



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 14 November, PNG has officially reported a cumulative total of 32,985 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 436 COVID-19 deaths.
- In the last seven days, a total of 1,114 newly diagnosed COVID cases were reported including 23 known deaths.
- As of 14 November 2021, over 259,363 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in PNG. Over 186,226 people are fully vaccinated. This is 10% of the 20% target for 2021 Phase I COVID-19 vaccinations.
- Team Cadus, an International Emergency Medical Team from Germany have arrived in the country on 14 November. They will be deployed to East New Britain province to assist in the surge.

Cluster Updates & Priorities

*Surveillance:

- In last seven days, a total of 1,114 new COVID-19 cases were reported including 23 new deaths, a 50% reduction in the number of cases and deaths compared to last two weeks. The cumulative number of cases is now at 32,985 with 436 known deaths.
- Overall, of cases reported in the last 7 days, 66% of the cases were identified as active cases, tested in the last 14 days, suggestive of a reduction in the number of active cases, compared to previous two weeks. Among all deaths reported in the last 7 days, 87% of them had occurred more than a week.
- The average monthly test positivity still remains at 7%. With overall low testing rates and delayed reporting of testing by private facilities and PHAs including non-reporting of RDTs by most or all facilities, this should be interpreted with caution.
- There was no new case of delta reported in the last 7 days. 98% of all the reported delta cases have recovered. Of those detected as delta variant infections five have reportedly passed away 80% (4/5) of these reported deaths were reported to have had underlying comorbidities.
- WHO provided several learning sessions for NCC surveillance team which included basics of infectious disease surveillance and data management.
- A circular was signed by the Deputy Controller for the sharing of key daily provincial indicators via provincial specific dashboards. It is envisioned that the dashboards will be used for both provincial and national level reporting.

* Cases are only reported upon receipt of CIFs and death certificates hence the figures reported may not be reflective on the current situation in the provinces.

**Table 1. Reported COVID-19 cases in PNG¹
(8 – 14 Nov 2021)**

Province	New Cases	Deaths	Cumulative Delta Variant	Cumulative Total
AROB	90		1	601
Central	45		5	720
ENB	189	1	1	1869
ES	5			607
EH	79	14	7	2060
Enga	12		3	725
Gulf	12			299
Hela	104		18	583
Jiwaka	3			395
Madang	55		5	1232
Manus	6	1	1	572
Milne Bay	20		3	988
Morobe	10		75	2447
NCD	171		132	8764
NI	2			607
Northern	0			198
Simbu	173			981
SH	31		30	840
WNB	22		4	1163
WS	5	1	59	758
Western	10		9	3602
WH	47	6	2	2652
TOTAL	1091	23	355	32985

¹ As of 14/11/2021, 12:00 pm, PNG time

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

	Confirmed Cases	Deaths
Global	253 163 330	5 098 174
Western Pacific	9 794 363	135 108

² WHO COVID-19 Dashboard as of 15/11/2021, 22:45 CEST

Clinical Management and Infection Prevention Control:

- The team continued to support the international medical teams in country. UK-MED, are currently providing clinical management, infection prevention and control (IPC), risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), logistics and hospital management in Western Highlands Province.
- Team Cadus from Germany have arrived in the country on Sunday 14th November. They will be deployed to East New Britain province to assist in the surge.
- Correctional facilities are being supported in collaboration with ICRC. Talks are ongoing for a multi disease isolation facility in prisons.
- WHO clinical team continues to support national counterparts in assessment, procurement and distribution of biomedical needs, consumables, PPE and medication. The joint CM team worked closely with logistics team in distribution of the biomedical and PPE stock.
- A meeting is scheduled with the NDOH obstetrics and gynaecology as well as the paediatric teams, to optimise COVID-19 care pathways due to increasing mortality and morbidity in this population.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement:

