

Malawi COVID-19 Situation Report

Highlights

- 6 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the past 24 hours, all in Lilongwe
- No new deaths recorded in the past 24 hours.
- Cumulatively, Malawi has 23 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 2 deaths and 3 recoveries.
- Currently, there are a total of 18 active cases
- 320 contacts have been traced to date
- 101 contacts tested
- 7058 high-risk travellers have entered the country through formal borders to date
- 103 people transporting essential goods and services have entered the country in the past 24 hours

Background

On 31 December 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) was alerted of several cases of pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. Later the disease was named Coronavirus disease-19 (COVID-19) and the virus was named Sars-Cov2. World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic on 12th March 2020.

On 20 March 2020, COVID-19 was declared a national disaster in Malawi, and on 2 April 2020, we registered our first cases of COVID-19. His Excellency the President of the Republic of Malawi, Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika gave a press briefing to inform the nation.

Global situation¹

No new country/territory/area reported cases of COVID-19 in the past 24 hours. As of 21 April 2020, WHO reported 2 397 216(83 006 new) confirmed COVID-19 cases, 162 956(5109 new) deaths, a case fatality rate of 6.81%.

Table1: Number of cases and death of COVID-19 in countries that share a boundary with Malawi

Country	Cumulative cases	New cases	Cumulative deaths	New deaths	Days since last reported case
Mozambique	35	4	0	0	1
Zambia	65	4	3	1	0
Tanzania	255	84	10	3	0

¹ Data extracted from WHO COVID-19 situation report <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>

Local situation

Malawi has reported 6 new cases and no new deaths in the past 24 hours.

Malawi has so far registered a total of 23 cases (7 from Blantyre, 12 from Lilongwe, 1 from Zomba, 1 from Chikwawa and 1 from Nkhotakota) as well as 2 deaths (1 from Blantyre and 1 from Lilongwe). Three cases, all from Lilongwe, have now been confirmed to have recovered which brings the total number of active cases to 18.

To date, a total of 7058 high-risk travellers have entered the country and are being monitored out of which 1819 have been discharged after completing the 14-day mandatory self-quarantine. Currently, only three borders are still open to allow transit of essential goods and services, in the past 24 hours 103 personnel transporting essential goods and services entered Malawi. Active tracing and monitoring of contacts of confirmed COVID-19 is ongoing, currently, a total of 320 contacts of COVID-19 cases have been traced out of which 101 have been tested. Table 1 below provides a summary of

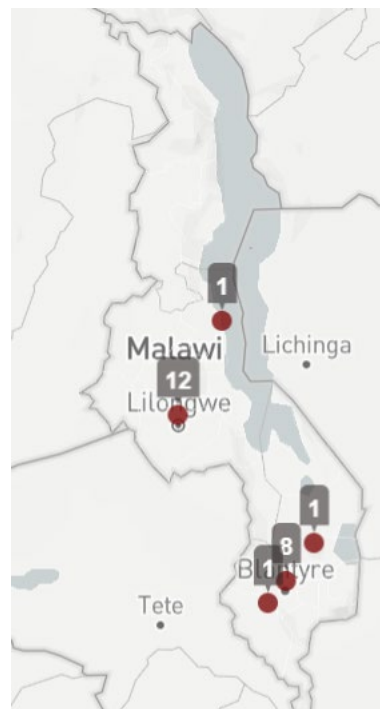


Table 1: Summary statistics for COVID-19 outbreak in Malawi as of 21 April 2020

Parameter	Statistic
Personnel transporting essential goods and services, PoEs* entries in the last 24 hours.	103
Travellers intercepted and repatriated in the past 24 hours	0
Cumulative high-risk traveller entries at Points of entry	7058
High-risk travellers on follow up at district level **	2020
Cumulative travellers completed 14 days follow up at district level	1819
Suspected cases	530
Probable cases	1
Cumulative confirmed cases	23
Cumulative deaths	2
Number of active cases	18
Cumulative recoveries	3
Cumulative contacts listed	320
Contacts on follow up	320
Contacts tested to date	101
Contacts that completed 14 days followed	0
Specimen received by the lab in the past 24 hours	33
Cumulative specimen received by the lab	530
Cumulative specimen tested	519
Number of cases with a positive result in the past 24 hours	6

