Since 31 December 2019, the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific (WPRO) has been responding to the outbreak that would eventually become the COVID-19 pandemic. WHO is working with countries across the Region, analyzing the latest data and science, informing and engaging the public, providing updates on the current situation, coordinating with partners, distributing life-saving supplies, advancing preparedness and strengthening health systems. This weekly situation report highlights the most recent developments in the regional response.

**WEEKLY SITUATION UPDATE**

- In the Western Pacific Region, a total of 19 countries and areas have reported COVID-19 cases since December 2019. Between 6 and 12 May 2020, there has been an increase of 8,004 cases including 240 deaths reported in the region, bringing the cumulative total to 161,872 cases including 6,527 deaths (PFC 4.0%), as of 12 May 2020, 10:00 (GMT+8). Figure 1 shows the geographical distribution of COVID-19 cases. The colour represents the number of cases reported in the last 7 days.
- Globally, as of 11 May 2020, 10:00 CEST, there have been 4,006,257 COVID-19 cases including 278,892 deaths in 214 countries/states/territories (7.0% PFC). Many countries that have experienced large outbreaks have also reported considerable excess mortality. Although AMRO and EURO are the most affected regions, accounting for 80% of all cases and 93% of deaths reported globally, an upward trend continues in AFRO, EMRO and SEARO.

*Figure 1. Countries, areas or territories with reported confirmed cases of COVID-19, 12 May 2020 10:00 (GMT+8)*
WHO has been supporting Pacific Island countries and territories to respond and to simultaneously prepare, prepare, prepare. Through a COVID-19 Pacific Joint Incident Management Team (JIMT), WHO is coordinating with partners to bring together resources and to assist Pacific Island countries and territories’ readiness to delay and control the spread of the virus. This includes mobilizing additional contact tracing and rapid response teams, strengthening testing capacity, and supporting countries and territories to implement physical distancing and other non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) early on.

The arrival of 2 million surgical masks has replenished the regional stockpile. The Operational Support and Logistics (OSL) team continues creating and dispatching kits of essential items, comprising of personal protective equipment (PPE) and finger pulse oximeters, to be dispatched to priority countries. Over the past week, items dispatched include 954 goggles, 1,215 face shields, 575,000 surgical masks, 2,195 respirators, 65,280 examination gloves, 672 gowns, 555 hand sanitizer bottles and 500 finger pulse oximeters.

In the past week, national response plans from the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa and Viet Nam were uploaded to the Partners Platform.

A further 13 consultants were added to the response efforts in the region, including deployments to Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. The HR plan has been updated and focus has shifted to ensuring capacity can be maintained until December 2020.

Leadership and Management
- The Incident Management Support Team (IMST) comprises of six pillars: Information & Planning, Health Service Delivery, Partner Coordination, Strategic Communications, Finance & Administration, and Operations Support and Logistics; with focal points for all critical functions identified.
- The IMST convenes twice daily for pillar and country updates as well as dissemination of relevant, response-critical information.
- The Regional human resource plan was updated this week to ensure a sustained response in the Region for the rest of 2020. Constant and frequent changes to travel restrictions continue to cause difficulty in deploying technical support to countries.

Finance and Administration
- Thirteen consultancy contracts have been processed in the past week, bringing the total deployments to 136. Ongoing travel restrictions continue to limit the provision of in-country support but remote support is being provided when travel is not possible.
- WPRO is finalizing distribution of available funding resources to eight country offices according to immediate country needs.
Health Service Delivery

Health Systems

- WPRO is exploring the potential impact of decreases in government revenue (due to the economic crisis and NPIs) on health, including support to country preparedness, health expenditure, supplementary budget planning, and public financial management policies for 2020 and 2021.

Community Engagement

- The Community Engagement team has sourced funding for three country offices, supporting them to engage with hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations. This funding will be used for two-way communication through multiple trusted channels, as well as to strengthen and leverage existing networks and empower communities to initiate ground-up solutions to existing challenges.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) and Clinical Management

- The Western Pacific Regional IPC network, established in March 2020, now has over 285 members representing 27 countries. Network members are invited to webinars conducted with regional IPC experts from WHO and partner institutions. Webinar sessions host more than 170 participants per session and topics are based on requests received from countries.

- WPRO is developing a set of audit tools to assess IPC clinical processes in health care facilities, including triage and isolation areas. This work is a product of a virtual IPC consultation with Bach Mai Hospital, Hanoi, Viet Nam, supported by WHO Viet Nam, and will be used to support health care facilities across the region.

Laboratory

- Between 7 and 12 May, the Laboratory team organized shipments of 70 000 swabs and virus transport medium to Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, PNG, Philippines, Viet Nam, French Polynesia. Twenty thousand swabs and universal transport medium have been sent to Australia to be delivered to Pacific Island countries and territories to support swift testing of COVID-19.

