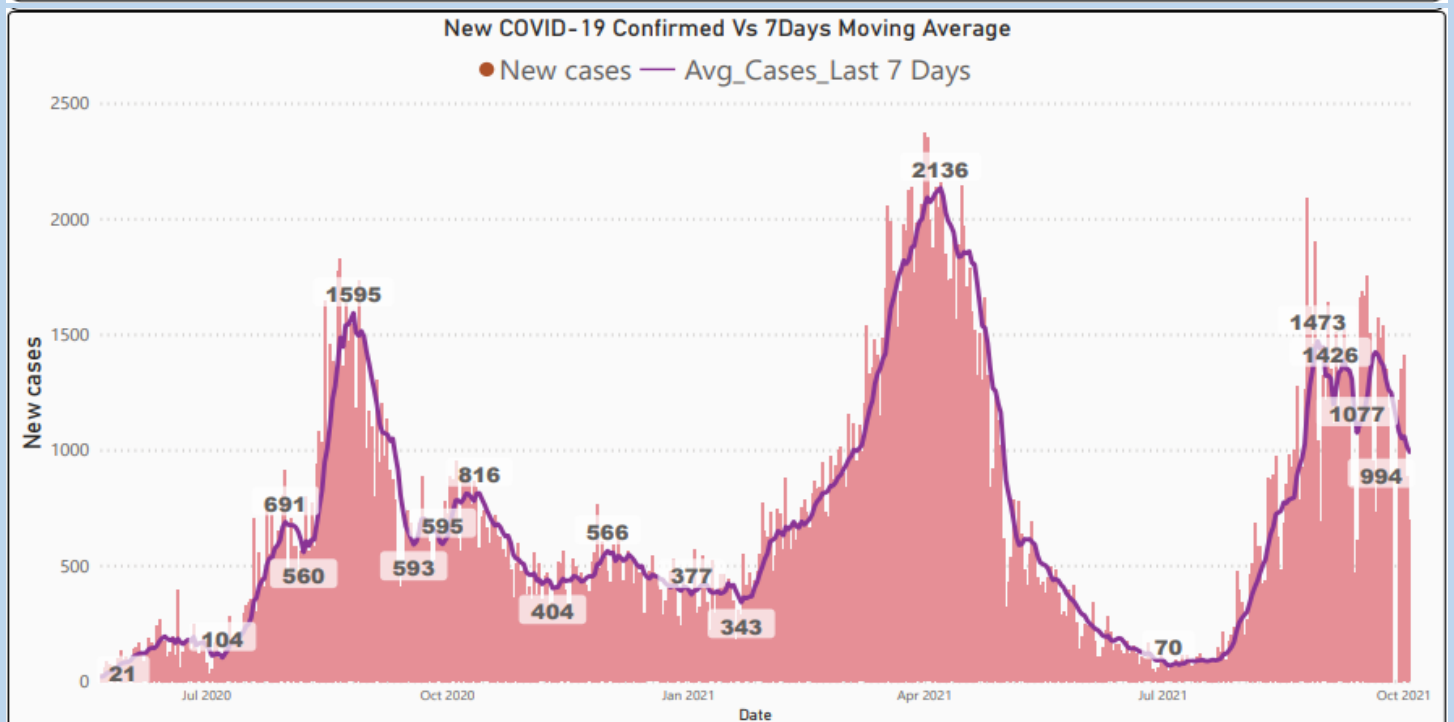
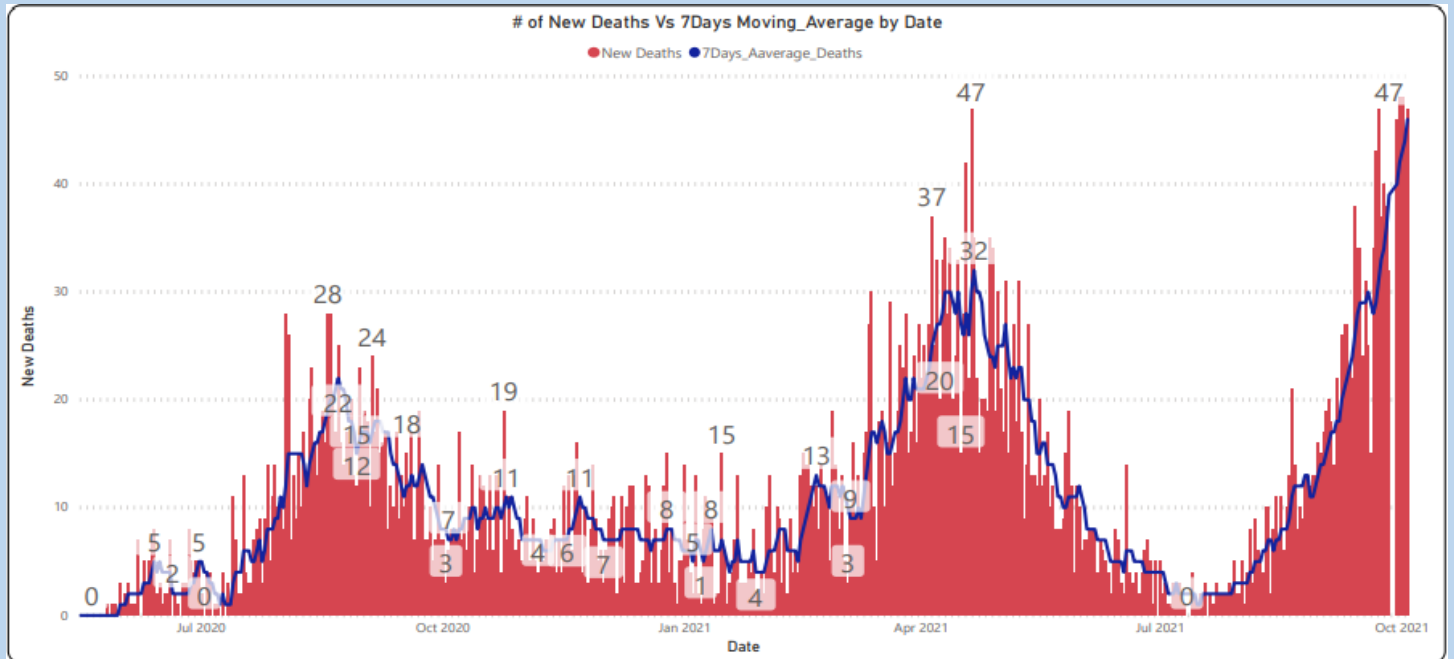
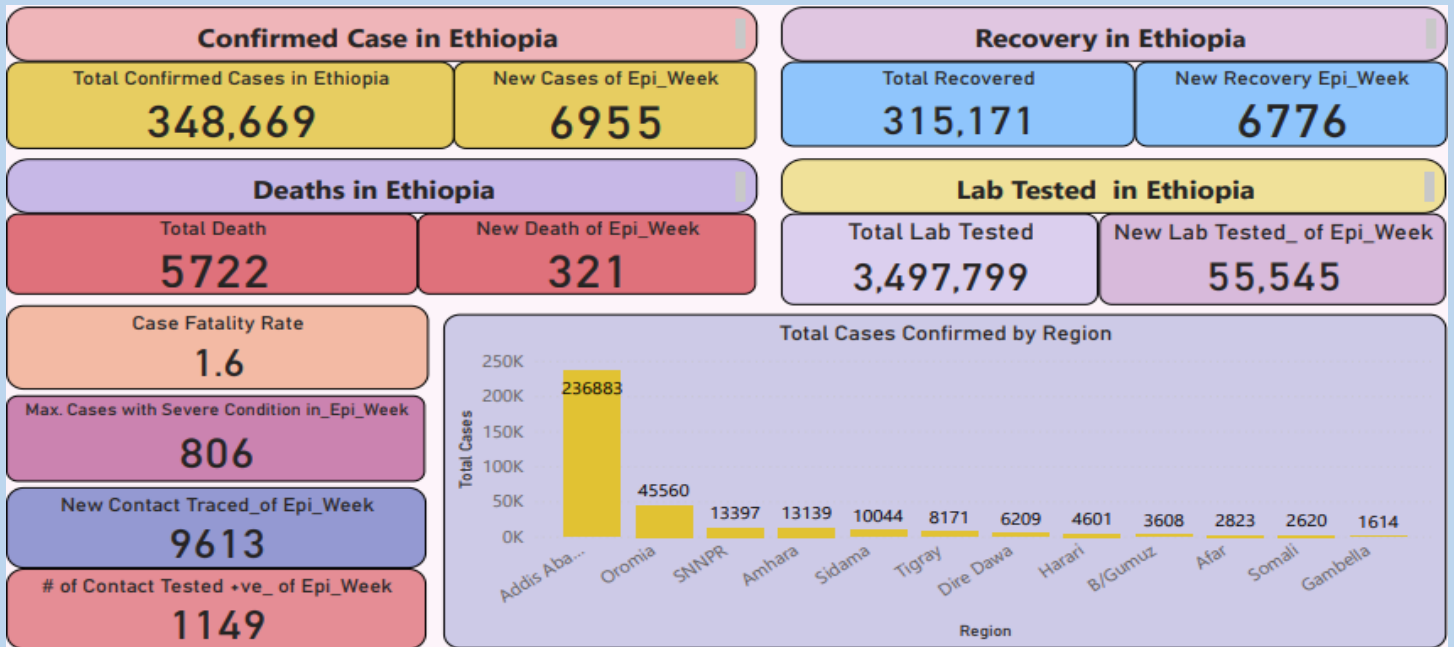


