



NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER (PHEOC), ETHIOPIA

COVID-19 PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN ETHIOPIA

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Epi-Week- 47 (November 22 – 28, 2021)

BULLETIN No. 83

I. HIGHLIGHTS

- A new COVID-19 Variant, named Omicron, with >30 mutations has been detected in South Africa, Botswana and other countries in this week.
- A total of 42,601 laboratory samples were tested in the Epi-Week-47 bringing the total number of samples tested to 3,860,277.
- A total of 1,062 new confirmed COVID-19 cases and 58 COVID-19 related deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-47 bringing the total cases and death to 371,262 and 6,740 respectively.
- On November 28, 2021, there are 233 cases in severe condition which is lower than the maximum number of daily cases in severe condition in the previous week (260).
- A total of 286,450 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been managed at Home Based Isolation and Care so far; 897 of these were enrolled in the Epi-Week-47.
- The number of confirmed cases, deaths due to COVID-19 and positivity rate has shown decrement in this week.

II. Subject of focus: SARS-CoV-2 new Variant of Concern (Omicron)

- A new COVID 19 Variant with >30 mutations has been detected in South Africa, Botswana and other countries in this week.
- On 26 November 2021, WHO designated the variant B.1.1.529 a variant of concern, named Omicron, on the advice of WHO's Technical Advisory Group on Virus Evolution (TAGVE). This decision was based on the evidence presented to the TAG-VE that Omicron has several mutations that may have an impact on how it behaves, for example, on how easily it spreads or the severity of illness it causes.
- Researchers in South Africa and around the world are conducting studies to better understand many aspects of Omicron and will continue to share the findings of these studies as they become available.

- It is not yet clear whether Omicron is more transmissible (e.g., more easily spread from person to person) and whether infection with Omicron causes more severe disease compared to other variants, including Delta.
- Preliminary evidence suggests there may be an increased risk of reinfection with Omicron (i.e., people who have previously had COVID-19 could become reinfected more easily with Omicron), as compared to other variants of concern, but information is limited.
- More researches are needed to understand the potential impact of this variant on our existing countermeasures, including vaccines. Current vaccines remain effective against severe disease and death.
- The widely used PCR tests continue to detect infection, including infection with Omicron, as it has been seen with other variants as well. Studies are ongoing to determine whether there is any impact on other types of tests, including rapid antigen detection tests.
- Corticosteroids and IL6 Receptor Blockers will still be effective for managing patients with severe COVID-19. Other treatments will be assessed to see if they are still as effective given the changes to parts of the virus in the Omicron variant.

III. Vaccination against COVID-19 in Ethiopia

- In Ethiopia, a total of 8,780,714 doses of COVID-19 vaccine (either AstraZeneca, Sinopharm, Johnson and Johnson or Pfizer) are administered so far. Out of these, 3,322,357 doses are administered in this week. Among the vaccinated individuals 3,491,391 (40%) people are fully vaccinated.

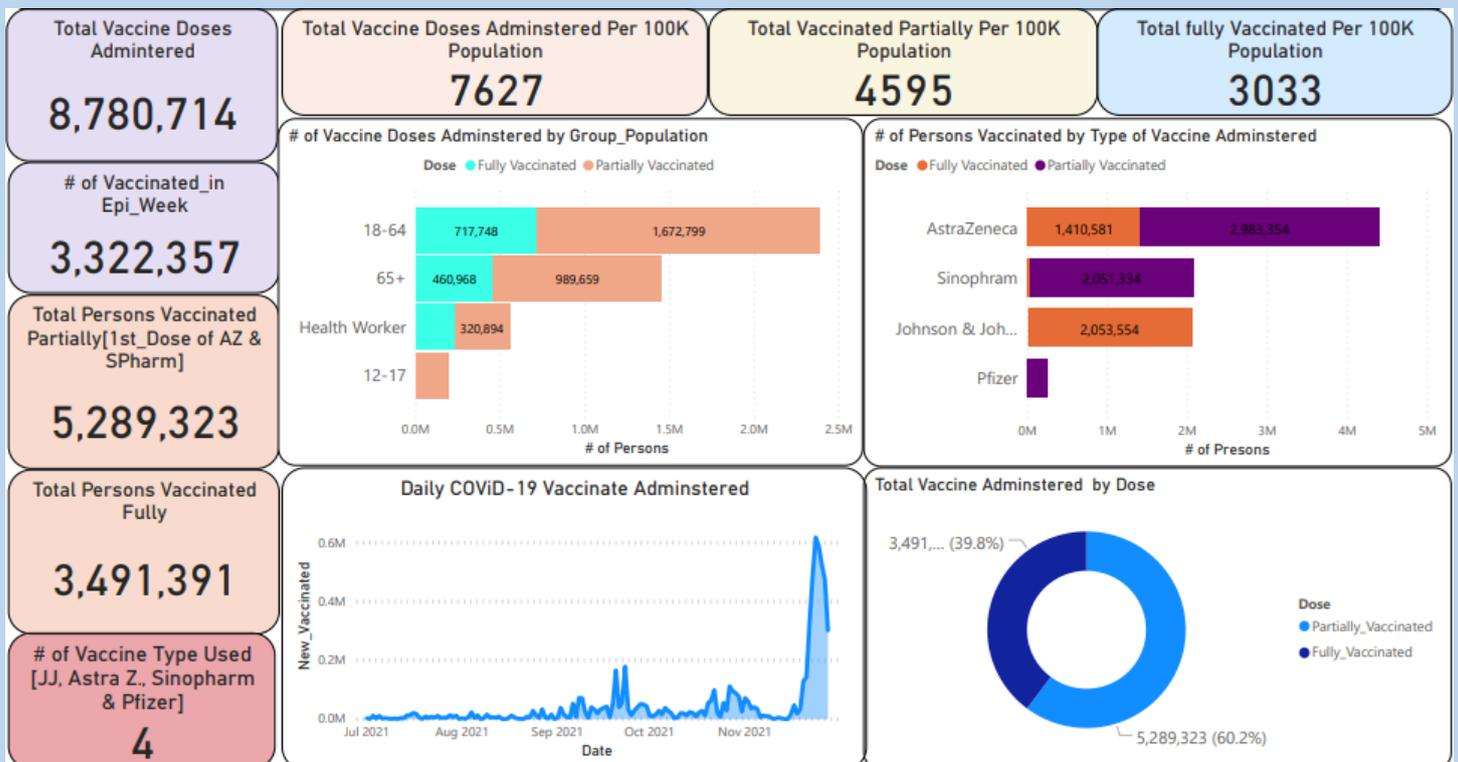


Figure 1: Summary of vaccination against COVID-19 in Ethiopia as of November 28, 2021

IV. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

a. Global Situation

- Globally, both the number of weekly COVID-19 cases and the number of deaths have increased.
- Over 7.8 million new cases and over 117,000 new deaths were reported during the week of 22 – 28 November 2021. Both number of cases and deaths in this week increased by 5% as compared to the previous week.
- As of November 28, 2021, a total of 250,456,576 COVID-19 cases and 4,911,612 deaths (CFR=1.96%) have occurred globally. Of the total cases and deaths reported since the beginning of the outbreak, 7,884,858 cases and 117,411 deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-47.
- The highest numbers of new cases in the last seven days were reported from the United States of America (1,695,975 new cases), Germany (534,520 new cases), The United Kingdom (453,401 new cases), The Russian Federation (402,719 new cases) and France (361,406 new cases).
- In Africa, as of November 28, 2021, a total of 8,530,056 cases and 217,286 deaths were reported across the continent (CFR=2.55%). Of these, 148,290 cases (24% increase compared to the previous week) and 3,397 deaths (16% increase compared to previous week) were reported during the Epi-Week-47.
- In Africa, the highest number of confirmed cases are reported from South Africa (45,600 new case) followed by Morocco (33,569 new cases).
- Ethiopia reported the highest number of COVID-19 confirmed cases in East Africa.