- Continued planning on 40 days until Christmas Vaccination campaign through community awareness, church advocacy and Private Sector Mobile Vaccine Units (MVUs).
- Social Listening and Response: Continued to track comments on institution/organization social media pages, feedback from community engagement, media monitoring and 'Dark social' monitoring of key groups. Compiling insights and responding through social media wraps on a fortnightly basis. A wide range of partners, private sectors and influential individuals that share same messages are leverage through the same network to increase the traction of correct information and content.
- UK MED EMT doctor engaged to provide support and work with PNG Risk Communication and Community Engagement teams. Dr Diana Maddah said effective communication during times of emergency saves lives and it is a challenging role in a country like PNG.

Logistics and Supplies:

- DFAT donated oxygen consumables was part of the AUSMAT surge kit dispatched to East New Britain, Autonomous Region of Bougainville, West New Britain, New Ireland, Milne Bay and Western Highlands provinces this week.
- Dispatched COVID-19 supplies of PPEs and lab consumables to 7 consignees from West New Britain, East New Britain, Braun Rural Hospital, Jiwaka, Southern Highlands, West Sepik and Port Moresby General Hospital this week.
- Donations of AgRDTs and GeneXpert cartridges were received from Global Fund through World Vision while gloves were received from ABD.
- Business/Partners Warehouse operations support WHO and DFAT on casuals, Warehouse consumables support by Oil Search and Gulf O2 concentrators delivery by Native Industries.
- Health Logistics: O2 Plant POMGEN: Training ongoing since 1st Nov. One of the 2 facilitators arrived the 2nd Nov instead 30th Oct due PCR issues
- Commissioning was planned on 02/11, but postponed till 5th Nov due to technical issues. Some O2 cylinders are already filled, but until next week they will not continue (HR...)
- Meeting held between Lab Pillar and OSL pillar; Expecting confirmation from Lab Pillar about incineration requirements of GeneXpert cartridges to release SOP.
- No progress on preparation for the Waste Area and Management Project (WAMP) for District x 1 roll-out in 22 provinces with support from WHO, UNOPS & UNICEF. UNOPS-preparation to distribute incinerators to provinces for installation. UNICEF-incinerators received at Lae port, awaiting inspection by Health Facilities Standard Branch (HFSB). Activities are pending.

Quarantine & Points of Entry:

- As of 14 November, there were 79 people under quarantine (PUQ) of whom 10 were in home quarantine, 55 in quarantine hotels and 14 in company sites.

- There was one reported COVID-19 case from incoming international travellers during the reporting period from Philippines. Investigation and contact tracing are being carried out and this traveller is in isolation for 14 days.

Table 3. Persons Screened by Point of Entry

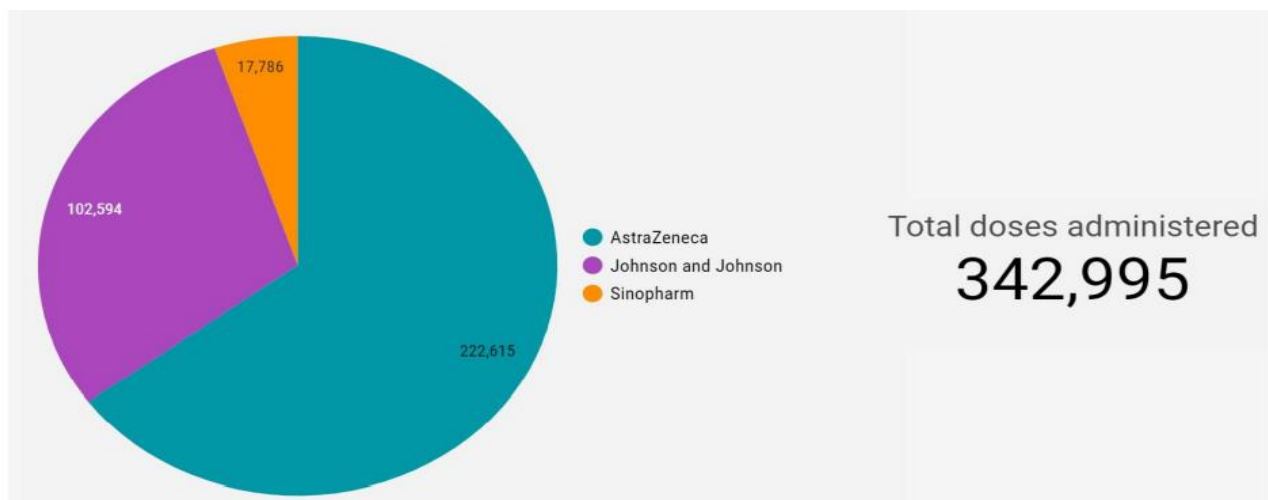
Total Number of Travelers Screened before SOE (Until 22 March 2020)	29,387	
Total Number of Travelers Screened during SOE (23 March – 16 June 2020)	3,788	
Total Number of Travelers Screened after SOE (17 June 2020 – 13 November 2021)	Air	32,385
	Sea	1,309
	Land	6

