



This Situation Report is jointly issued by PNG National Department of Health (NDOH) and World Health Organization (WHO) once weekly. This Report is not comprehensive and covers information received as of reporting date.

Situation Summary and Highlights

- As of 28 November, PNG has officially reported a cumulative total of 35,090 confirmed cases of COVID-19 including 545 COVID-19 confirmed deaths.
- A total of 618 newly diagnosed COVID cases were reported including 17 known deaths in the last 7 days.
- 51 new delta cases were reported, increasing the cumulative number of delta cases in country to 349.
- Over 206,259 people are fully vaccinated, representing 11% of the government’s 20% target for 2021 Phase I COVID-19 vaccinations. Over 275,773 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Deputy Controller of the PNG COVID-19 National Pandemic Response Dr Daoni Esorom called for all rapid test kits for COVID-19 to be validated by National Control Centre (NCC).
- Dr Daoni further urged Papua New Guineas to get their COVID-19 vaccination as preventative measure following the drastic drop in the number of people being vaccinated in November compared to last month.

Table 1. Reported COVID-19 cases in PNG¹ (22 – 28 Nov 2021)

Province	New Cases	Deaths	Cumulative Delta Variant	Cumulative Total
AROB	74	1		772
Central	23		4	764
ENB	87	2	1	2090
ES	2			686
EH	1		18	2137
Enga	7		3	1037
Gulf	15			324
Hela	16	4	13	742
Jiwaka	12		1	418
Madang	11		4	1260
Manus	27	1	2	618
Milne Bay	140			1131
Morobe	1		62	2484
NCD	63		136	9201
NI	3		1	726
Northern	0			362
Simbu	58		13	1058
SH	33	9		1019
WNB	23			1203
WS	3		56	762
Western	3		32	3609
WH	16		3	2707
TOTAL	618	17	349	35090

¹ As of 28/11/2021, 12:00 pm, PNG time

Table 2. COVID-19 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL UPDATE^{2b}

	Confirmed Cases	Deaths
Global	261 358 909	5 212 662
Western Pacific	10 192 032	141 455

² WHO COVID-19 Dashboard as of 28/11/2021, 22:45 CEST

Cluster Updates & Priorities

Surveillance:

- 618 new cases, 17 known deaths, running total number of cases at 35,090 and confirmed deaths at 545 this week.
- 68% of the newly reported cases and 70% of reported deaths were tested and had occurred more than 7 days ago.
- Overall, among all cases reported in the last 14 days, 95% recovered, 4% active and 1% died.
- There appears to be a decline in the number of active cases while test positivity remains at 8%.
- 51 Delta cases were reported in the last 7 days bringing the cumulative total to 349.
- GoData was rolled out to Morobe Province. A total of 10 participants were trained.

Figure 1. Epidemiological curve of total COVID-19 cases in Papua New Guinea as of 28th November 2021

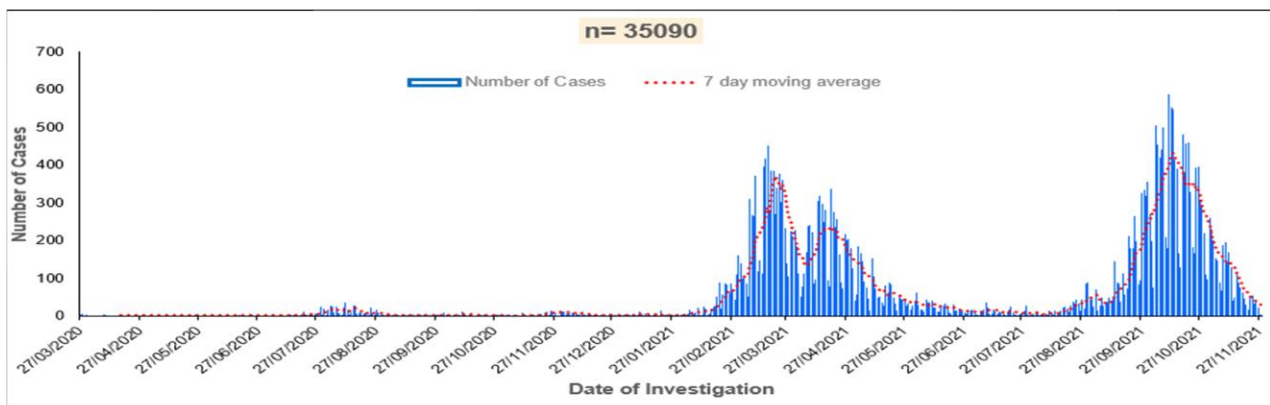
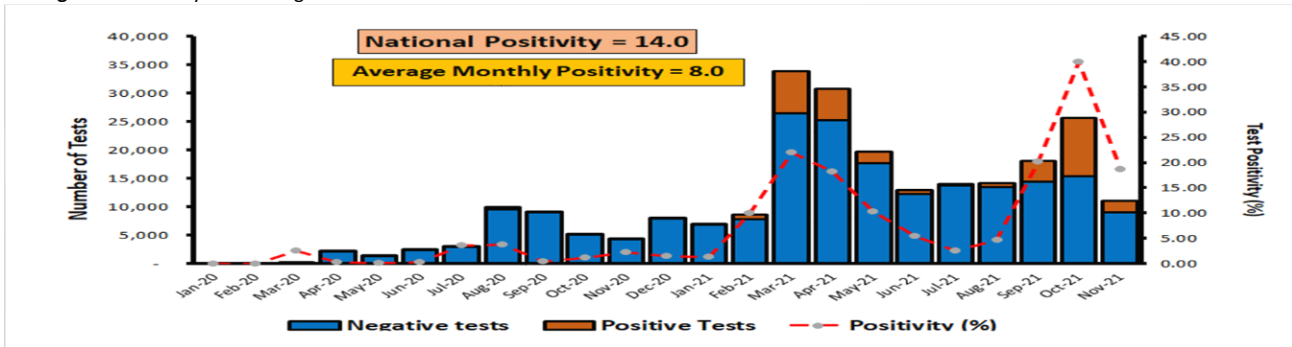


