



Summary

- A pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan, China was first reported to the WHO Country Office in China on 31 December 2019.
- WHO is working 24/7 to analyse data, provide advice, coordinate with partners, help countries prepare, increase supplies and manage expert networks.
- The outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020.
- The international community has asked for US\$675 million to help protect states with weaker health systems as part of its Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan.
- On 11 February 2020, WHO announced a name for the new coronavirus disease: COVID-19.
- To stay up to date, follow [@DrTedros](#) and [@WHO](#) on Twitter, read WHO's [daily situation reports](#) and [news releases](#), and watch our regular [press conferences](#).

WHO WhatsApp health alert launches in Arabic, French and Spanish

27 March 2020

Today, WHO is launching dedicated messaging services in Arabic, French and Spanish with partners WhatsApp and Facebook to keep people safe from coronavirus. This easy-to-use messaging service has the potential to reach 2 billion people and enables WHO to get information directly into the hands of the people that need it.

From government leaders to health workers and family and friends, this messaging service will provide the latest news and information on coronavirus including details on symptoms and how people can protect themselves and others. It also provides the latest situation reports and numbers in real-time to help government decision-makers protect the health of their populations.

The service can be accessed by a link that opens a conversation on WhatsApp. Users can simply type "hi", "salut", "hola" or "مرحبا" to activate the conversation, prompting a menu of options that can help answer their questions about COVID-19.

Join WHO's Health Alert on WhatsApp:

Arabic

Send "مرحبا" to +41 22 501 70 23 on WhatsApp

wa.me/41225017023?text=مرحبا

French

Send "salut" to +41 22 501 72 98 on WhatsApp

wa.me/41225017298?text=salut

Spanish

Send "hola" to +41 22 501 76 90 on WhatsApp

wa.me/41225017690?text=hola

English

Send "hi" to +41 79 893 18 92 on WhatsApp

wa.me/41798931892?text=hi

Extraordinary Virtual G20 Leaders' Summit on COVID-19

26 March 2020

Addressing the Extraordinary Summit on COVID-19, chaired by King Salman of Saudi Arabia, the WHO Director-General called on G20 leaders to fight, unite, and ignite against COVID-19.

"

Honoured to address the [@g20org](https://www.g20.org) Extraordinary Summit on [#COVID19](https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1243888888888888888), chaired by [@KingSalman](https://twitter.com/KingSalman). I asked them to:

1. Fight like our lives depend on it, because they do.
2. Unite. We will only get out of this together.
3. Ignite a global movement to ensure this never happens again.

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus ([@DrTedros](https://twitter.com/DrTedros)) [March 26, 2020](https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/20200326)"

Key materials:

[News release](#)

[WHO Director General's remarks at the Extraordinary Virtual G20 Leaders' Summit on COVID-19 - 26 March 2020](#)

UN launches COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan to #InvestInHumanity

25 March 2020

The UN today issued a \$2 billion appeal to fight coronavirus in the most vulnerable countries.

Properly funded, it will provide laboratory materials for testing, supplies to protect health workers and medical equipment to treat the sick. It will bring water and sanitation to places facing shortages, and will help humanitarian workers and supplies get to where they are needed most to support the COVID-19 response.

"

Today, [@antonioGuterres](#) [@UNReliefChief](#) [@DrTedros](#) [@unicefchief](#) launched the [#COVID19](#) Global Humanitarian Response Plan, appealing for \$2 billion to fight [#coronavirus](#) in the most vulnerable countries.

We will only win this battle through solidarity. <https://t.co/SnNVFi1FCP>

— Mark Lowcock ([@UNReliefChief](#)) [March 25, 2020](#)"

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus joined UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for the plan's virtual launch, together with UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock and UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore.

Writing in the Washington Post, the WHO Director-General and UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs co-authored a piece calling on countries to fund the plan while sustaining support for existing humanitarian and refugee response plans.

