



MULTI-COUNTRY MONKEYPOX OUTBREAK: SITUATION UPDATE

The situational report updates the epidemiological and public health response activities on the ongoing multi-country monkeypox outbreak.

The situation in South Africa

Since 22 June 2022 to date (13 September 2022), there have been five unlinked laboratory-confirmed monkeypox cases reported in South Africa with no deaths. No new laboratory-confirmed case has been reported since the last case reported on 17 August 2022. The cases in South Africa were reported from Limpopo (n=1), Gauteng (n=2) and Western Cape (n=2). At the time of this report, there have been no secondary cases linked to the five confirmed cases.

From 25 May to 7 September 2022, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases conducted 372 monkeypox laboratory tests (PCR) from individuals suspected of monkeypox disease within South Africa (n=258) and other African countries (n=114). This testing volume does not account for the testing conducted by private-sector laboratories. Full genetic sequencing for the first two cases reported (i.e., the first cases to be identified in Gauteng and in Western Cape Province) was conducted. The viral genomes clustered in the B.1 lineage of the Western Africa clade with other viral genomes associated with cases of the current multi-country outbreak.

Even though the risk of monkeypox to the general South African public is considered low, healthcare workers should be on high alert and maintain a high index of suspicion for any individuals presenting with an unexplained acute rash or skin lesions **AND** one or more of the following signs or symptoms: headache, acute onset of fever (>38.5°C), lymphadenopathy (swollen lymph nodes), myalgia (muscle pain/body aches) and backache **AND** for which the following differential diagnoses are excluded: chickenpox, measles, bacterial skin infections, syphilis, molluscum contagiosum, allergic reactions and other locally relevant common cause of papular or vesicular rash. For more information on monkeypox preparedness and response activities, visit <https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/monkeypox/>

On 23 July 2022, the WHO Director-General declared this outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) and issued temporary recommendations for countries in order to stop transmission and contain the outbreak. Several actions have been undertaken to address the requirements imposed through the WHO and related to the PHEIC status of monkeypox. In summary, a national risk assessment and WHO-mediated gap analysis have been conducted, and a multi-sectoral action plan has been developed. Discussions are also underway to determine the need for monkeypox vaccines and possible strategies for access to monkeypox vaccines. Steps have also been taken to improve surveillance through employing an active case finding approach in partnership with non-governmental organizations, and improved accessibility of testing aimed at the at risk population.

Global situation

Since January 2022 to 13 September 2022, a total of 57 605 laboratory-confirmed monkeypox cases, including 22 deaths, have been reported from 102 countries/areas/territories across all six WHO Regions (European Region, Region of the Americas, Eastern Mediterranean Region, Western Pacific Region, South-East Asia Region and African Region). The majority of the cases have been reported from the WHO Region of the Americas with 33 162 confirmed cases and the WHO European Region with 23 628 confirmed cases. The African Region is the third region reporting more cases with 585 laboratory-confirmed cases. The 22 monkeypox-associated deaths reported includes eight deaths that occurred outside of Central and West Africa. These eight deaths were reported from Spain (n=2), Brazil (n=2), Ecuador (n=1), Cuba (n=1), Belgium (n=1) and India (n=1). Africa Region reported 14 deaths from Nigeria (n=6), Central African Republic (n=2), Cameroon (n=2) and Ghana (n=4). In the ongoing 2022 multi-country monkeypox outbreak, males aged between 18 - 44 years and males who self-identify as men who have sex with men (MSM) and have reported recent sexual activities with one or multiple partners continues to be disproportionately affected, except in the West and Central Africa countries.

The latest updates on the global situation can be accessed at

https://worldhealthorg.shinyapps.io/mpx_global/; <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/monkeypox-situation-update>; <https://map.monkeypox.global.health/country>;
<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/world-map.html>;
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/situation-reports>.