Figure 5: Summary of the COVID-19 situation in Ethiopia as of October 03, 2021, Ethiopia

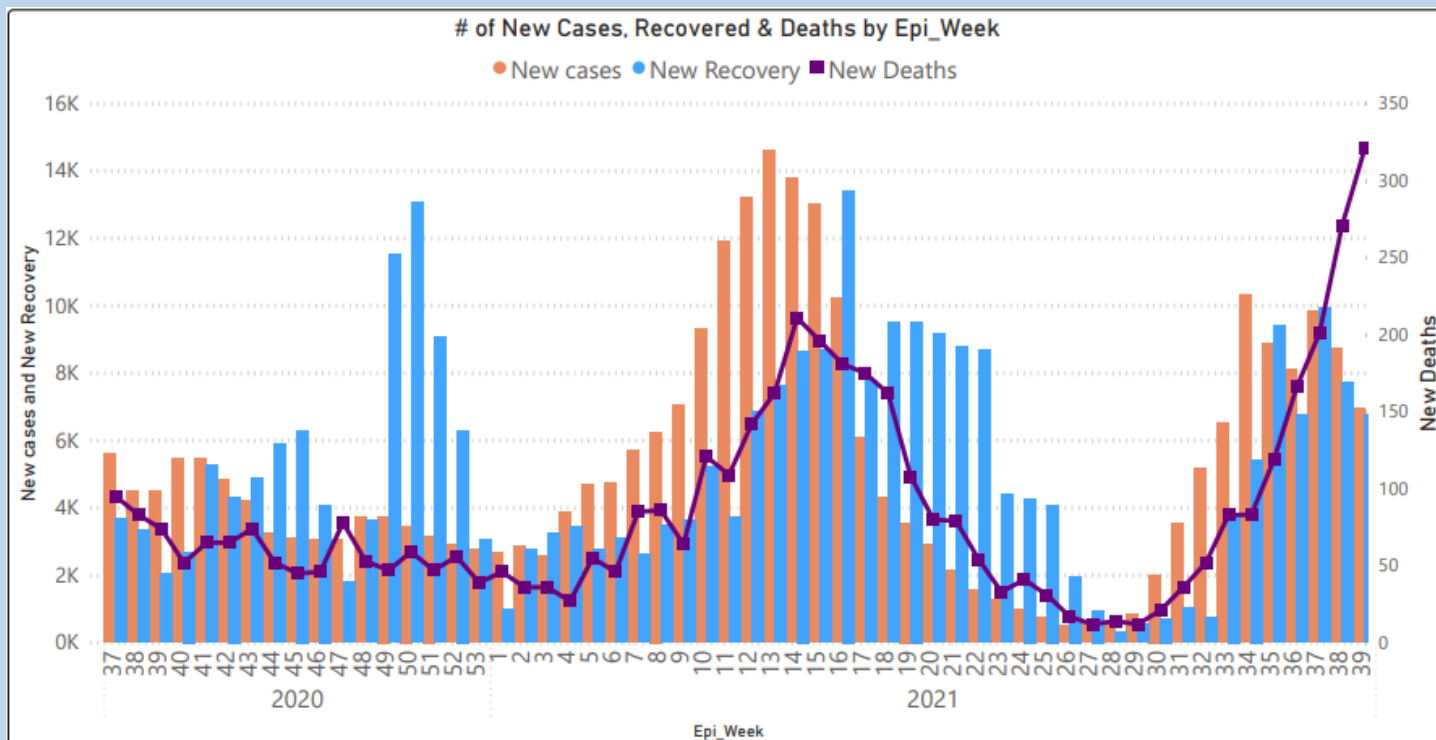


Figure 6: COVID-19 confirmed cases, recovery and death by Epi-Week as of October 03, 2021, Ethiopia

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.

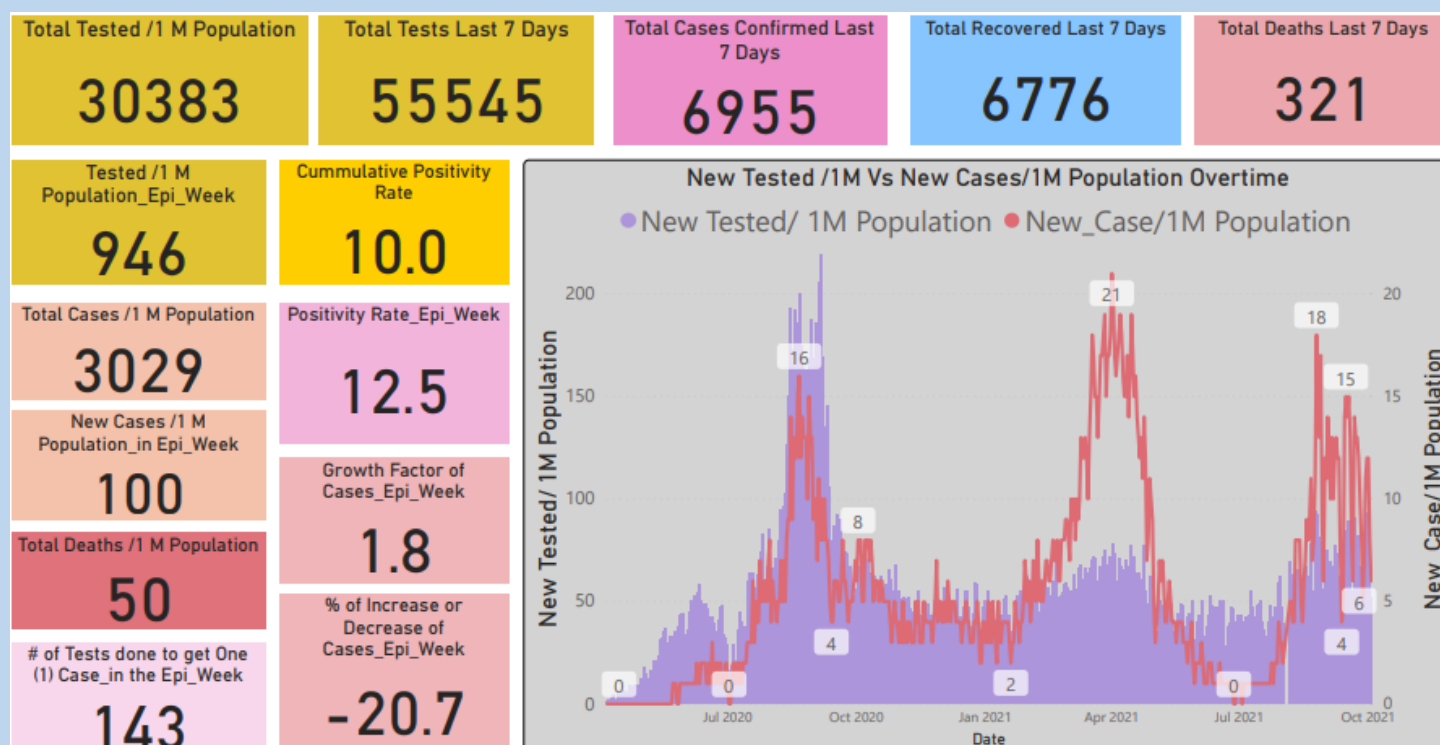


Figure 7: Summary of COVID-19 confirmed cases in Ethiopia as of October 03, 2021.

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 October 03, 2021:
 - A total of 423,172 contacts of confirmed cases have been identified. Of these, 2,445 contacts were identified in the Epi-Week-39.
 - Of total contacts, 345,085 (81.54%) have completed follow-up, while 8,444 contacts are still on follow-up.
 - All the contacts traced are from Addis Ababa city administration and SNNP and Harari regional states; no contact tracing activity is reported from other regions.
- Overall, 44,589 (10.53%) of the contacts (symptomatic plus asymptomatic) have been tested positive.
- Contacts of the confirmed cases contributed for the 12.79% 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.