National Vaccination Rollout

Table 4: PNG COVID-19 Vaccination cumulative number and coverage of persons vaccinated as of 10 November 2021

Category	At least one dose received	Fully vaccinated	Coverage(%)
Health Worker	13909	8248	<p>Health Worker (%)</p> <p>At least one dose: 48.4</p> <p>Fully vaccinated: 28.7</p>
45 years and above	84672	64610	<p>45 years and above (%)</p> <p>At least one dose: 7.1</p> <p>Fully vaccinated: 5.4</p>
Persons with comorbidity	6192	4241	<p>Comorbidity (%)</p> <p>At least one dose: 2.2</p> <p>Fully vaccinated: 1.5</p>
Cumulative	259363	186226	<p>Cumulative (%)</p> <p>At least one dose: 13.9</p> <p>Fully vaccinated: 10</p>

Figure 1: PNG COVID-19 Vaccination cumulative number and coverage of persons vaccinated as of 10 November 2021



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

Partner Coordination Activities

- The Health Cluster meeting was held on the 9th 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.
- A partner mapping tool is being created by WHO and UNOCHA and will be trialled before rolling out to all clusters. This tool is to provide decision makers with up-to-date information regarding partner capacity across the country.
- 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.
- MV *YWAM PNG* has been engaged in twinned MCH and COVID-19 patrol in collaboration with the Western Provincial Health Authority and other partners in South Fly District.
- Specific activities undertaken: COVID-19 Awareness, COVID-19 Testing, COVID-19 Vaccine, MCH and selected outpatient including TB testing and education and Collaboration with Local Healthcare Workers.
- During the week of 1-7 November, the vessel anchored and sent teams out from anchorages near Saibai, Boigu and Daru Islands. Successful surveying using newly installed multibeam hydrographic survey equipment enabled the vessel to expand its reach and travel 70 nautical miles through previously uncharted waters.
- Thank you to Babak Askarian who presented on behalf of the Protection Cluster at the last meeting.
- The next health cluster meeting will be held on the 23rd of November at 1pm PNG Time.

Transmission Assessment

While the epidemic curve shows a slow declining trend after reaching its highest peak around the 1st and 2nd week of October, 2021, this trend must be interpreted with caution due to delays with reporting and overall low testing rates observed throughout the nation.

Nonetheless, more than 72% of the provinces (16/22), appear to show declining trend in the number of cases diagnosed in week 44 compared to weeks 42 and 43.

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 44 (1st – 7th November, 2021).

MOMASE REGION

- All four provinces have shown a decline in case numbers between weeks 41 and 44. West Sepik is now considered to be in stage 1 transmission while East Sepik, Morobe and Madang are now considered to be in stage 2 community transmission (localised spread).