"

Mark Lowcock [@UNReliefChief](#) & I are calling on countries to:

-Support & fund the [@UN](#) global humanitarian response plan

-Sustain funding to existing humanitarian & refugee response plans

Here is our full piece in the [@washingtonpost](#): <https://t.co/Z4APoxrZZ4>

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus ([@DrTedros](#)) [March 25, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[Global Humanitarian Response Plan: UN Coordinated Appeal \(April-December 2020\)](#)

[OCHA News Story: UN issues \\$2 billion appeal to combat COVID-19](#)

[YouTube recording: Launch of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#)

[Washington Post piece: The coronavirus threatens all of humanity. All of humanity must fight back.](#)

[UN Secretary General's Remarks](#)

Off-label use of medicines for COVID-19

25 March 2020

No pharmaceutical products have yet been shown to be safe and effective for the treatment of COVID-19. However, a number of medicines have been suggested as potential investigational therapies, many of which are now being or will soon be studied in clinical trials, including the SOLIDARITY trial co-sponsored by WHO and participating countries.

In many countries, doctors are giving COVID-19 patients medicines that have not been approved for this disease. The use of licensed medicines for indications that have not been approved by a national medicines regulatory authority is considered “off-label” use. The prescription of medicines for off-label use by doctors may be subject to national laws and regulations. All health care workers should be aware of and comply with the laws and regulations governing their practice. Further, such prescribing should be done on a case-by-case basis. Unnecessary stockpiling and the creation of shortages of approved medicines that are required to treat other diseases should be avoided.

It can be ethically appropriate to offer individual patients experimental interventions on an emergency basis outside clinical trials, provided that no proven effective treatment exists; it is not possible to initiate clinical studies immediately; the patient or his or her legal representative has given informed consent; and the emergency use of the intervention is monitored, and the results are documented and shared in a timely manner with the wider medical and scientific community.^[1]

The decision to offer a patient an unproven or experimental treatment is between the doctor and the patient but must comply with national law. Where it is possible and feasible for the treatment to be given as part of a clinical trial, this should be done unless the patient declines to participate in the trial.

If it is not possible to give the treatment as part of a clinical trial, appropriate records of the use of the medicine must be kept, in compliance with national law, and outcomes for patients should be monitored and recorded.

If early results from an unproven or experimental treatment are promising, the treatment should be studied in the context of a formal clinical trial to establish its safety, efficacy, risks, and benefits.

WHO and FIFA team up on campaign to kick out coronavirus

23 March 2020

WHO and FIFA launched the “Pass the message to kick out coronavirus” campaign, led by world-renowned footballers. The campaign promotes five key steps for people to follow to protect their health in line with WHO guidance, focused on hand washing, coughing etiquette, not touching your face, physical distance and staying home if feeling unwell.

“We need teamwork to combat the coronavirus,” said FIFA President Gianni Infantino. “FIFA has teamed up with WHO

because health comes first. I call upon the football community worldwide to join us in supporting this campaign to pass the message even further. Some of the greatest players to have played the beautiful game have put their names to the campaign and are united in their desire to pass the message to kick out COVID-19."

Twenty-eight players are involved in the video campaign, which is being published in 13 languages.

"

Pleased to launch "Pass the message: 5 steps to kicking out #coronavirus" campaign, together with @FIFACOM Gianni Infantino & @Alissonbecker. I thank them for their active involvement in passing the message against the pandemic since the very beginning!pic.twitter.com/ew5CmZDHD5

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) **March 23, 2020**"

Key materials:

[Video: Pass the message: Five steps to kicking out coronavirus](#)

[News release: Pass the message: Five steps to kicking out coronavirus - with social tiles](#)

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 23 March 2020](#)

[Youtube recording of media briefing](#)

[Video clips for broadcasters](#)

WHO Health Alert for coronavirus launches on WhatsApp

20 March 2020

To increase access to reliable information, WHO worked with WhatsApp and Facebook to launch a new WHO Health Alert messaging service today. The WhatsApp-based service will provide vital information about COVID-19 to millions of people through their mobile phones. The service uses an AI chatbot to provide updated information on the pandemic, including how to protect yourself, questions and answers, and the latest news and press coverage. The Health Alert service is now available in English and will be introduced in other languages next week. This is part of WHO's wider initiative to work with technology companies to get accurate health information into the hands of people that need it at this critical time.