* Point of entry

**The number of high-risk travellers on follow up as district level is under-reported (few districts reported)

Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 cases reported countrywide as of 21 April 2020

Reporting District	New Cases	Confirmed Cases	New Deaths	Total Deaths	Transmission Classification	Days since last reported case
Lilongwe	6	12	0	1	4 Imported 8 Local transmission	0
Blantyre	0	8	0	1	2 Imported 6 Local transmission	4
Zomba	0	1	0	0	1 Imported	8
Chikwawa	0	1	0	0	1 Imported	11
Nkhotakota	0	1	0	0	1 Imported	9

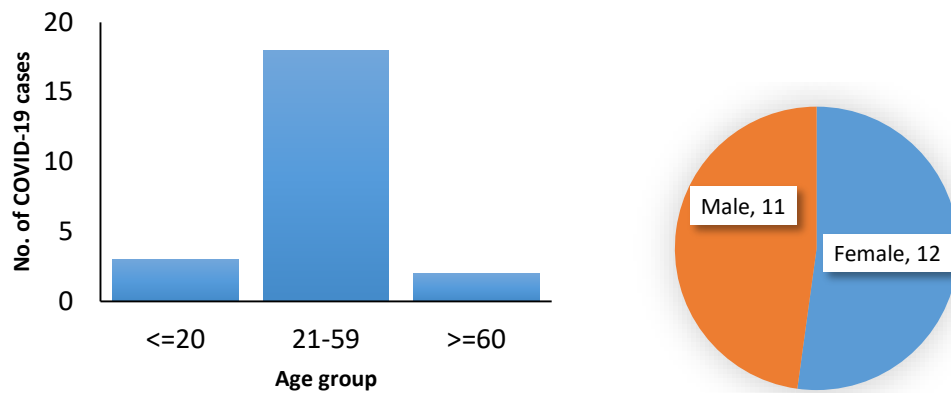


Figure 1: Age and sex distribution of COVID-19 cases in Malawi as of 21 April 2020