NEW GUINEA REGION

- All provinces appear to show an increasing trend except New Ireland and West New Britain province although for both there is a suspected reporting issue; there are unofficial reports of increasing cases and strain in New Ireland on the health care system.
- East New Britain is now in stage 3 (widespread) community transmission while Manus, WNB, NIP and AROB can be considered in stage 2 community transmission.

HIGHLANDS REGION

- EHP, WHP, Chimbu, Enga and Hela provinces show declining trends in the number of cases per week over several weeks after a notable surge in the preceding weeks, while the trend in cases for SHP, and Jiwaka provinces have been steady over several weeks to 07th November.
- SHP, WHP and Hela appear to be in wide spread (stage 3) community transmission and are still considered high risk in view of delayed reporting and unknown testing rates while EHP, Chimbu and Enga provinces are now considered to be in stage 2 transmission (localised spread).

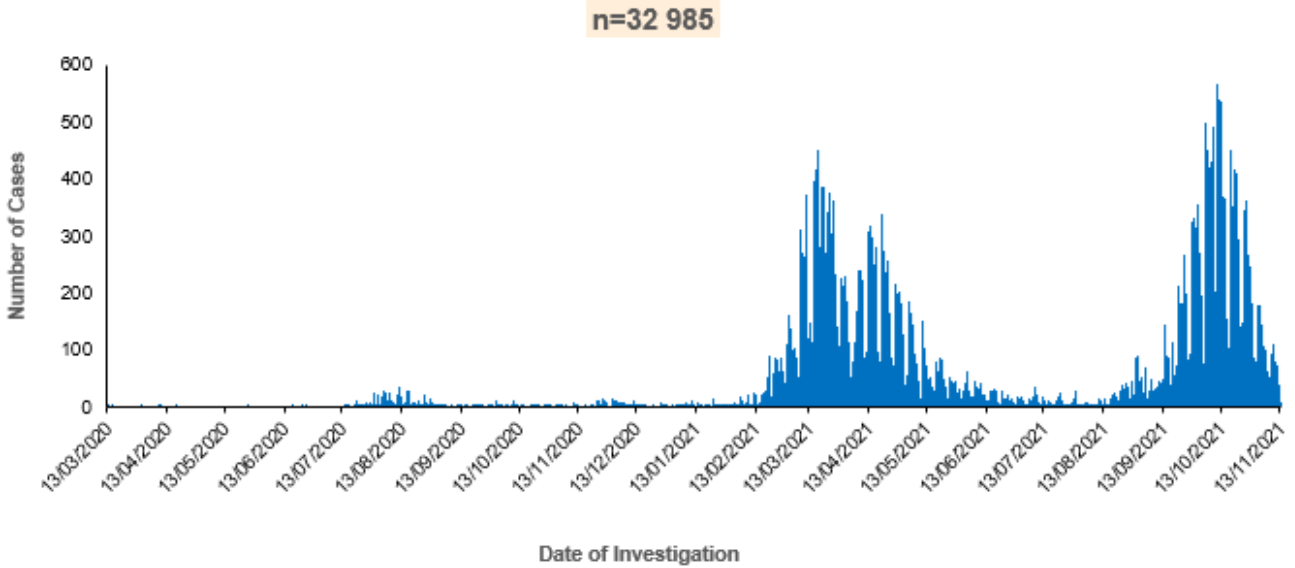
SOUTHERN REGION

- Western province, a once high-risk province, in stage 3 community transmission with surges in delta cases, shows a significant reduction in the trend of cases over the five weeks to 7th November. WP accounted for 1% of cases reported in the last 14 days and is considered to be in stage 1 transmission with sporadic cases.
- Milne Bay province, on the other hand, a once low risk province, continue to be in stage 3 community transmission now. However, unlike in the second week of October (11th - 17th October, 2021), it continues to show a decreasing trend. It is now showing a decrease in the number of cases. This must be interpreted with caution due to delayed reporting and low testing rates observed in the province.
- NCD is showing a reduction in the number of cases diagnosed in week 41 to 44 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 has seen a 50% increase in number of cases diagnosed in the week 42 compared to week 41 but appears to show a decreasing trend in weeks 43 and 44. Given its proximity to NCD among other risk factors, it remains in stage 3 transmission.
- Gulf province was not reporting until in the last few weeks. It is still considered to be in stage 2 transmission trends in influenza-like-illness.
- Northern (Oro) 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 14 days ago, when only 1 case was reported).