"

I am proud to announce that today we launched a new @WHO Health Alert messaging service via @WhatsApp. This service will provide the latest news & information on #COVID19, including details on symptoms and how to protect yourself. To subscribe, click here <https://t.co/mUvOWIGfqC>

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) **March 20, 2020**"

Key materials:

[News release](#)

[Link to receive messages from the WHO Health Alert on WhatsApp](#)

Young people "are not invincible"

20 March 2020

Speaking at the COVID-19 media briefing, the Director-General said:

"Although older people are the hardest hit, younger people are not spared.

Data from many countries clearly show that people under 50 make up a significant proportion of patients requiring hospitalization.

Today, I have a message for young people: you are not invincible. This virus could put you in hospital for weeks, or even kill you.

Even if you don't get sick, the choices you make about where you go could be the difference between life and death for someone else.

I'm grateful that so many young people are spreading the word and not the virus."

"

Young people are not invincible from [#COVID19](#). The [#coronavirus](#) could put you in hospital for weeks, or even kill you. Even if you don't get sick, the choices you make about where you go could be the difference between life and death for someone else. <https://t.co/fOK1OkINbK> [pic.twitter.com/m6LSIMgqNf](https://t.co/m6LSIMgqNf)

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) [March 20, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 20 March 2020](#)

[Youtube recording of media briefing](#)

[Video clips for broadcasters](#)

#AskWHO on disability considerations during COVID-19

19 March 2020

The impact of COVID-19 is "felt by different groups in different ways".

Expert Lindsay Lee emphasises that everyone has a critical role to play to protect people with disability during the COVID-19, in her [#AskWHO](#) public Q&A session.

"

[#AskWHO](#) on disability considerations during [#COVID19](#). [#coronavirus](#) <https://t.co/FxWxu4NUET>

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [March 19, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[Periscope recording of the #AskWHO on disability considerations during COVID-19](#)

UN Secretary-General calls for solidarity, hope and political will

19 March 2020

The coronavirus pandemic is a crisis unlike any in the UN's 75-year history.

During his press briefing on COVID-19, UN Secretary-General António Guterres asked world leaders to come together and offer an urgent and coordinated global response.

Key materials:

[YouTube recording of the press briefing](#)

WHO Regional Office for Africa holds joint COVID-19 media briefing with World Economic Forum

19 March 2020

Speakers included Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa and WHO Country Representatives Dr Lucile Imboua-Niava (Senegal) and Dr Owen Kaluwa (South Africa).

Many questions remain about how the pandemic will evolve in Africa. Of particular concern is the potential vulnerability of the roughly 26 million people living with HIV, and the 58 million children with malnutrition on the continent.

"

[#COVID19Africa](#) briefing moderated by [@wef](#) earlier today. This is one of the biggest health challenges Africa has

[#COVID19Africa](#) briefing moderated by [@wef](#) earlier today. This is one of the biggest health challenges Africa has faced in a generation. Adopting approaches which are adaptable to the African context is key to containing the spread. pic.twitter.com/iPejLseLhL

— Dr Matshidiso Moeti (@MoetiTshidi) **March 19, 2020**"

Key materials

- [YouTube recording of the briefing](#)
- [World Economic Forum COVID-19 Action Platform](#)
- [AFRO News Release: More than 600 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Africa](#)
- [AFRO News Release: Rapid Response Teams are racing against the spread of COVID in Africa](#)

Launch of SOLIDARITY trial

18 March 2020

WHO and partners are launching an international clinical trial that aims to generate robust data from around the world to find the most effective treatments for COVID-19. The SOLIDARITY trial provides simplified procedures to enable even overloaded hospitals to participate.

"

Research and development is an important part of our [#COVID19](#) response [@WHO](#) <https://t.co/f4odwpJc7n>

— Soumya Swaminathan (@doctorsoumya) **March 19, 2020**"

Key materials:

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 18 March 2020](#)

[Periscope recording of the media briefing](#)

[Video clips for broadcasters](#)

More than 320 000 learners enrol in online COVID-19 courses

18 March 2020

Real-time training during global emergencies is critical for effective preparedness and response.