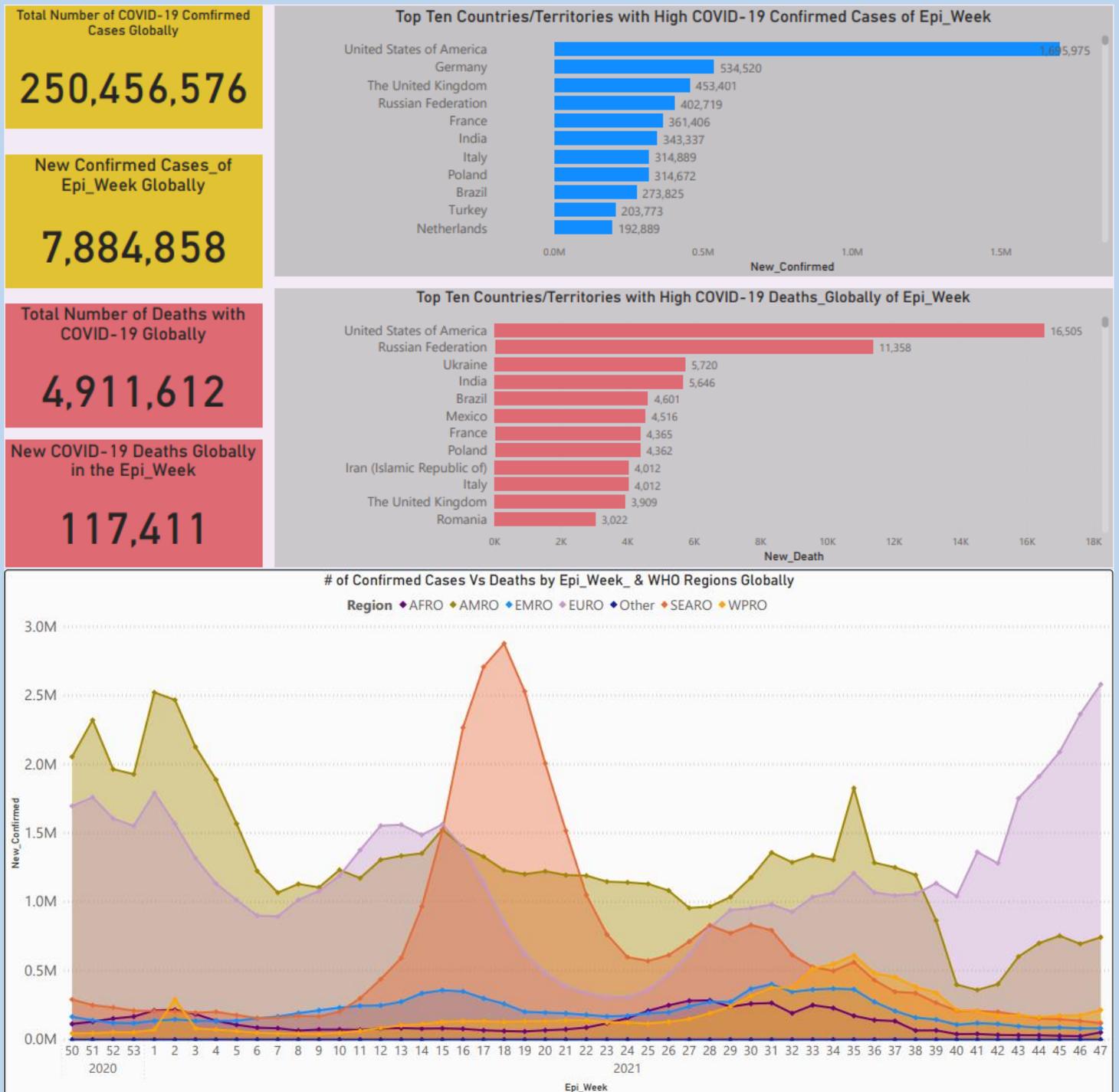


Figure 2: COVID-19 Global Situation Update as of November 28, 2021 (Source: WHO)