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

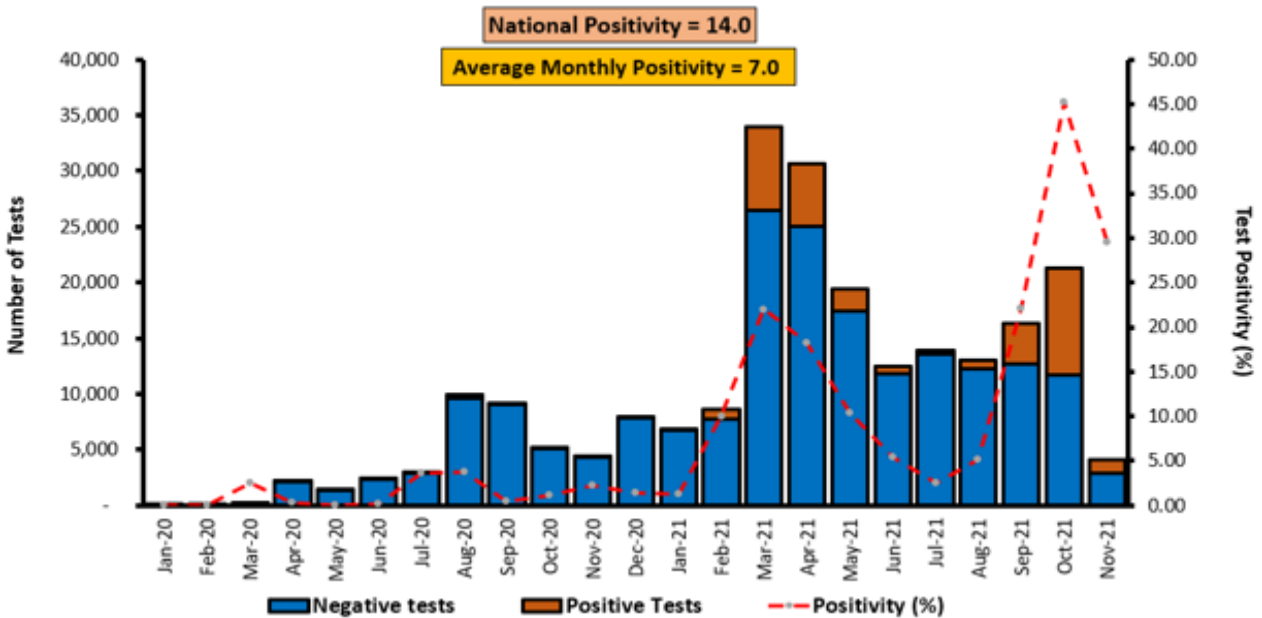
Epidemiology

Figure 2. Epidemiological curve of total COVID-19 cases in Papua New Guinea as of 14 November 2021



Please note: The true extent of the trend must be interpreted with caution as there are delays in receiving and reporting results from provinces.

Figure 3: Positivity and testing trend from 22 Jan 2020 – 14 November 2021



ANNEX – Photos

Photo 1: Vaccination drive in rural logging camp, Open Bay Timber, in East New Britain Province.



Photo 2: UK-Med Risk Communications engagement, Dr Diana Maddah, is pictured at her first meeting with PNG counterparts, NCC and WHO teams, at the National Control Centre for COVID-19.



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