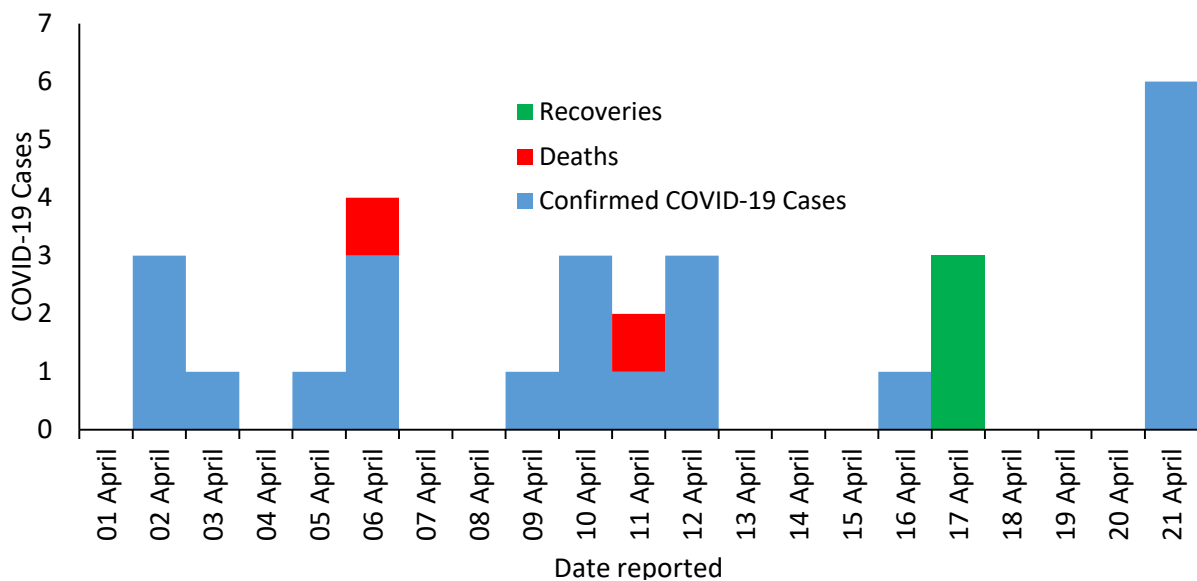


Figure 2: Epi-curve of COVID-19 confirmed cases, deaths and recoveries in Malawi as of 21 April 2020

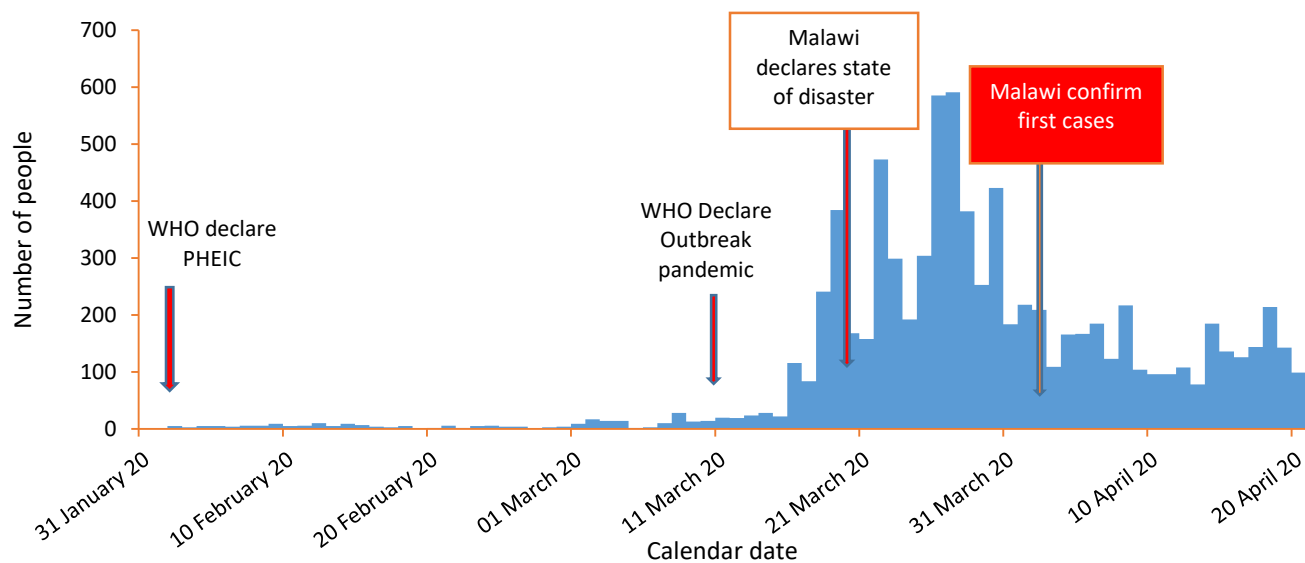


Figure 3: Daily entries through Malawi borders as of 21 April 2020*

*The number of travellers have gone down since the close of our borders and restriction of travel to essential goods and services.

Laboratory testing

Currently, four laboratories are testing COVID-19 in the country, National Health Reference (NHRL) in Lilongwe, College of Medicine (COM) laboratory and Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust (MLW) in Blantyre, and Mzuzu Central Hospital laboratory in Mzuzu. As of 21 April 2020, a total of 519 samples have been tested, with 23 positive results and 11 pending results. Table 2 shows the breakdown of tests done by each laboratory.

Table 3: Laboratory testing for COVID-19 for Malawi, 21 April 2020.