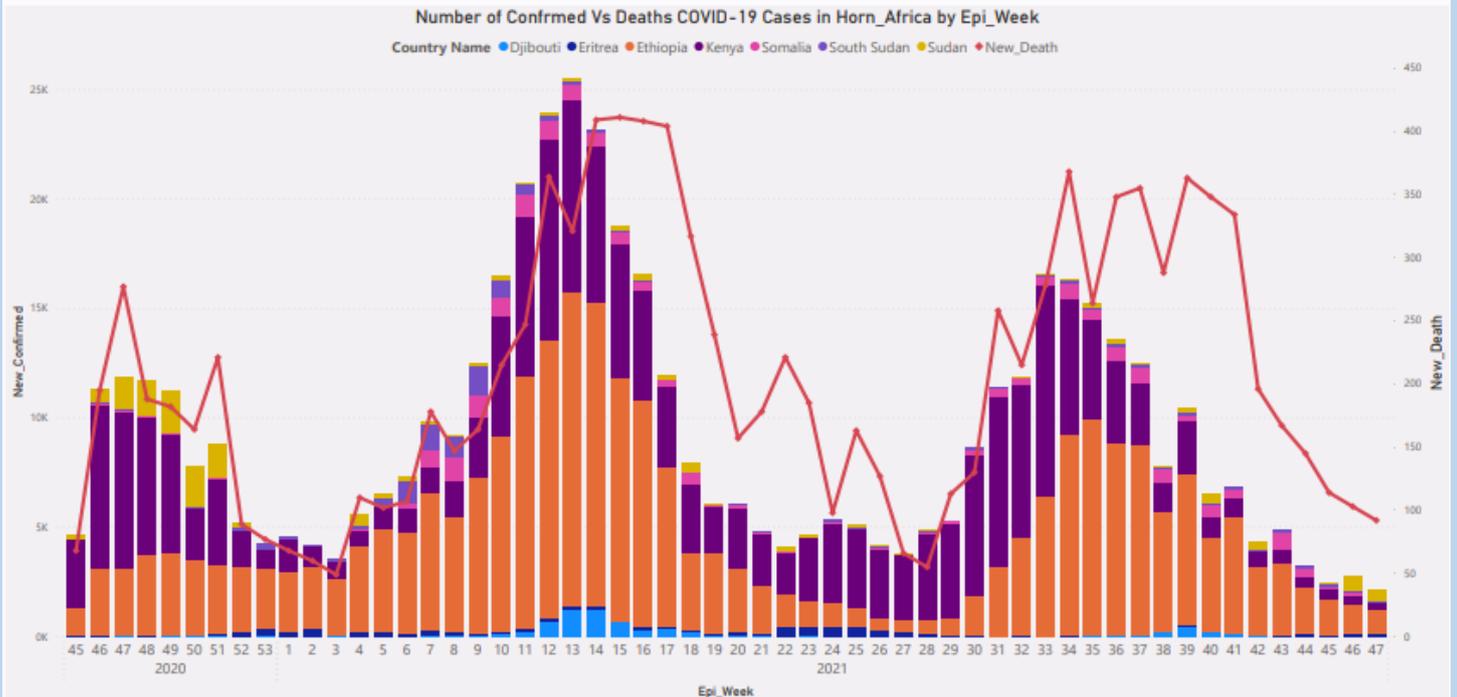
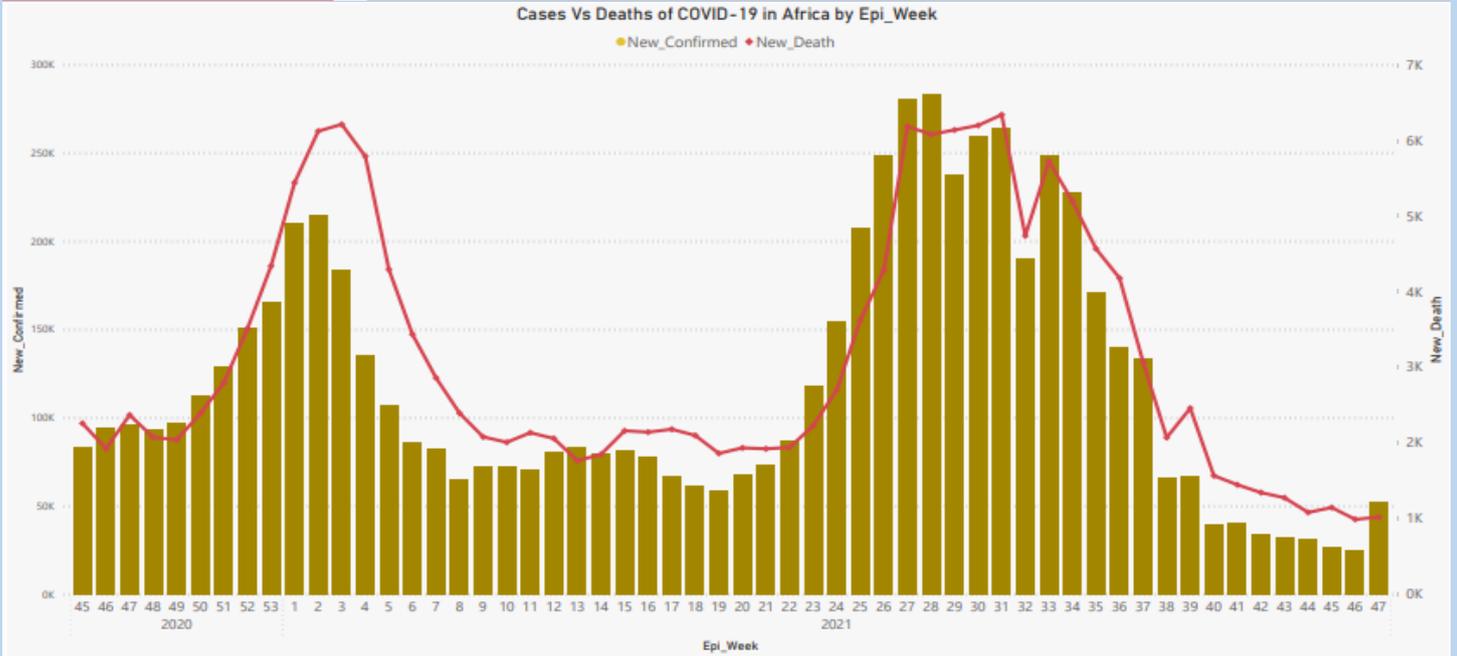
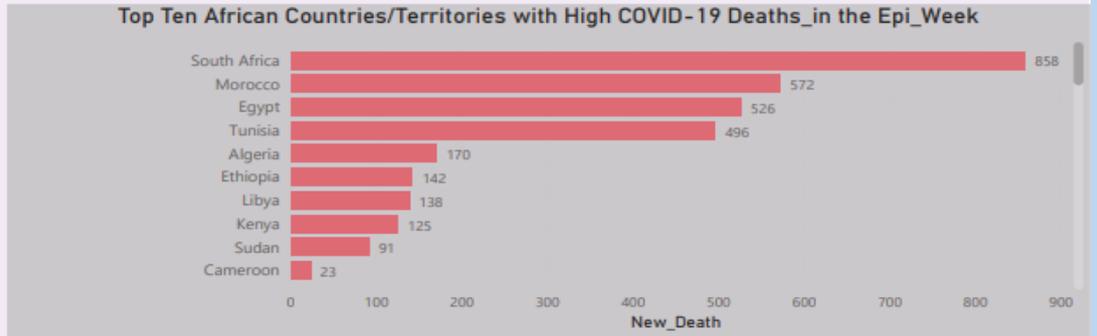
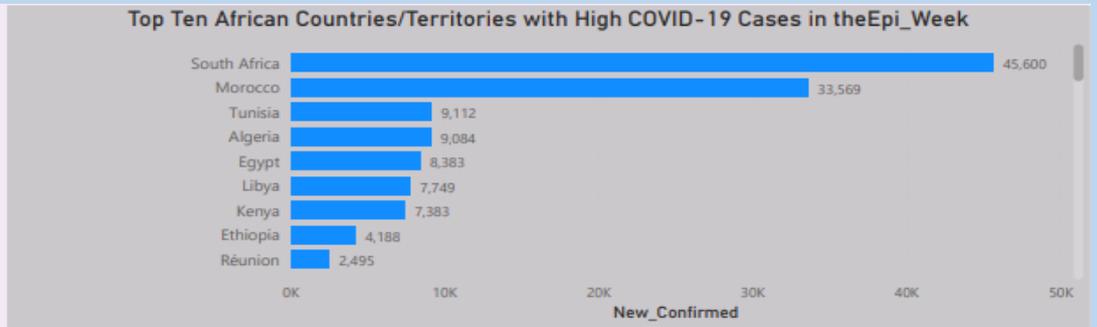
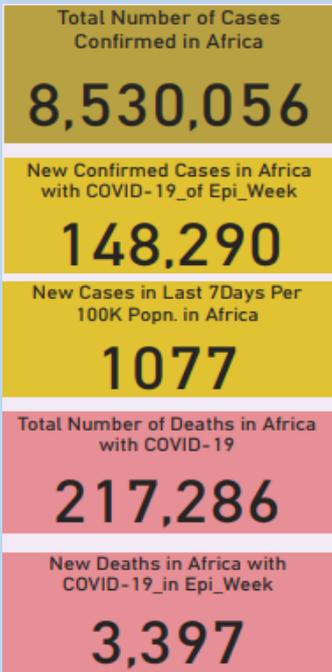


Figure 3: COVID-19 Situation Update in Africa as of November 28, 2021 (Source: WHO)

b. National COVID-19 situation:

- As of November 28, 2021, a total of 371,262 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 6,740 deaths were recorded in the country with a case fatality rate of 1.82%.
- One-thousand-three-hundred-seventy-eight (1,378) newly confirmed COVID-19 cases and 59 COVID-19 related deaths were reported during the Epi-Week-46.
- There is decrease in the number of cases for the last ten consecutive weeks and decrease in the number of deaths for the last eight consecutive weeks. In this week, there is 22% decrease in the number of COVID-19 confirmed cases and almost an equivalent 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-47 of 2021

Regions	New_Testeds	New_Cases	New_HF_Admission	New_Deaths	Positivity Rate
Addis Ababa	29969	626	81	19	2.0
Oromia	3621	102	53	14	2.6
SNNPR	2195	31	8	5	1.1
Dire Dawa	1880	119	7	3	6.1
Harari	1203	57	12	2	5.3
Sidama	1103	24	4	2	2.3
Afar	1033	9	0	0	0.7
Somali	602	16	0	0	2.3
Benishangul G	469	20	1	2	5.3
Amhara	314	56	37	11	18.3
Gambella	212	2	0	0	0.9
Tigray	0	0	0	0	
Total	42601	1062	203	58	4.3