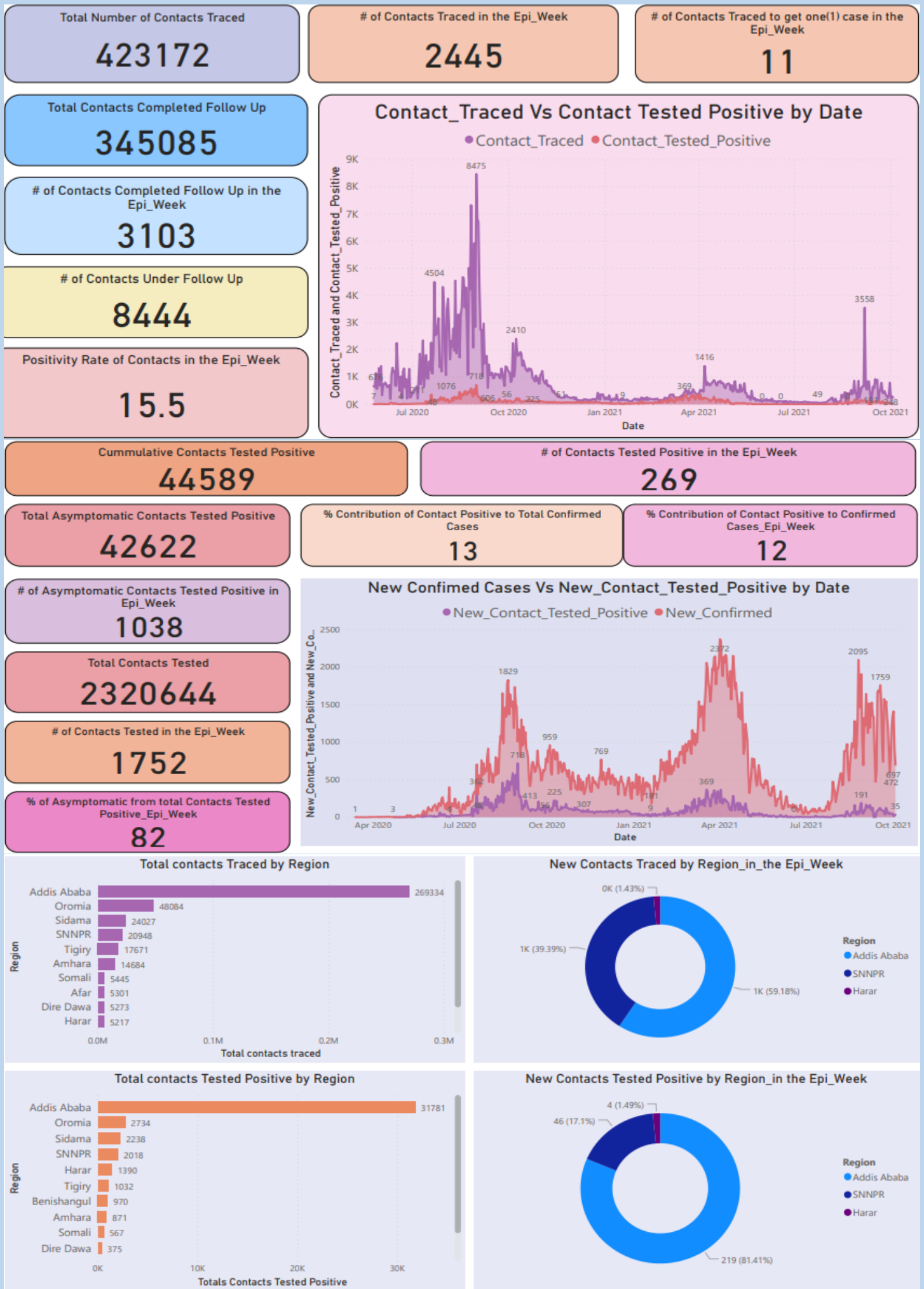


Figure 8: Summary of COVID-19 contact tracing as of October 03, 2021, Ethiopia.

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 October 03, 2021:
 - 393,006 rumors/alerts have been received and investigated. Of these, 19 rumors were reported in the Epi-Week-39.
 - 279,089 (71.01%) of the rumors/alerts have fulfilled the suspected case definition.
- 14,611 COVID-19 related calls are received through call centers in this Epi-week.