Name of Laboratory	Cumulative samples	In the past 24hrs		Total tested	Pending results	Result	
		Samples received	Samples tested			Positive	Negative
NHRL	200	6	6	200	0	13	187
COM	167	0	11	160	7	10	152
MLW	145	30	26	141	4	0	139
Mzuzu	18	14	14	18	0	0	18
Total	530	50	57	519	11	23	496

Clinical case management

- 1 active case is institutionalized in severe condition with other comorbidities
- 15 active cases are being managed as outpatients and are under self-isolation
- 2 asymptomatic cases have been institutionalized due to security reasons
- 3 cases have now recovered
- Cumulatively, Malawi has recorded 2 deaths
- Current clinical case management training is underway in all districts
- 20 ventilators deployed to the central hospitals for tertiary care of COVID-19 critical cases

Enforcement and security

- MDF and Police ready to enforce lockdown measures
- Police deployed to provide border security patrols
- Road traffic police enforcing new seating capacity for public transportation
- Control of crowds in public and private service outlets (e.g. banks)
- Joint patrols on Lake Malawi (MDF and Immigration)
- Roadblocks mounted in strategic points across the country

Point of entry

- Monitoring personnel transporting essential goods and services
- All borders closed except 3 for essential personnel travel (e.g. petroleum services and other goods).

Logistics

- Deliveries to districts of supplies from UNICEF is done
- Deliveries to districts of supplies from Chinese donation in progress – besides the districts, this also accommodates Army, Prison, and Police

Risk communication and community engagement

- Continued airing of COVID-19 public service announcements on community and national radio stations.
- Daily press briefings on the evolving outbreak situation
- Daily updates through **ZODIAK radio**
- Set up interactive COVID-19 messages on **Airtel *919#**
- Production and printing of fact sheets, posters, leaflets, and roll-up banners.
- Push messages on Airtel and TNM in both English and Chichewa.
- Community awareness meetings.
- Develop messaging for public service announcements to suit the current measures on lockdown.
- Mobile van units for the distribution of information, education and communication materials in Lilongwe, Blantyre, and Mangochi

Coordination

In order to facilitate coordination and maintain focused efforts towards combating COVID-19 we hold routine and ad-hoc meetings:

- Established a special cabinet committee on COVID-9 and they meet regularly
- Weekly health cluster meetings
- Weekly meetings of technical committees for the various response pillars
- Daily surveillance technical committee meetings
- Daily emergency operation center meetings
- Implementation of the national response plan

Case definitions

1. Suspect Case

- A patient with acute respiratory illness (fever and at least one sign/symptom of respiratory disease, e.g. cough, shortness of breath), AND a history of travel to or residence in a location reporting community transmission of COVID-19 disease during the 14 days prior to symptom onset.
- A patient with any acute respiratory illness AND having been in contact with a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case in the last 14 days prior to symptom onset;

OR

- A patient with severe acute respiratory illness (fever and at least one sign/symptom of respiratory disease, e.g. cough, shortness of breath; AND requiring hospitalization) AND in the absence of an alternative diagnosis that fully explains the clinical presentation

2. Probable Case

- A suspect case for whom testing for COVID-19 is inconclusive. Inconclusive being the result of the test reported by the laboratory

OR

- A suspect case for whom testing could not be performed for any reason.

3. Confirmed Case

- A person with laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 infection, irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms.

Classification of transmission patterns

No cases: Countries/territories/areas with no confirmed cases

Sporadic cases: Countries/territories/areas with one or more cases, imported or locally detected

Clusters of cases: Countries/territories/areas experiencing cases, clustered in time, geographic location and/or by common exposures

Community transmission: Countries/area/territories experiencing larger outbreaks of local transmission defined through an assessment of factors including, but not limited to:

- Large numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains
- Large numbers of cases from sentinel lab surveillance
- Multiple unrelated clusters in several areas of the country/territory/area



Conclusion

The Ministry of Health and partners continue in its efforts to ensure the citizens are protected from the Coronavirus outbreak and that the country is able to detect and respond to any cases that may arise.

- Daily update dashboards can be accessed from <http://covid19.health.gov.mw/>
- Toll-free call line with Chipatala Cha Pa Foni (number: **54747**).

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