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

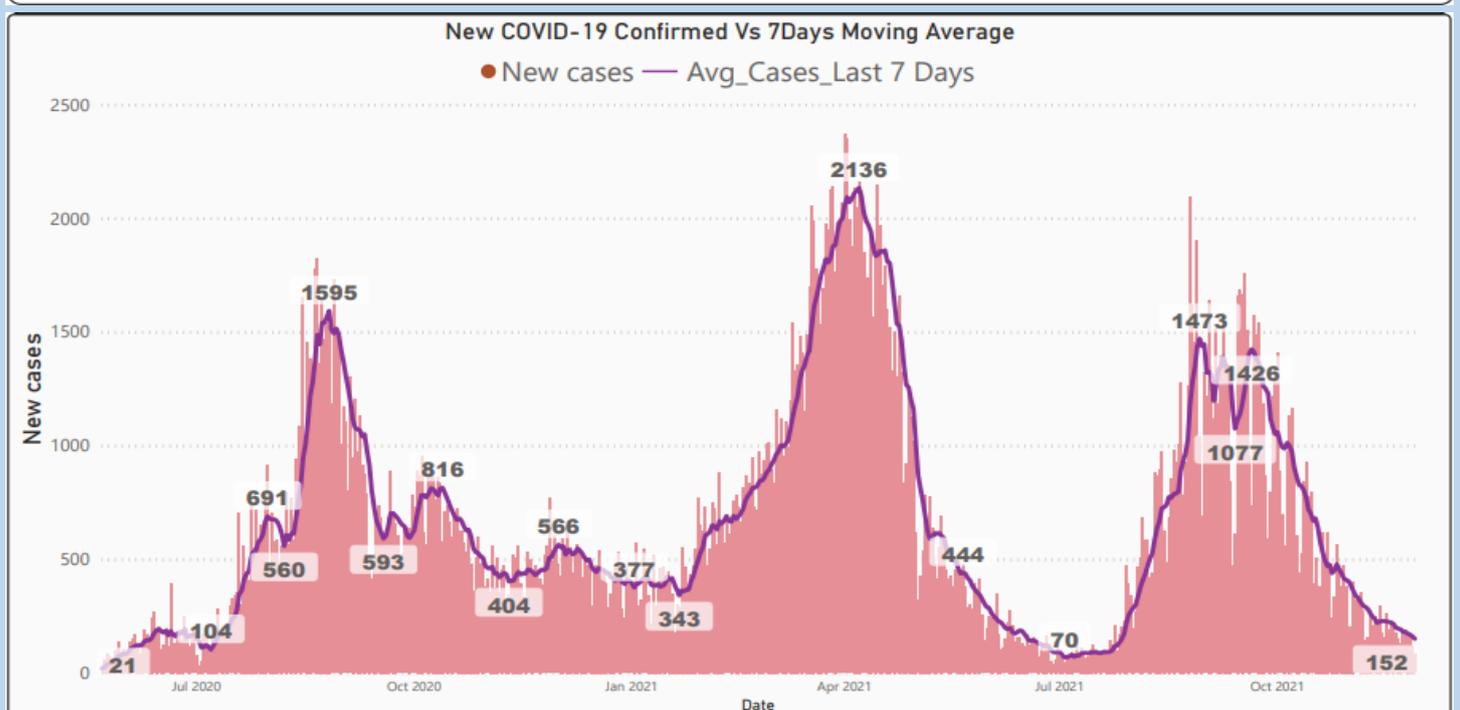
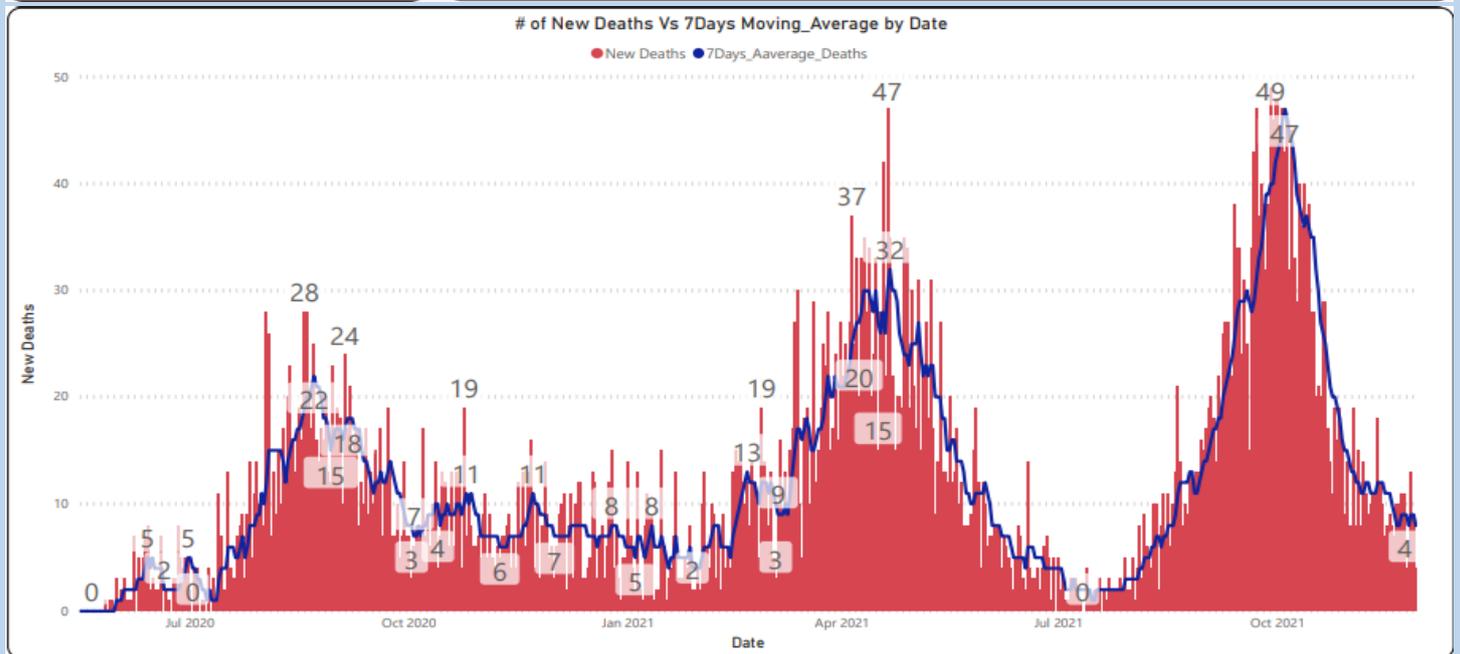
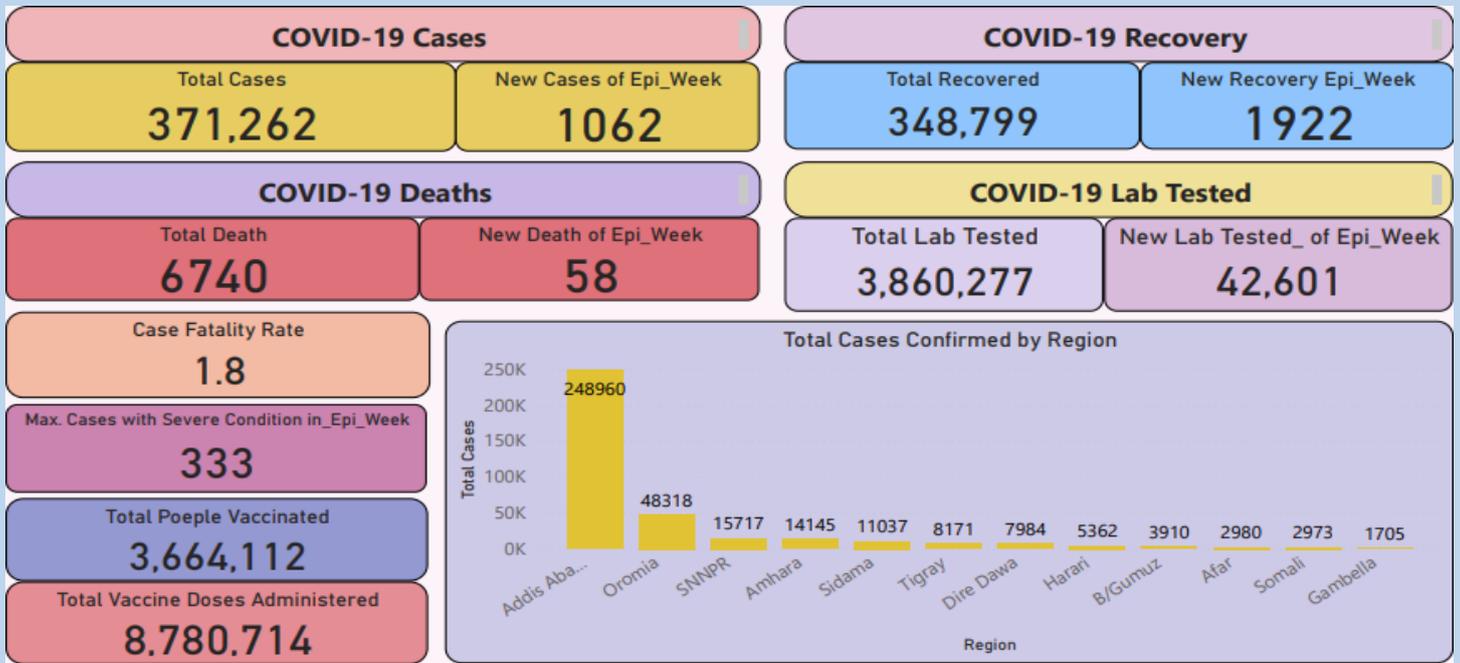