Figure 2: Positivity and testing trend from 22 Jan 2020 – 28 November 2021



Clinical Management and Infection Prevention Control:

- On-going support in clinical management and IPC, risk communication messaging, vaccine awareness and biomedical assistance by international medical emergency teams (Team Cadex, UK Med and Team NZ-Med/Response Global) in East New Britain, Western Highlands and Autonomous Region of Bougainville PHAs respectively.
- WHO moves to coordinate efforts to support Water Aid Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) as an integral part of IPC. A call out has been made to partners and stakeholders to coordinate efforts in the IPC sphere of activities, especially for WASH, training and IEC material. The team highlighted IPC’s current and proposed activities to the country’s Health Cluster partners during the partners’ meeting.
- An IPC assessment done in Port Moresby General Hospital and newly built Minderoo Air Laboratory in Taurama Aquatic Centre by joint NDOH-WHO IPC teams was done this week.
- IPC SOPs and Guidelines can be obtained via this link <https://bit.ly/3xSSjBq> or by contacting azzouz@who.int.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE):

- Cluster completed the first batch of Health Care Workers (HCW) RCCE training in Madang on 23 November. 17 final year nursing students got vaccinated after their participation in the training.
- Advocacy trainings planned and preparations done this week for Western Highlands HCWs and Influencers by NDoH/Vaccine Task Force in collaboration with UK-Med and Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA).
- WHPHA facilitated the Highlands Regional Vaccine Communications Training on 25 November.
- 20 Faith Based HCWs trained on Vaccination and Communications under the Church Partnership Program. This is to increase the skills and knowledge about the vaccine and to communicate and address the myths and rumours effectively.
- More partners signed up for Social Wrap to combat social media misinformation including advocacy, training and 40-day COVID-19 vaccination.



Logistics and Supplies:

- Setup and stocked new AES warehouse.
- Provided trainings with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to Provincial Health Authorities (PHAs) on how to fill-in the requisitions form and provide real-time Stock-On-Hand (SOH).
- All 23 PHAs’ Incinerators were received in country and ready to be shipped to their respective provinces.
- Continued distribution of PPE and Lab items. Log Cluster dispatched an estimated 25 tons of PPE in last 2 months throughout PNG both to Surge, non-surge, and non-health facilities.
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Quarantine & Points of Entry:

- 33 international travellers under quarantine.
- No reported COVID-19 case from incoming international travellers during the reporting period.

Table 3. Persons Screened by Point of Entry

Total Number of Travelers Screened before SOE (Until 22 March 2020)	29,387	
Total Number of Travelers Screened during SOE (23 March – 16 June 2020)	3,788	
Total Number of Travelers Screened after SOE (17 June 2020 – 27 November 2021)	Air	33,119
	Sea	1,373
	Land	6

National Vaccination Rollout

- Over 206,259 people are fully vaccinated, representing 11% of the government’s 20% target for 2021 Phase I COVID-19 vaccinations.
- Over 275,773 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Figure 4: Total COVID-19 Vaccines doses administered as of 28 November, 2021

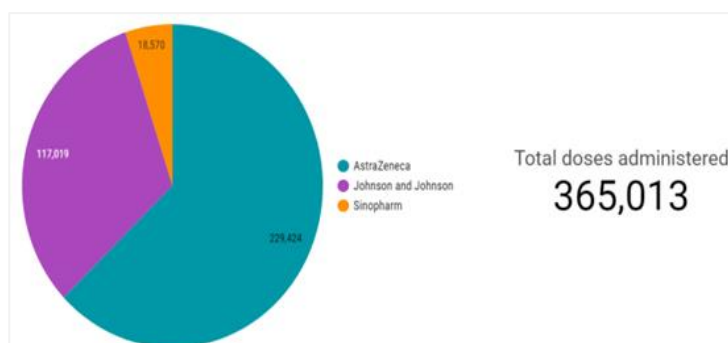


Table 4: COVID-19 Cumulative number of persons vaccinated as of 28 November 2021

Category	At least one dose received	Fully vaccinated
Health Worker	14300	8839
45 years and above	89008	70116
Persons with comorbidity	6518	4630
Cumulative	275773	206259

