



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 17 August 2022, no new cases of monkeypox have been confirmed in South Africa. From 22 June 2022 to date (19 October 2022), there have been five unlinked laboratory-confirmed monkeypox cases reported in South Africa with no deaths. The cases in South Africa were reported from Limpopo (n=1), Gauteng (n=2) and Western Cape (n=2). There have been no secondary cases linked to the five confirmed cases.

From 25 May to 19 October 2022, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases conducted 391 monkeypox laboratory tests (PCR) from individuals suspected of monkeypox disease within South Africa (n=272) and other African countries (n=119). 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. The 3rd meeting of the International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee regarding the multi-country monkeypox outbreak is set to take place on 20 October 2022. Several actions have been undertaken in South Africa 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 should the need arise. 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 18 October 2022, 73 436 laboratory-confirmed monkeypox cases, including 29 deaths, have been reported from 109 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 47 215 confirmed cases and the WHO European Region with 25 056 confirmed cases. The African Region is the third region reporting more cases with 869 laboratory-confirmed cases. While some countries continue to report new cases, **the number of reported cases globally is still on a downward trend**. The number of weekly reported new cases globally has decreased by 21% in week 41 (10 Oct - 16 Oct, n = 2,167 cases) compared to week 40 (03 Oct - 09 Oct, n = 2,730 cases). The 29 monkeypox-associated deaths reported includes 16 deaths that occurred outside of Central and West Africa. These 16 deaths were reported from Brazil (n=6), Spain (n=2), USA (n=2), Belgium (n=1), Cuba (n=1), Czechia (n=1), Ecuador (n=1), India (n=1) and Sudan (n=1). Africa Region corrected reporting of 13 deaths from Nigeria (n=7), 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>.