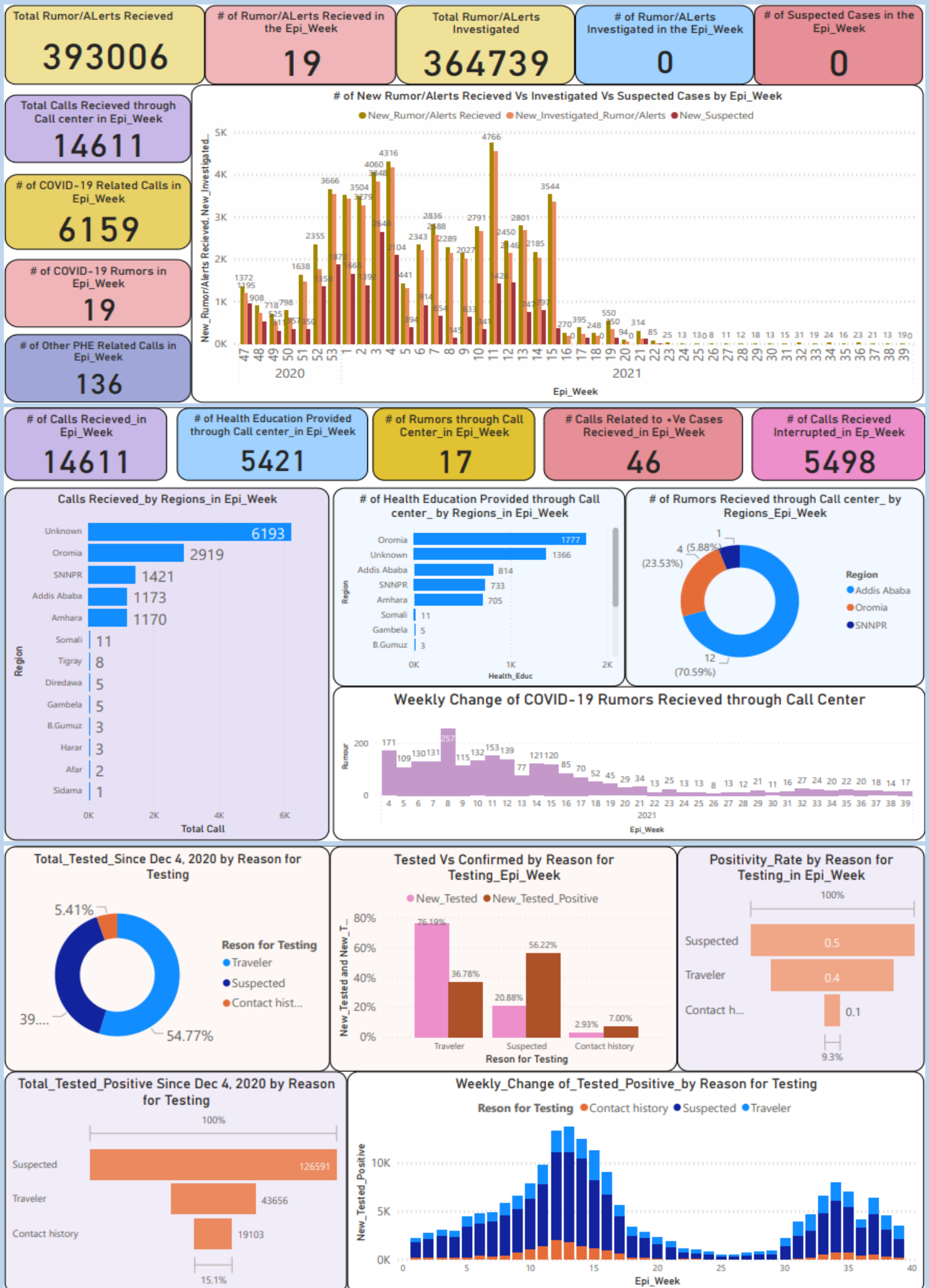


Figure 9: Summary of COVID-19 rumor/alert investigation as October 03, 2021, Ethiopia.

iii. Point of entry and Quarantine related activities

- Since the start of the outbreak, 2,736,370 passengers have been screened at the Point of Entries of Ethiopia and 830,298 (30%) of them were screened at Bole International Airport.
- Of the total passengers screened, 25,187 were screened for COVID-19 in the Epi-Week-39.
- As of October 03, 2021, among the passengers coming with COVID-19 PCR test result certificates 58 (none in Epi-week-39) passengers with PCR positive certificates were identified during health screening. A total of 96 (one in week-39) 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, 7,604 tests (2,996 in week-39) are conducted among which 96 positive cases (three in week-39) are detected as of October 03, 2021.
- A total of 65,293 returnees were received through Bole International Airport since April 28, 2021. A total of 963 returnees were received in the Epi-week-39. The returnees are admitted to Wosen, Kotebe, Gurdsholla, Megenagna, Kirkos, Nifasilk Lafto, Gerji and Entoto returnee centers. 63,611 (97%) returnees are discharged and there are 1,682 returnees currently in returnees' centers as of October 03, 2021.

IV. Laboratory related activities

- As of 03 October 2021, a total of 3,497,799 samples have been tested for COVID-19 by laboratories across the country.
- 55,545 laboratory tests were processed during the Epi-Week-39 which is a 4% decrease compared to number of tests performed in the previous week.
- The laboratory test positivity rate for the Epi-Week-39 is 12.52%, which is lower than that of the preceding week (15.11%).
- Sidama, Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, Somali, Harari 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 352,231 laboratory tests are performed by Ag-RDT among which 17,279 is performed in the Epi-week-39 (figure 10 below).