The OpenWHO Massive Online Open Courses for COVID-19 provide learning resources for health professionals, decision-makers and the public. More than 320 000 learners have already enrolled.

As the pandemic continues to evolve, new resources will be added, additional language versions will continue to be rolled out, and existing courses will be updated to best reflect the changing context.

Courses include:

[Operational Planning Guidelines to Support Country Preparedness and Response](#)

[Infection Prevention and Control](#)

[Acute Respiratory Infections \(ARIs\) and basic hygiene measures to protect against infection](#)

[Clinical Care Severe Acute Respiratory Infection](#)

[Emerging respiratory viruses, including COVID-19: methods for detection, prevention, response and control](#)

"

The Massive Online Open Course at <https://t.co/aDo7E824zZ> has now over 323,000 enrollments for **#COVID19** courses. This platform was developed in 2017 as part of pandemic preparedness together with the "managing epidemic" handbook. <https://t.co/hlC8WqjIXX>

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) **March 17, 2020**"

More information:

[Managing epidemics: key facts about major deadly diseases](#)

WHO calls for urgent, aggressive actions to combat COVID-19, as cases soar in South-East Asia Region

17 March 2020

The World Health Organization today called on Member states in South-East Asia Region to urgently scale-up aggressive measures to combat COVID-19, as confirmed cases cross 480, and the disease claims eight lives.

Key Materials

[Press release](#)

New guidance on people affected by humanitarian crises

17 March 2020

To avoid the neglect and stigmatization of individuals in groups such as asylum seekers, internally displaced people and refugees, this interim guidance outlines 'Scaling-up COVID-19 Outbreak in Readiness and Response Operations in Camps and Camp-like Settings'.

WHO jointly developed the guidance with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

"

NEW: #COVID19 guidance on preparedness & response in humanitarian situations incl. in camp & camp-like settings <https://t.co/OL0QpK9YEF> [#coronaviruspic.twitter.com/4DKDqcEpu6](https://twitter.com/4DKDqcEpu6)

WHO | [New guidance on COVID-19 in humanitarian situations](#) | 17 March 2020

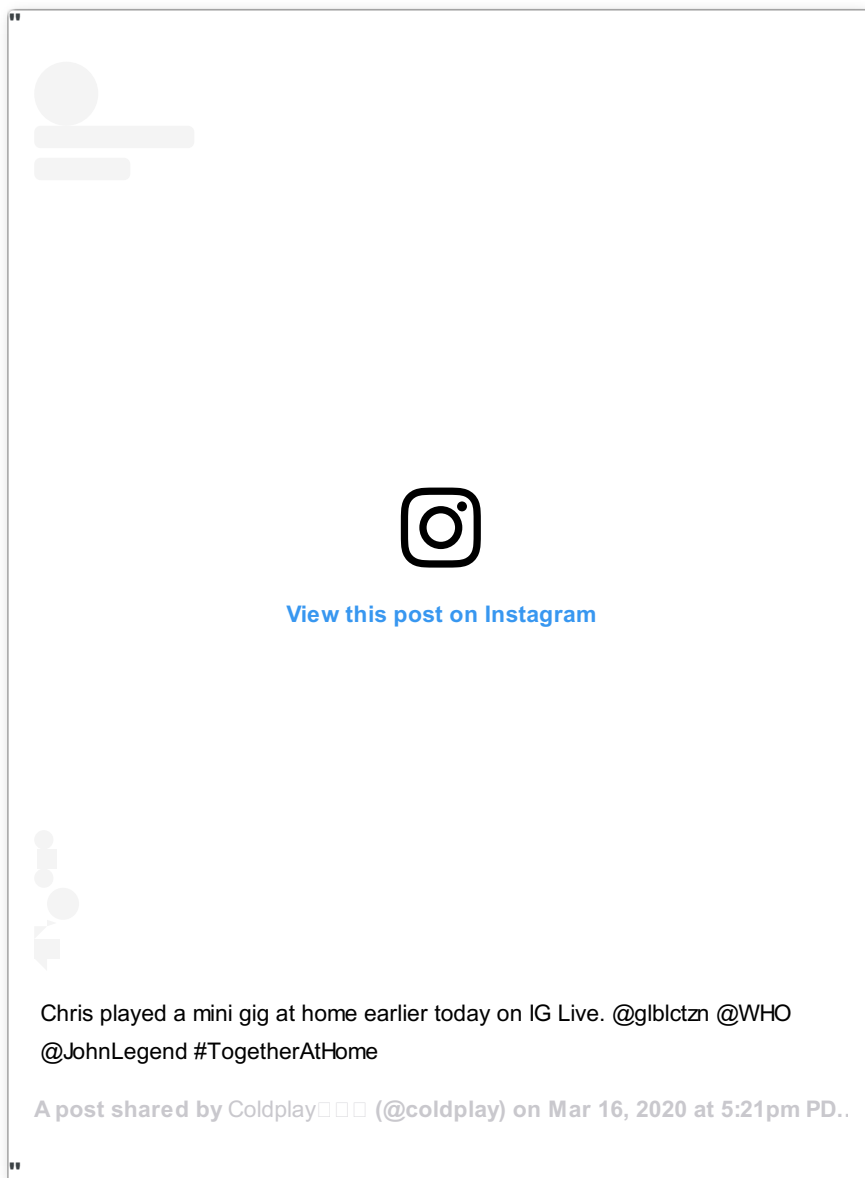
Key materials:

- [Interim Guidance on Scaling-up COVID-19 Outbreak in Readiness and Response Operations in Camps and Camp-like Settings \(jointly developed by IFRC, IOM, UNHCR and WHO\)](#)
- [Statement by Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, on the COVID-19 crisis](#)

#TogetherAtHome online concert series starts

16 March 2020

Chris Martin played a mini gig at home to kick off #TogetherAtHome, a virtual no-contact concert series that aims to promote physical distancing and taking action for global health, presented by WHO and Global Citizen. More Solidarity Sessions are planned to promote health, to show support for people who are staying at home to protect themselves and others from COVID-19, and to encourage donations to the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund.



Key materials:

[Instagram video of Coldplay #TogetherAtHome session](#)

[COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund](#)

"You cannot fight a fire blindfolded."

16 March 2020

Countries should test every suspected case of COVID-19.

If people test positive, they should be isolated and the people they have been in close contact with up to 2 days before they developed symptoms should be sought out, and those people should be tested too if they show symptoms of COVID-19.

WHO also advises that all confirmed cases, even mild cases, should be isolated in health facilities, to prevent transmission and provide adequate care.

But we recognize that many countries have already exceeded their capacity to care for mild cases in dedicated health facilities.

In that situation, countries should prioritize older patients and those with underlying conditions.

"

"We have a simple message for all countries:

test

test

test.

Test every suspected [#COVID19](#) case.

If they test positive, isolate them & find out who they have been in close contact with up to 2 days before they developed symptoms & test those people too"-[@DrTedros #coronavirus](#)

— World Health Organization (WHO) ([@WHO](#)) [March 16, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 16 March 2020](#)

[Full video of Press Conference - 16 March 2020](#)

[Video clips for broadcasters](#)

WHO Mission to Iraq covers detection and response

THE MISSION TO INCREASE COVID-19 DETECTION AND RESPONSE

15 March 2020

The mission, which comprised experts from the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office and from WHO headquarters in Geneva, held a series of meetings with national health authorities to identify the disease detection dynamics and at-risk populations, in addition to providing guidance on strengthening response and control measures.

The mission also reviewed the Ministry's overall readiness to deal with a potential increase in case reporting and the priority of establishing an Emergency Operation Centre to speed up action now that the disease has been announced as a global pandemic.

"

Head of @WHOEMRO team of experts Dr. Rana Hajja held a joint press conference with the MOH minister today. Dr Hajjeh stressed the collective responsibility for containing the spread of the virus by protecting ourselves, families, and the community. <https://t.co/RrGD7p0JDt> pic.twitter.com/V46gyRySd2

— WHO Iraq (@WHOIraq) March 12, 2020"

Key materials:

[News release](#)

[Video clip from MOH and mission press conference](#)

Launch of #SafeHands Challenge


13 March 2020


WHO launched the #SafeHands Challenge to promote the power of clean hands to fight the coronavirus.