Figure 4: Summary of the COVID-19 situation in Ethiopia as of November 28, 2021, Ethiopia

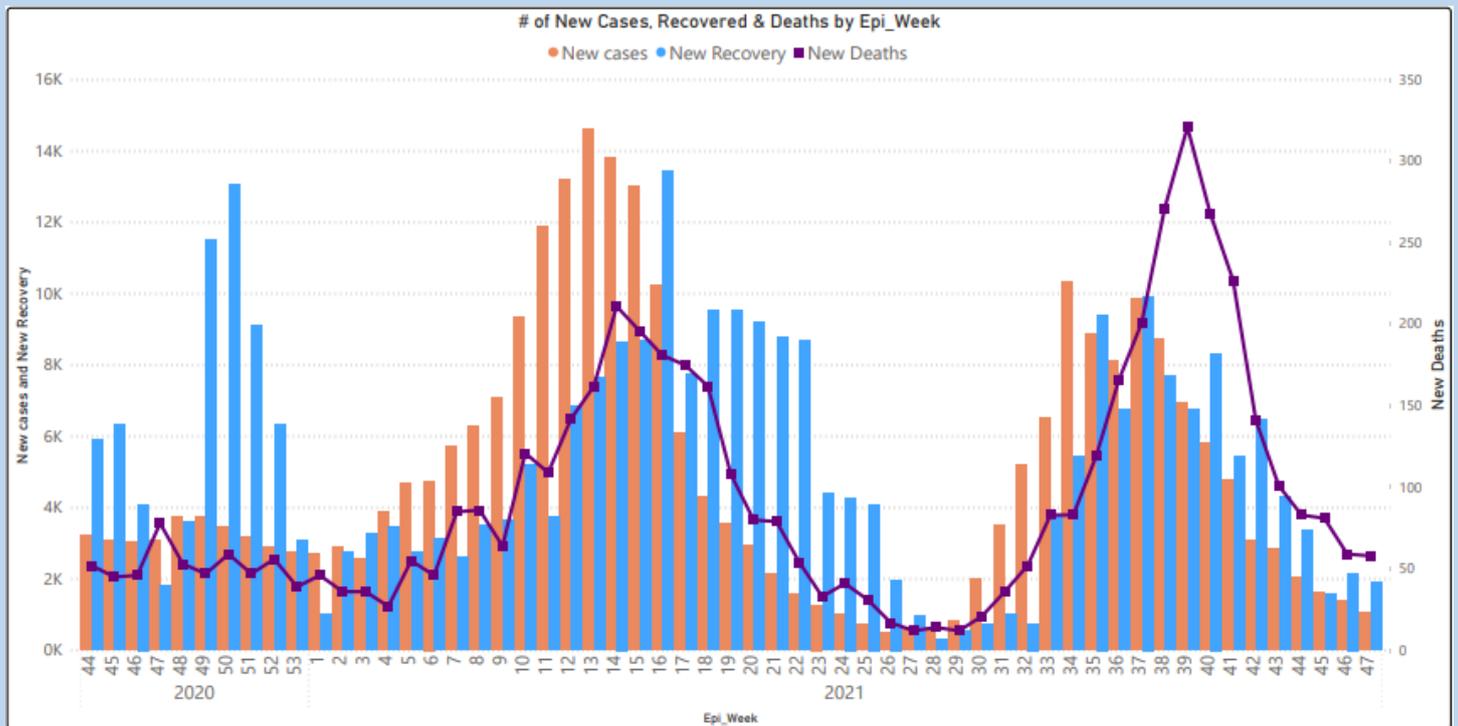


Figure 5: COVID-19 confirmed cases, recovery and death by Epi-Week as of November 28, 2021, Ethiopia

c. Other Epi-Surveillance Related Activities

There is ongoing travelers' health screening at point of entries (POEs), rumor collection, verification, investigation and information provision via toll free call center 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.

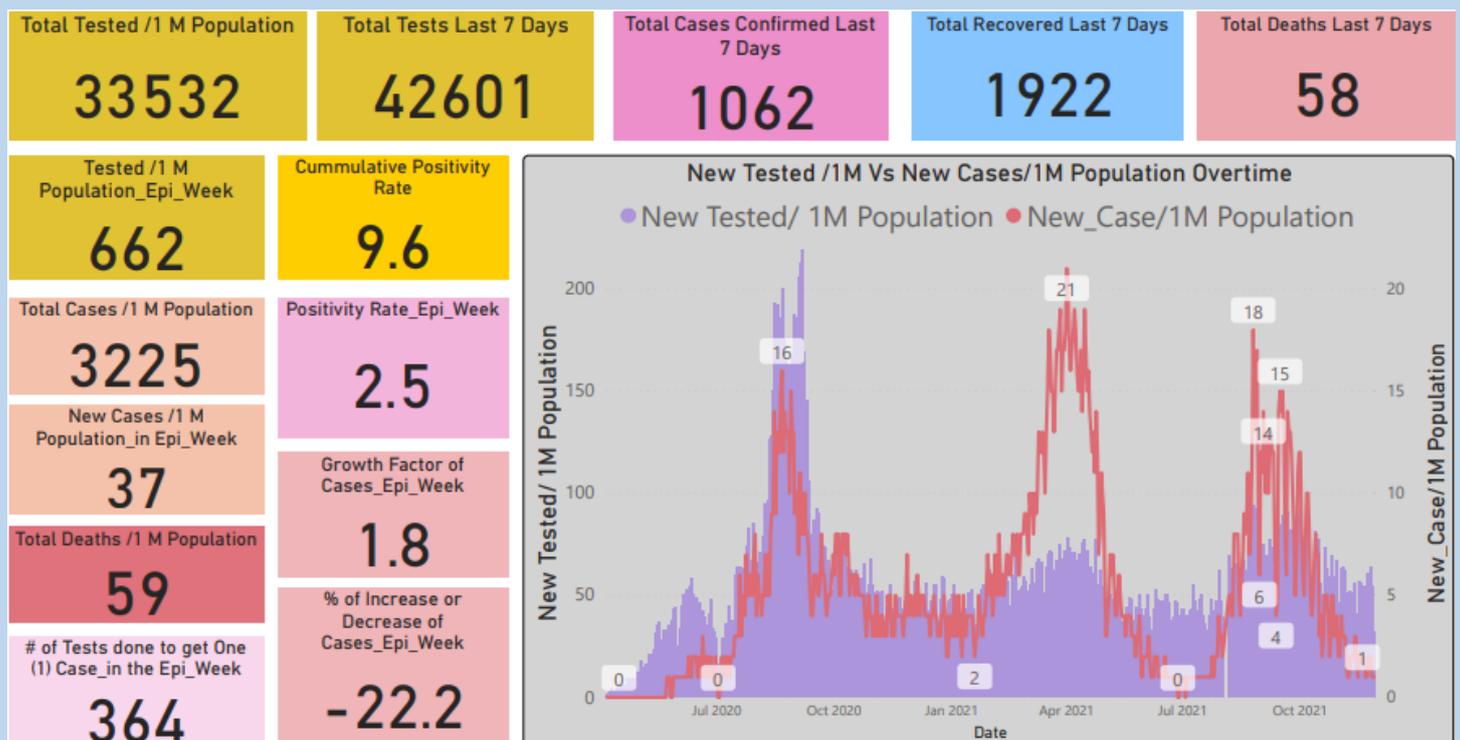


Figure 6: Summary of COVID-19 confirmed cases in Ethiopia as of November 28, 2021.