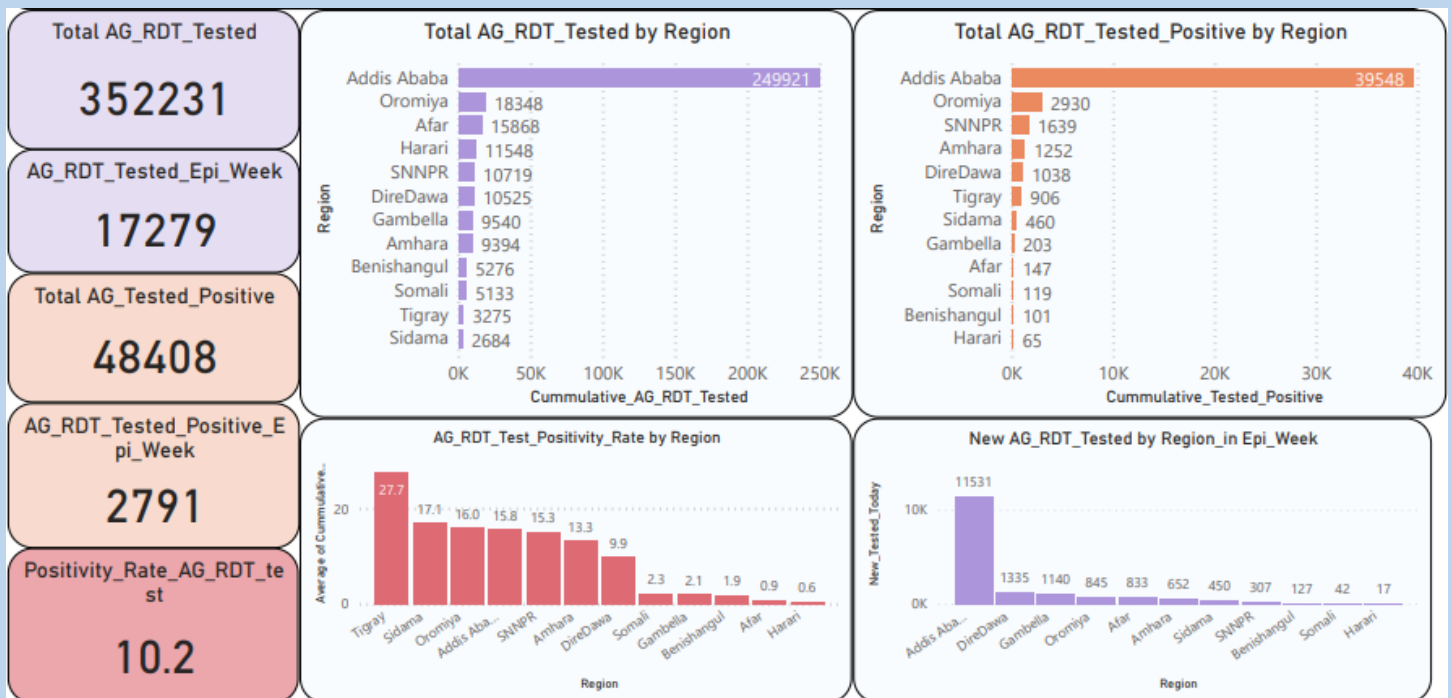
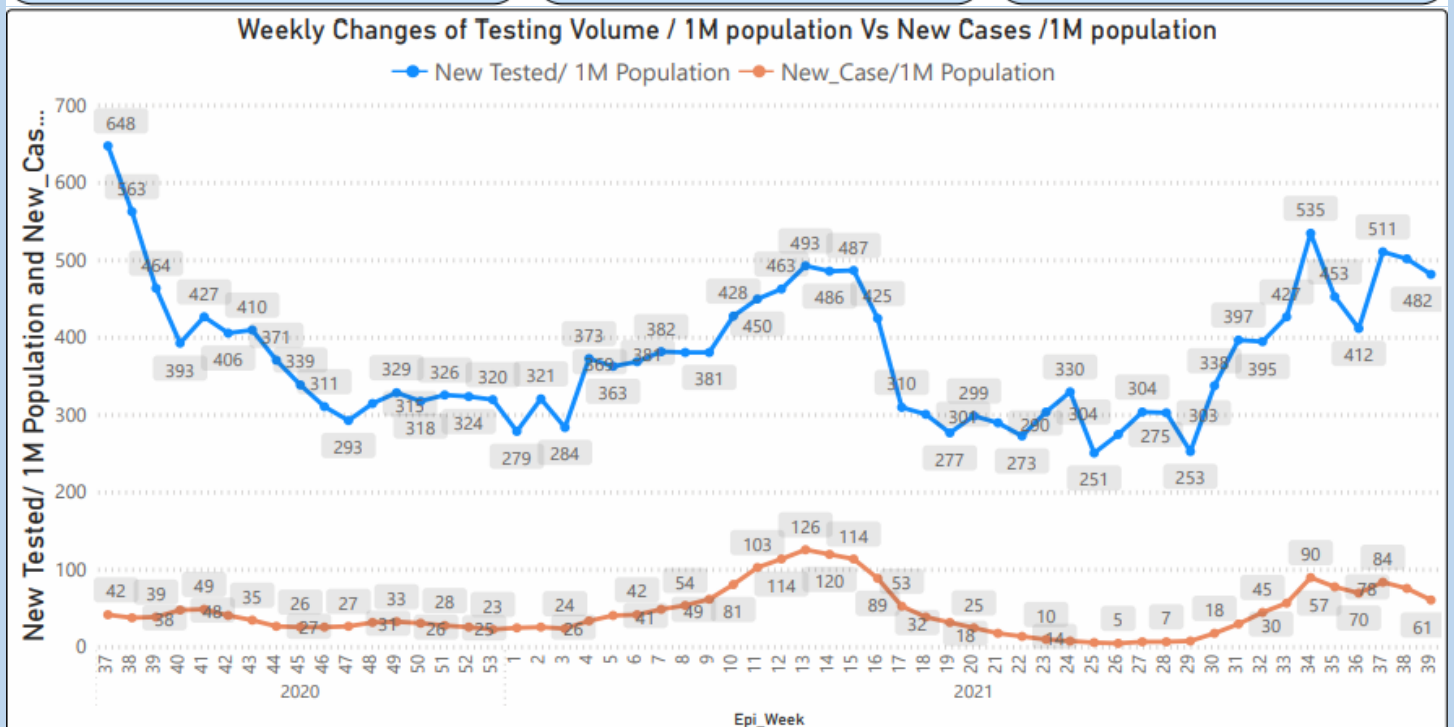
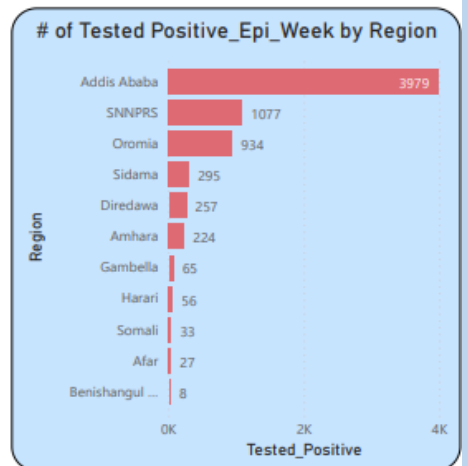