National and Provincial Health Update

- The Pandemic Response Coordination Group and the Health Operations Team continued to meet regularly at the National Control Centre.
- Full details of all containment measures can be found at www.covid19.info.gov.pg
- Deputy Controller of the National Pandemic Response Dr Daoni Esorom says rapid test kits for coronavirus (COVID-19) being brought into the country must be validated by the National Control Centre.
- Dr Daoni urged people to vaccinate to protect themselves from COVID-19 following the drastic drop in the number of people being vaccinated in November compared to last month.
- He added that it reflects the general behavior of people in health matters that do not take preventive measures seriously until something happens and they react. This is why we lost so many people in this wave, driven by the Delta Variant. Had people listened and got vaccinated earlier, we would have developed some immunity with the help of the vaccine long before the Delta wave.

Partner Coordination Activities

- The Health Cluster meeting was held on the 23 November. Please email osheaj@who.int if you or your organisation wishes to join the cluster meetings and present activities. These meetings are strategic and are used to align all partner activities.

- Currently, NCDPHA, WNBPHA and WPHA have expressed interest or are holding weekly partner coordination meetings via zoom. If PHA's wish to engage in similar meetings, please contact osheaj@who.int who can assist in facilitating this.
- Partners are also advised that there will be a shared drive created for direct updates for health cluster members to update each week. This will be shared post the Health Cluster meetings each fortnight.
- The next health cluster meeting will be held on the 7 December at 1pm PNG Time.

Transmission Assessment

The epidemic curve shows a declining trend after reaching its highest peak around the 1st and 2nd week of October, 2021, similar to observed trend in the last March/April surge therefore may suggest a true decline in the number of COVID-19 cases. However, this must be interpreted with caution in view of the delays in reporting and overall low testing rates. This observation is supported by the declining weekly trend in the number of cases observed in 18/22 provinces (82%).

In order to allow for delayed reporting and a current data entry backlog, we have conducted the transmission assessment based on cases diagnosed in week 47 (15th-21th November, 2021).

MOMASE REGION

- All 4 provinces continue to show a decline in case numbers between epi weeks 41 and 47. West Sepik and Morobe is now considered to be in stage 1 transmission (sporadic cases) while Madang is now considered to be in stage 2 community transmissions (localised spread).

NEW GUINEA ISLAND REGION

- All 5 provinces appear to show an increasing trend however, with delayed reporting and suspected overall low testing rates, trends should be interpreted with caution. WNBPH has not been reporting for the last few weeks (weeks 45-47) while in New Ireland there are unofficial reports of increasing cases and strain in NIP on the health care system. ENBP continues to be in stage 3 (widespread) community transmission while WNBPH, NIP and AROB remain in stage 2 community transmission (localised spread). Manus province can now be considered to be in stage 1 transmission (sporadic cases).

HIGHLANDS REGION

- All the 7 highlands provinces continue to show declining trends in the number of cases from week 43 after a notable surge in the month of October. SHP and WHP continue to be in wide spread (stage 3) community transmission and are still considered high risk in view of delayed reporting and unknown testing rates. Hela, Jiwaka, EHP, Chimbu provinces continue to be in stage 2 transmission (localised spread while Enga and EHP are in stage 1 transmission with sporadic cases.

SOUTHERN REGION

- Western province continues to show significant reduction in the trend of cases and is now considered to be in stage 1 transmission with sporadic cases. Despite a spike in the second week of October, Milne Bay province continues to show a decreasing trend however this must be interpreted with caution due to delayed reporting and low testing rates observed in the province. It now appears to be in stage 2 transmission.
- NCD is showing a reduction in the number of cases diagnosed in week 41 to 47 and in the context of increased testing. But it may be too early to be interpreted and is still considered to be in stage 3 (wide spread) community transmission. Central province appears to show a decreasing trend in week 43 and 47. In the context of increased testing, it is now in stage 1 transmission.
- Gulf province was not reporting until the last few weeks. It is still considered to be in stage 2 transmission.
- Northern province is considered high risk and in stage 3 transmission given unofficial reports of increased cases and deaths (no formal reports have been received for 6 months, until in the last 7 days, it has been reporting cases. Oro is the only province with no report of any COVID-19 deaths.

Additional information about transmission classification can be found on the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) COVID-19 transmission stage dashboard at bit.ly/WPRODashboard

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