i. 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, Point of Entry (PoE), Community surveillance and Special Settings.
- As of November 28, 2021:
 - 393,033 rumors/alerts have been received and investigated.
 - 279,089 (71.01%) of the rumors/alerts have fulfilled the suspected case definition.
- 14,920 COVID-19 related calls are received through call centers in this Epi-week.

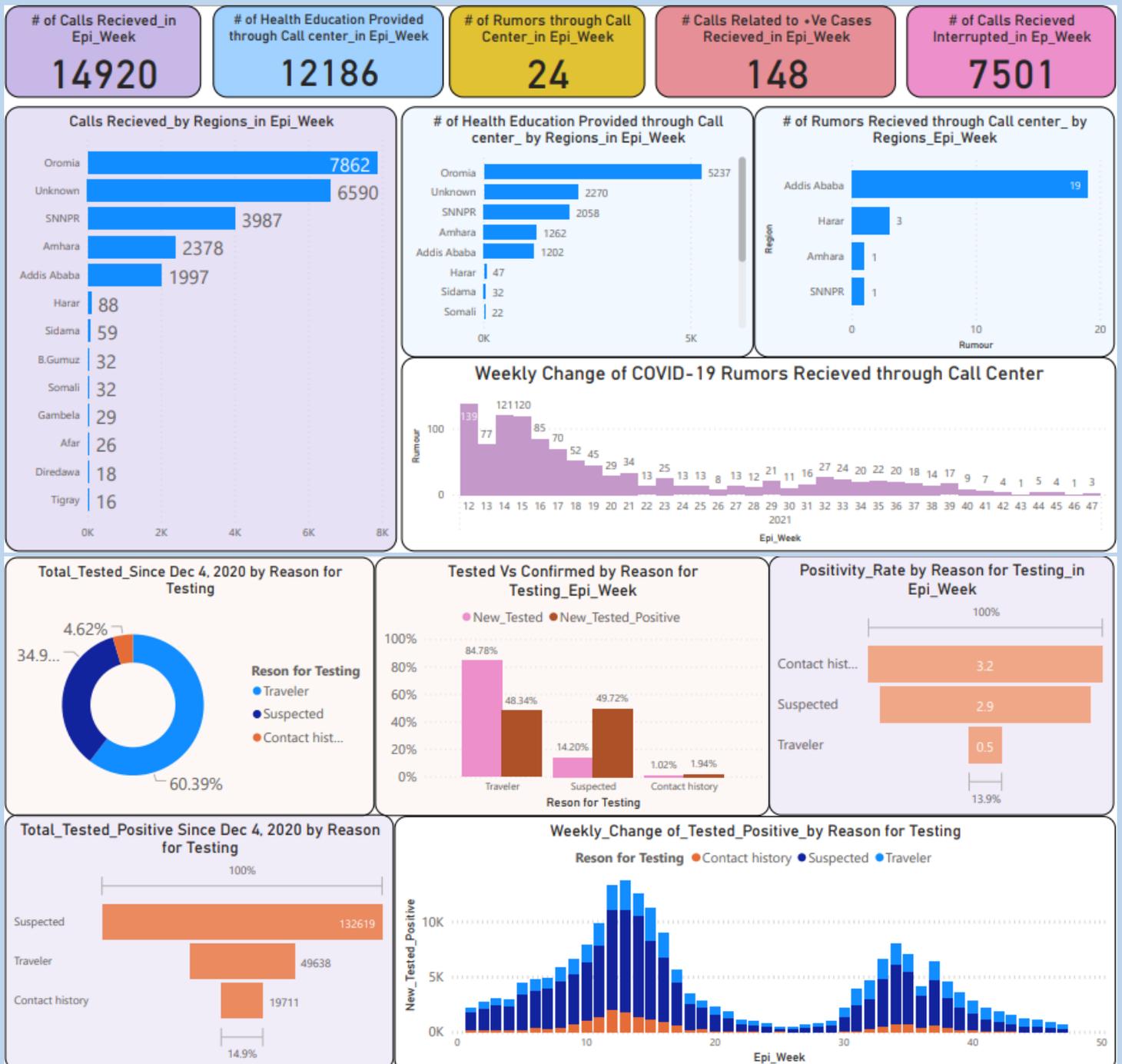


Figure 7: Summary of COVID-19 rumor/alert investigation as November 28, 2021, Ethiopia.

ii. Point of entry and Quarantine related activities

- Since the start of the outbreak, 2,956,273 passengers have been screened at the Point of Entries of Ethiopia and 881,146 (31%) of them were screened at Bole International Airport.
- Of the total passengers screened, 78,180 were screened for COVID-19 in the Epi-Week-47.
- As of November 28, 2021, among the passengers coming with COVID-19 PCR test result certificates 60 (none in Epi-week-47) passengers with PCR positive certificates were identified during health screening. A total of 95 (none in week-47) 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, 9,280 tests (none in week-47) are conducted among which 97 positive cases (none in week-47) are detected as of November 28, 2021.
- A total of 73,825 returnees were received through Bole International Airport since April 28, 2021. A total of 391 returnees were received in the Epi-week-47. The returnees are admitted to Wosen, Kotebe, Gurdsholla, Megenagna, Kirkos, Nifasilk Lafto, Gerji and Entoto returnee centers. 72,549 (98%) returnees are discharged and there are 1,276 returnees currently in returnees' centers as of November 28, 2021.

V. Laboratory related activities

- As of 28 November 2021, a total of 3,860,277 samples have been tested for COVID-19 by laboratories across the country.
- 42,601 laboratory tests were processed during the Epi-Week-47 which is an 11% increase compared to number of tests performed in the previous week.
- The laboratory test positivity rate for the Epi-Week-47 is 2.49%, which is lower than that of the preceding week (3.44%).
- Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Harari regional states and Dire Dawa city administration have reported positivity rates higher than the national weighted average (figure 9 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 505,015 laboratory tests are performed by Ag-RDT among which 8,884 is performed in the Epi-week-47 (figure 8 below).