Mental Health

- In collaboration with partners, WPRO supported the adaptation and translation of “My Hero is You”, a children’s story book for ages 6-11 in several countries in our Region. The additional languages include Tagalog, Jarai, Cham, Mong, Khmer, Hoa, Ede and Phu Tai. The aim of the book is to help children learn how to cope and manage their emotions, as well as the psychosocial impact of Covid-19.

Information and Planning

Surveillance

- WPRO classifies transmission according to three categories: imported cases (stage 1), localised community transmission (stage 2) and large-scale community transmission (stage 3). Available data indicate most countries and areas in the Western Pacific Region are experiencing stage 1 or stage 2 transmission but have not seen stage 3 transmission. In most countries, the number of reported cases is decreasing, after the first

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1 Imported cases (stage 1): most cases have been acquired outside the location of reporting or are directly linked to imported cases, and the generation of secondary cases is limited.

2 Localised community transmission (stage 2): local transmission has been detected (i.e., cases cannot be linked to importation), but most sources of infection are identified, and most cases are occurring within a defined geographical area.

3 Large-scale community transmission (stage 3): cases cannot be easily linked to a source of infection, persons in the area are at high risk for infection.
or second wave of cases. Several countries and areas are reporting low case numbers or no reported cases for more than seven days. Some countries are starting to lift their non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs).

- The Information and Planning team is revising the regional dashboard and aims to include sub-national data on the epidemiology and healthcare capacity for all countries and areas in the region. Activities have continued to strengthen existing surveillance systems into a multisource assessment platform to detect cases, assess transmission, mobilize resources, and make decisions on NPIs.
- WPRO is supporting COVID-19 responders in implementing Go.Data. Go.Data, managed by the Global Outbreak and Response Network (GOARN), is an online/offline outbreak investigation tool for field data collection during public health emergencies. The tool includes functions for case investigation, contact tracing, and visualization of chains of transmission. Around 30% of countries in the region are using Go.Data and there are ongoing actions and trainings in countries to support WHO country offices, governments and national institutions to implement the tool.

Table 1. Countries or areas with reported laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths, as of 12 May 2020, 10:00 (GMT+8) (n=161,872)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO Region</th>
<th>Country, territory, area</th>
<th>Case numbers</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Change in 7-day average</th>
<th>Days since last reported case</th>
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<tr>
<td>WPRO</td>
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<td>84,451</td>
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IHR and Border Measures

- As countries are preparing to ease travel restrictions, WPRO and HQ colleagues are working together to develop content for webinars aiming to help countries in the region to prepare for cases of ill travellers, as well as preparedness at points of entry.
- WPRO has received information from 32 countries and areas implementing additional measures at borders. Some countries and areas with consistently fewer case numbers are discussing how to reduce measures safely and in parallel with the easing of domestic travel restrictions.
**Operations Support and Logistics**

- The arrival of 2 million surgical masks has replenished the regional stockpile. The Operational Support and Logistics (OSL) team continues creating and dispatching kits of essential items, comprising of personal protective equipment (PPE) and finger pulse oximeters, to be dispatched to priority countries. Over the past week, items dispatched include 954 goggles, 1 215 face shields, 575 000 surgical masks, 2 195 respirators, 65 280 examination gloves, 672 gowns, 555 hand sanitizer bottles and 500 finger pulse oximeters.
- The OSL team, together with the Partner Coordination pillar, is supporting WHO country offices to submit requests for critical supplies in the new Supply Portal.
- Support is being provided to HQ in establishing distribution hubs in China to supply critical items globally, including to countries and areas in our region.

**Partner Coordination**

- A Supply Portal has been added to the COVID-19 Partners Platform to streamline procurement and distribution of essential supplies. WPRO continues to work closely with HQ to support countries in utilizing the COVID-19 Partners Platform and Supply Portal. In the past week, national response plans from the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa and Vietnam were uploaded to the Partners Platform.

**Strategic Communication**

- WPRO, working alongside country offices and partners, is supporting countries to communicate the “new normal” - that is the way society will function in the mid- to long-term until an effective vaccine is developed for COVID-19 or the pandemic comes to an end. The first phase of this support includes:
  - Key messages to help leaders explain the new normal to the public
  - A content plan (e.g. materials on back to work, back to school etc)
  - A webinar on 13 May in which 71 participants came together to share best practices across countries
- **New materials are available** on:
  - Staying healthy while working from home
  - Combatting stigma
  - Shopping safely during the COVID-19 pandemic and making smart food choices
Evidence shows that stigma due to #coronavirus leads to:

- Reduction in people seeking medical care or testing
- Reduction in people adhering to interventions (including self-isolation)
  - This can lead to cases not being reported, and more people being exposed
  - Which makes responding to the outbreak more difficult.

#SolidarityNotStigma

Stigma and discrimination towards one person is a risk to all people. Let’s support our family, friends, neighbours and frontline responders in the fight against COVID-19.

#SolidarityNotStigma

More WHO advice for the public on COVID-19