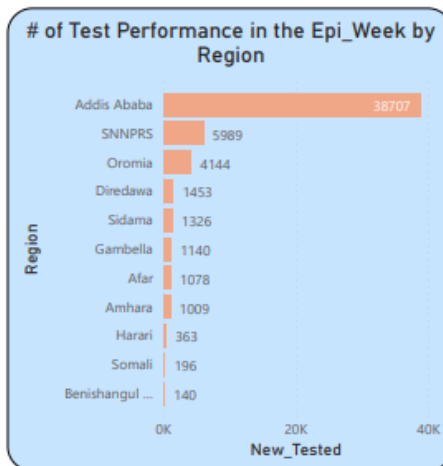
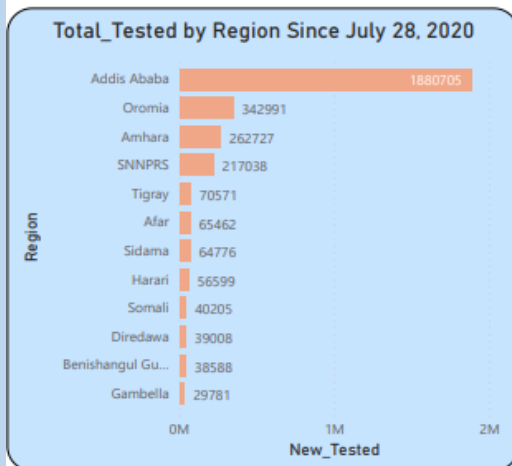
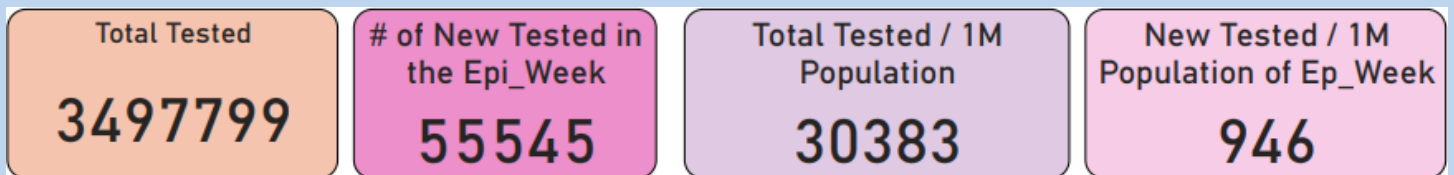