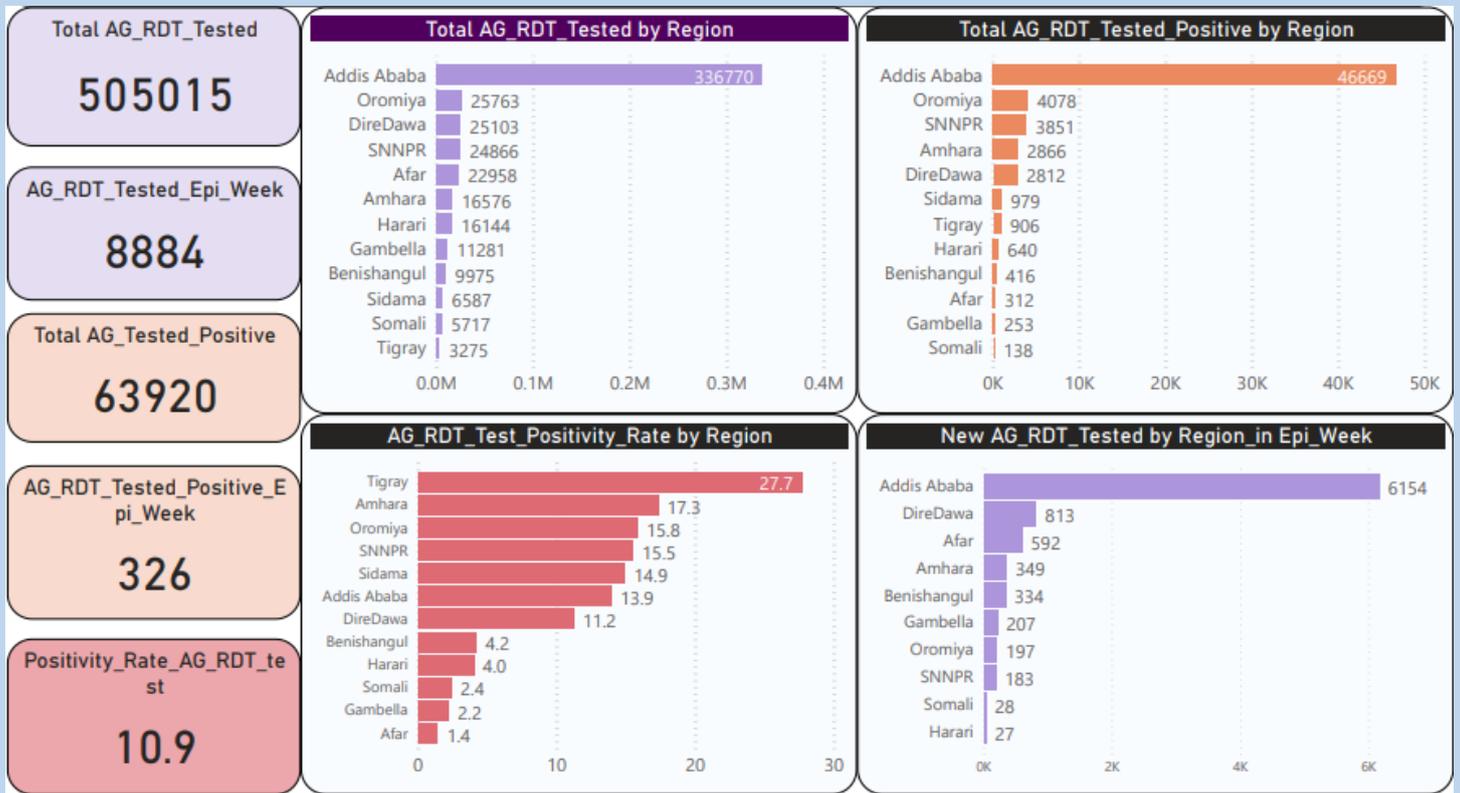
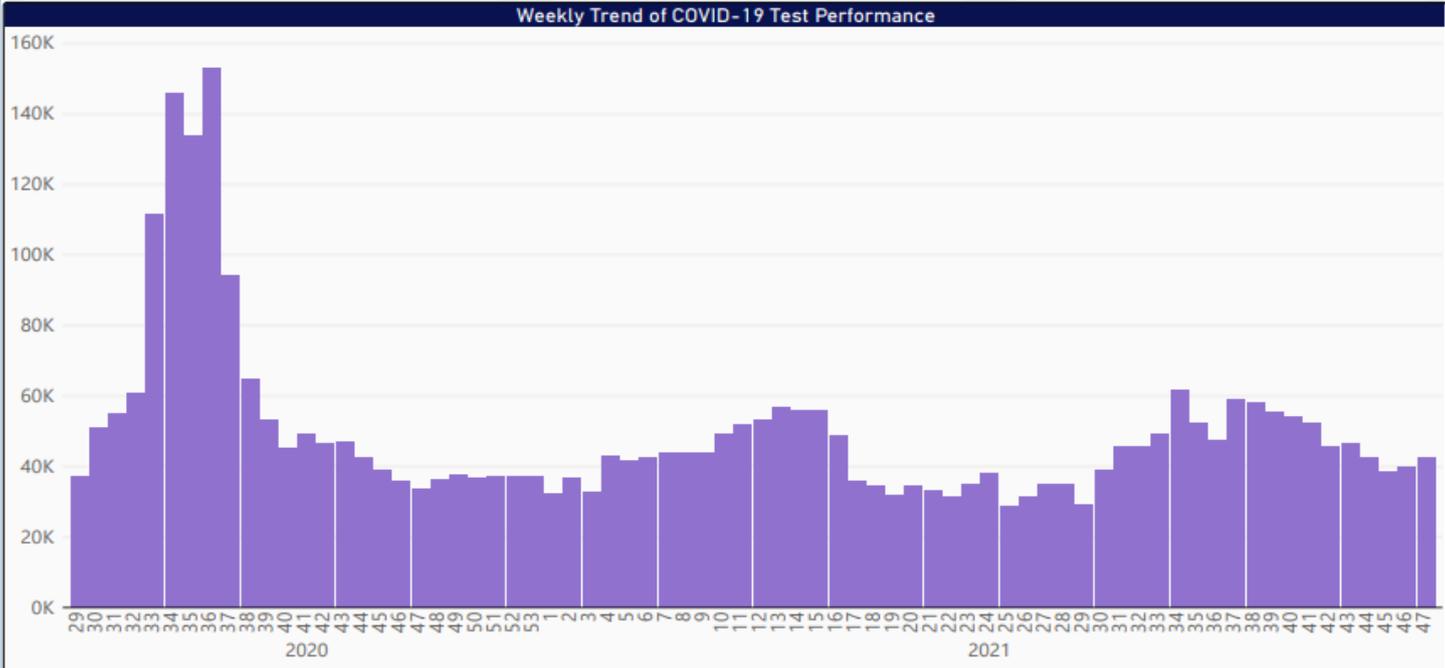
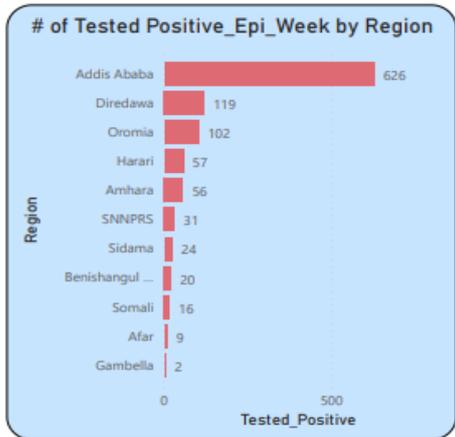
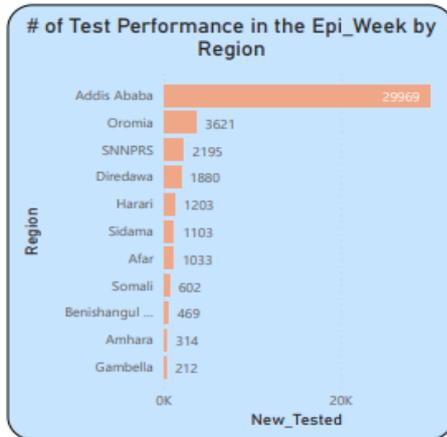
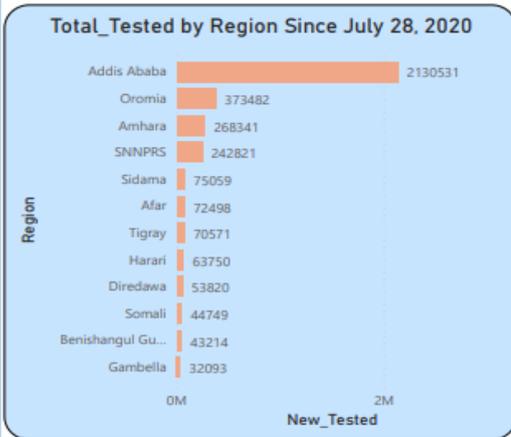


Figure 8: Update on laboratory tests performed by Ag-RDT, as of November 28, 2021

Total Tested 3860277	# of New Tested in the Epi_Week 42601	Total Tested / 1M Population 33532	New Tested / 1M Population of Ep_Week 662
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Region/City Admn	New_Tested	Tested_Positive	New_Deaths	Positivity_Rate
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Tigray	0	0	0	
Total	42601	1062	58	4.3

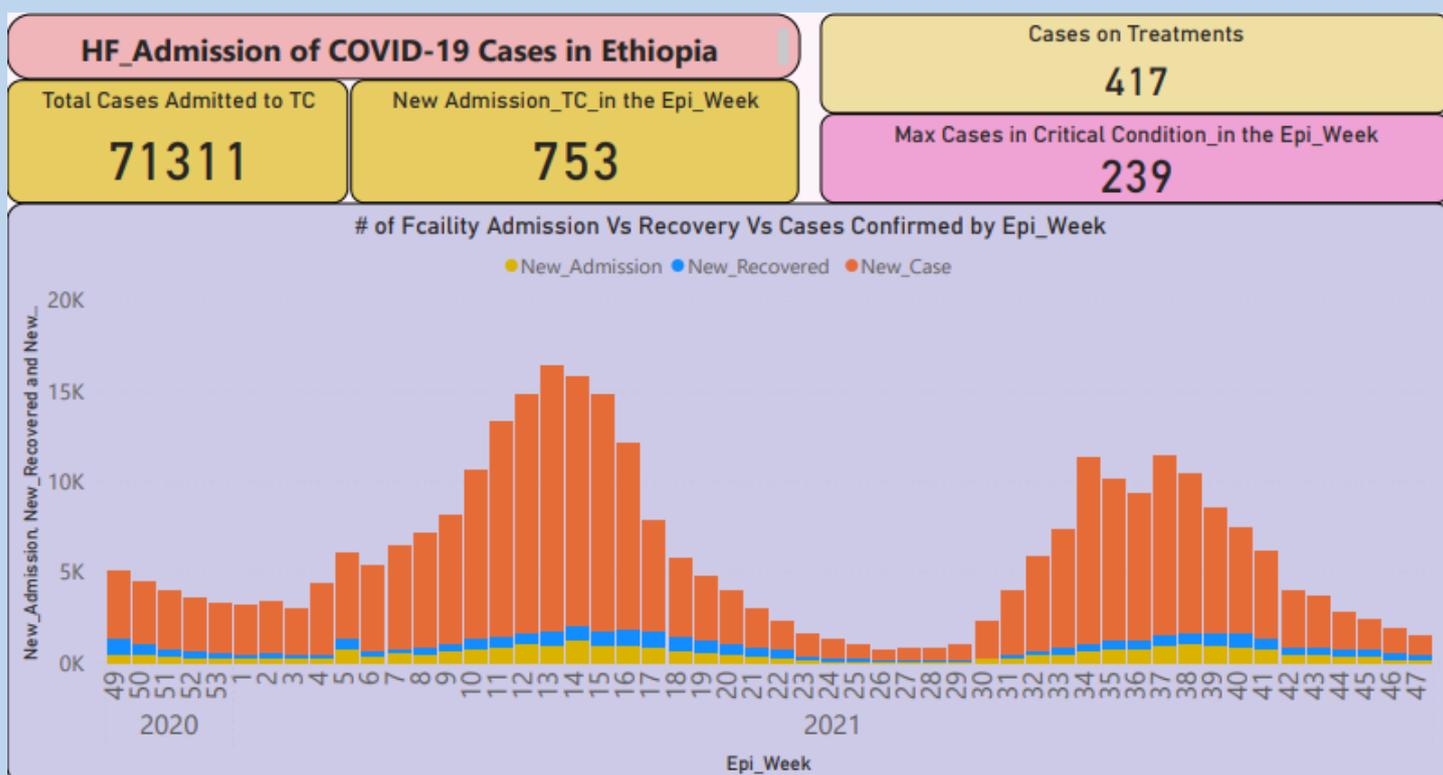
***** Positivity Rate is average of Regional Distn of Rates

Figure 9: Summary of COVID-19 laboratory testing as of November 28, 2021, Ethiopia.

VI. Case Management and Facility Readiness

a. COVID-19 treatment center

- There were total of 1,922 newly recovered COVID-19 cases during the Epi-Week-47, bringing the total number of recovered cases to 348,799 (both from COVID-19 treatment center and from HBIC). This brings the overall recovery rate to 94%.
- On November 28, 2021, there are 233 cases in severe condition which is lower than the maximum number of daily cases in severe condition in the previous week (260).



HF=Health Facilities TC=Treatment Center

Figure 10: Summary of COVID-19 cases in Health Facilities/Treatment centers, as of November 28, 2021.

Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 cases at treatment centers as of November 28, 2021

Regions	Total_Case	New_Case	Total_Admission	New_Admission	Total_Death	Total_Recovered	On_Treatment	Critical_Case
Addis Ababa	248960	60	36229	8	3708	30751	147	98
Oromia	48318	8	9451	4	946	8367	136	55
SNNPR	15717	3	5164	0	251	4942	8	2
Amhara	14145	9	5326	2	414	4864	46	29
Sidama	11037	0	3697	0	223	3404	6	5
Tigray	8171	0	5290	0	59	5224	0	0
Dire Dawa	7984	2	1446	0	130	1300	16	10
Harari	5362	2	1415	1	180	1216	15	15
Benishangul G	3910	1	1015	0	29	978	10	0
Afar	2980	0	826	0	5	812	0	0
Somali	2973	0	770	0	96	638	33	19
Gambella	1705	0	682	0	8	674	0	0

b. Home Based Isolation and Care (HBIC):

- So far, 286,450 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been on HBIC. Of them 285,469 (99.65%) have recovered and 47 (0.016%) died.
- Of these, 897 cases have been enrolled to HBIC and 1,676 cases have recovered in the Epi-Week-46.
- As of November 28, 2021, there are 2,169 cases on HBIC.
- So far, 2,546 (27 in the Epi-week-47) of the cases have been transferred from treatment centers to HBIC after improvement.
- So far, 1,131 (none in the Epi-week-47) of the cases have been transferred from HBIC to treatment centers for better care.

VII. Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

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



Figure 11: COVID-19 situation update as of November 28, 2021 shared on social media.

VIII. 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 once in two weeks.

IX. Challenges and Way Forward

a. Challenges

- Emergence of new variant of COVID-19 globally and high risk it poses in different perspectives including health and socio economic aspects.
- Competing priority of the leadership related to the current conflict in the country.
- 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 surveillance including genomic surveillances
- Enhancing the COVID-19 vaccination campaign.
- Enhancing law enforcement to enhance public health and social measures by all responsible bodies.
- Intensifying risk communication and community engagement activities.
- Strengthening collaboration and coordination with key stakeholders and partners.
- 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.
- 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:

- COVID-19 vaccines should be provided to the public only at public health facilities and free of charge.
- 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/ephipa ge/		
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/UCvvTzeY-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 Bureau	Regional Health	https://www.facebook.com/srhbdot.com/...	6599	somalipheoc@gmail.com
SNNP Bureau	Regional Health	https://www.facebook.com/snnprhealthbureau/?ref=br_rs	6929	snnppheoc@gmail.com
Tigray Bureau	Regional Health	https://www.facebook.com/tigrayrb/	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

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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