Figure 10: Update on laboratory tests performed by Ag-RDT, as of October 03, 2021



Region/City Admn	New_Test	Tested_Positive	New_Deaths	Positivity_Rate
Addis Ababa	38707	3979	206	10.1
SNNPRS	5989	1077	16	20.2
Oromia	4144	934	55	21.5
Diredawa	1453	257	7	18.8
Sidama	1326	295	5	24.0
Gambella	1140	65	0	5.2
Afar	1078	27	0	2.9
Amhara	1009	224	31	21.7
Harari	363	56	1	15.1
Somali	196	33	0	17.8
Benishangul Gumuz	140	8	0	5.6
Tigray	0	0	0	
Total	55545	6955	321	14.8

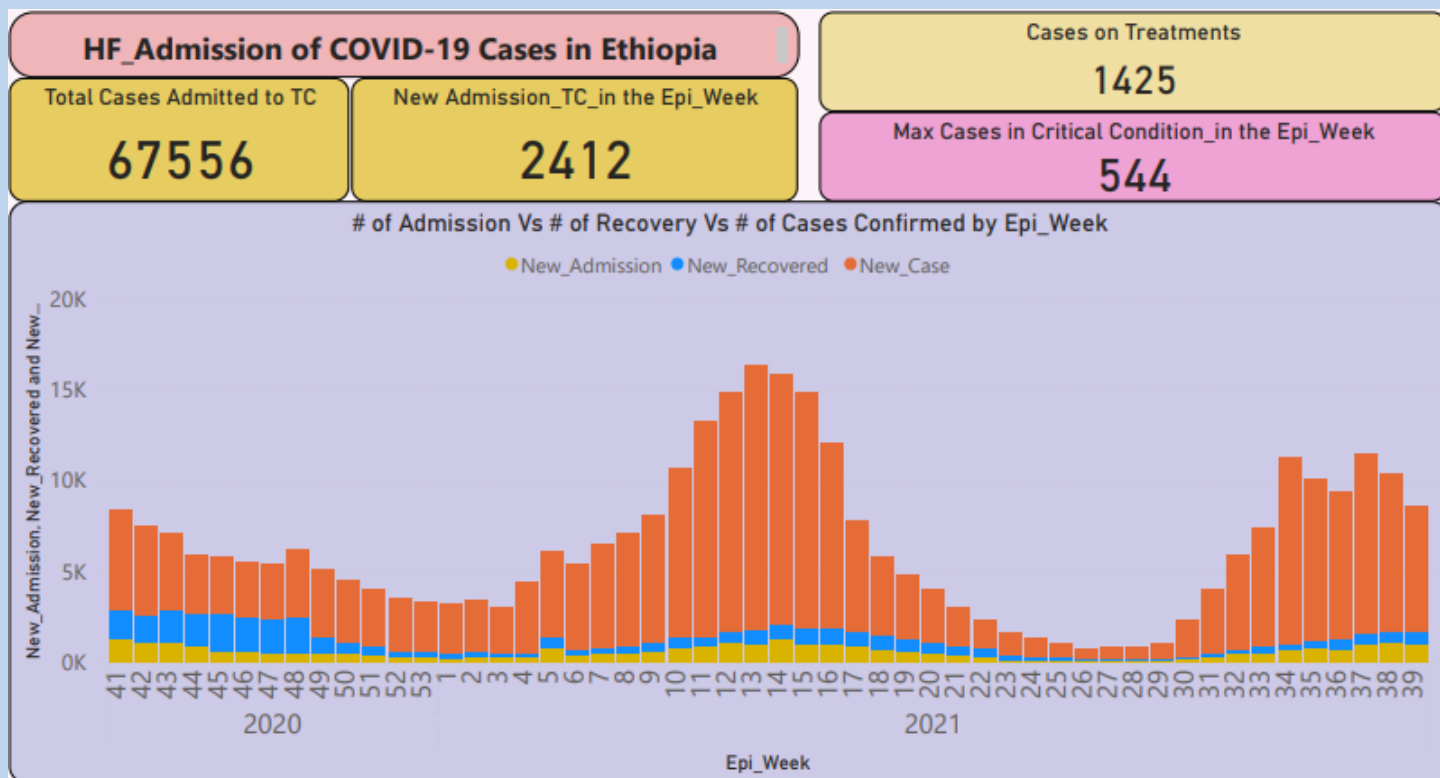
***** Positivity Rate is average of Regional Distn of Rates

Figure 11: Summary of COVID-19 laboratory testing as of October 03, 2021, Ethiopia.

V. Case Management and Facility Readiness

a. COVID-19 treatment center

- There were total of 6,776 newly recovered COVID-19 cases during the Epi-Week-39, bringing the total number of recovered cases to 315,171 (both from COVID-19 treatment center and from HBIC). This brings the overall recovery rate to 90%.
- The number of cases in severe condition has decreased after increasing for nine consecutive weeks. On October 03, 2021, there are 771 cases in severe condition which is lower than the maximum number of daily cases in severe condition in the previous week (798).



HF=Health Facilities TC=Treatment Center

Figure 12: Summary of COVID-19 cases in Health Facilities/Treatment centers, as of October 03, 2021.

Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 cases at treatment centers as of October 03, 2021

Regions	Total_Case	New_Case	Total_Admission	New_Admission	Total_Death	Total_Recovered	On_Treatment	Critical_Case
Addis Ababa	236883	446	34740	65	3639	29369	732	509
Oromia	45560	108	8281	34	706	7196	381	180
SNNPR	13397	69	4929	5	350	4635	133	3
Amhara	13139	6	4900	10	338	4488	62	48
Sidama	10044	32	3588	7	213	3290	42	16
Tigray	8171	0	5290	0	59	5222	0	0
Dire Dawa	6209	29	1276	6	97	1154	37	10
Harari	4601	4	1310	0	166	1141	4	4
Benishangul G	3608	0	915	0	23	883	9	1
Afar	2823	3	826	0	13	812	0	0
Somali	2620	0	665	0	58	604	0	0
Gambella	1614	0	682	0	8	649	0	0

b. Home Based Isolation and Care (HBIC):

- So far, 266,388 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been on HBIC. Of them 255,727 (96.00%) have recovered and 38 (0.014%) died.
- Of these, 5,347 cases have been enrolled to HBIC and 6,091 cases have recovered in the Epi-Week-39.
- As of October 03, 2021, there are 11,902 cases on HBIC.
- So far, 2,408 (49 in the Epi-week-39) of the cases have been transferred from treatment centers to HBIC after improvement.
- So far, 1,129 (76 in the Epi-week-39) of the cases have been transferred from HBIC to treatment centers for better care.

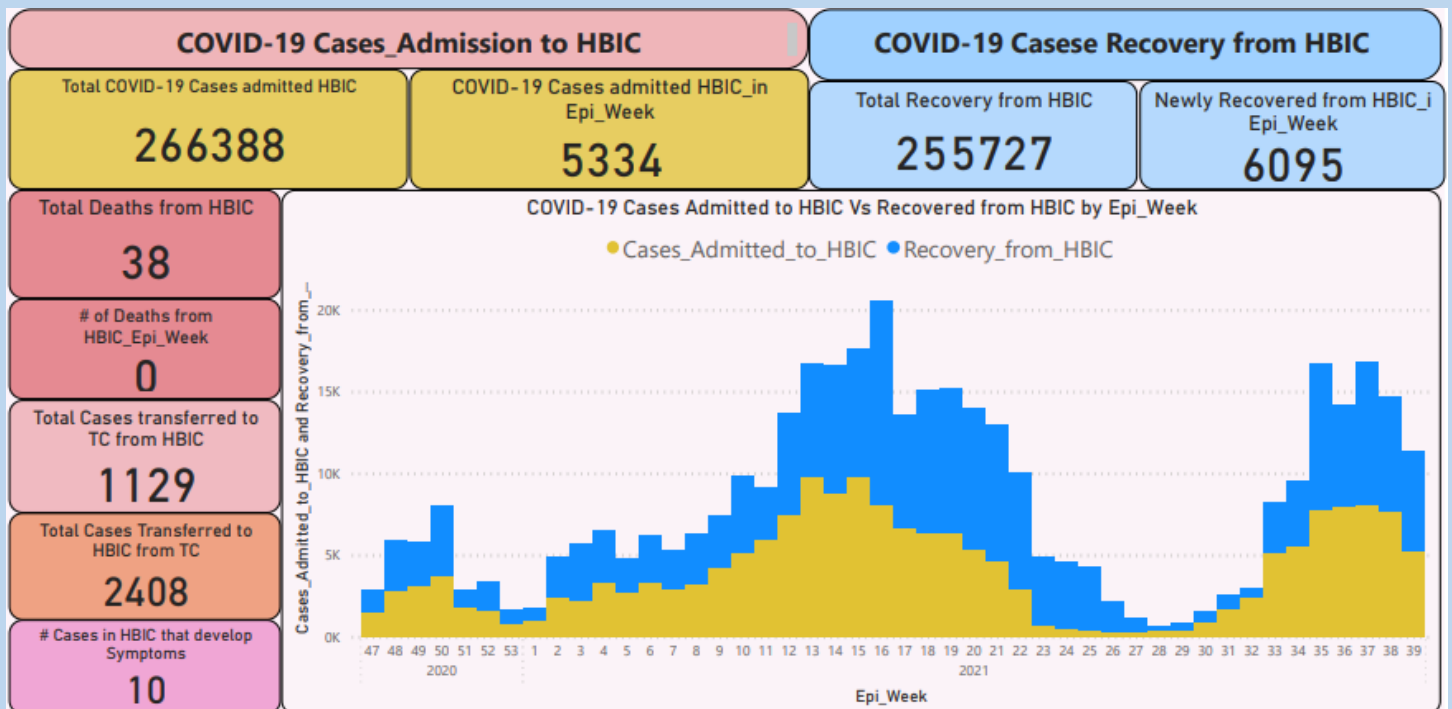


Figure 13: Summary of COVID-19 Home Based Isolation and Care in Ethiopia, as of October 03, 2021.

VI. Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- The Ethiopian Public Health Institute wishes a peaceful *Irecha* celebration. All individuals should take precautionary measures to prevent COVID-19 spread during the *Irecha* 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 the Ethiopian Public Health Institute on the current situation of COVID-19 pandemic in Ethiopia.





Figure 14: Press release on COVID-19 situation in Ethiopia, September 28, 2021

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



Figure 15: COVID-19 situation update as of October 03, 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. This meeting was used to be held weekly and it has now decided to be conducted once in two weeks.
- Discussion has been held on COVID-19 prevention and control during *Irecha* celebrations. The discussion was held in the presence of State Minister of Health, HE Dr. Dereje Duguma, Deputy Director General of the Ethiopian Public Health Institute and COVID-19 response Incident Manager, Mr. Aschalew Abayneh, Head of the Addis Ababa City Administration Health Bureau, Dr. Yohannes Chala, Head of the Oromia Health Bureau, Dr. Mengistu Bekele, Abba Gadas', "Haadha Siinqee" and "Foollee". Extensive discussions were held regarding COVID-19 prevention and control on the occasion of *Irecha* celebrations, at the Oromia Cultural Center in Addis Ababa.



Figure 16: Discussion on COVID-19 prevention and control during *Irecha* celebration, September 29, 2021, Addis Ababa

VIII. 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.

IX. 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.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.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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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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