To support the challenge to encourage people to clean their hands with soap or alcohol-based hand rub, Twitter created a new #HandWashing emoji.

Heads of State, footballers, singers and more have already taken part, with more people nominated to join the challenge every day.

"

There are several measures you can take to protect yourself from #COVID19. One of the most important ones is regular & safe hand hygiene. Here are the steps recommended by @WHO 

Show the  where and how you wash your hands. Join the WHO #SafeHands challenge!

pic.twitter.com/5ElZyiyZun

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) March 13, 2020"

Europe becomes epicenter of the pandemic

13 March 2020

Europe now has more reported cases and deaths than the rest of the world combined, apart from China.

More cases are now being reported every day than were reported in China at the height of its epidemic.

"

5,000 people have lost their lives to **#COVID19** - this is a tragic milestone.

Europe has now become the epicenter of the pandemic, with more reported cases and deaths than the rest of the world combined, apart from China. <https://t.co/ryTAmB9Znl>

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) **March 14, 2020**"

Key materials:

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 13 March 2020](#)

[Periscope reading of press briefing](#)

[Video for broadcasters](#)

Updated clinical guidance

13 March 2020

"

Updated **#COVID19** clinical guidance covers:

- ☐ Early case recognition
- ☐ Guidance for care of children, pregnant women, adults & older people
- ☐ Managing cases
- ☐ Infection prevention & control
- ☐ Sample collection & an update on investigational therapeutics
- ☐ <https://t.co/ZVaiu2C19V> [pic.twitter.com/yyOzlbtdEO](https://t.co/ZVaiu2C19V)

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) **March 15, 2020**"

Key materials

[Interim guidance: Clinical management of severe acute respiratory infection when novel coronavirus \(nCoV\) infection is suspected](#)

WHO, UN Foundation and partners launch first-of-its-kind COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund

13 March 2020

A new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Solidarity Response Fund will raise money from a wide range of donors to support the work of the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners to help countries respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund, the first-of-its-kind, enables private individuals, corporations and institutions anywhere in the world to come together to directly contribute to global response efforts, and has been created by the United Nations Foundation and the Swiss Philanthropy Foundation, together with WHO.

"

WHO, @unfoundation and partners launch first-of-its-kind #COVID19 Solidarity Response Fund.

More <https://t.co/WV9i5bp2LP#coronavirus> pic.twitter.com/seT4gLQKd7

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) March 13, 2020"

Key Materials:

[The COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund](#)

[Press release](#)

[Audio file of press conference - 13 March](#)

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 13 March 2020](#)

Expert mission to Iran concludes

12 March 2020

A five-day expert mission to Iran with experts from WHO, GOARN partners, Robert Koch Institute in Berlin and the Chinese Center for Disease Control has concluded.

"Everybody in the country is engaged in this response. The right and timely public health measures implemented on [an] adequate scale will make a difference," said Dr Richard Brennan, WHO Regional Emergency Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region and mission team lead.

Looking forward, Dr Brennan said more work needs to be done to protect health workers. The mission also held constructive discussions on ways to advance epidemiological data collection and analysis.

"

.@WHO mission to IR #Iran was impressed w/ sanitariums set up to receive recovering #COVID19 patients & mild cases, when needed. The team has shared recommendations on case management, epidemiological analysis, infection prevention/control & monitoring the overall response. pic.twitter.com/NH51rsQfyb

— WHO EMRO (@WHOEMRO) March 10, 2020"

Key materials:

[Press release](#)

Azerbaijan welcomes WHO mission

12 March 2020

During its 5-day mission, a team of WHO experts worked with the national response committee on developing a national preparedness and response plan for COVID-19.

The Government of Azerbaijan is contributing to global efforts to address COVID-19, coordinating with neighbouring countries, and has pledged US\$ 5 million to WHO's strategic preparedness and response plan.

Key materials:

[News release](#)

WHO characterizes COVID-19 as a pandemic

11 March 2020

Speaking at the COVID-19 media briefing, the WHO Director-General said:

"WHO has been assessing this outbreak around the clock and we are deeply concerned both by the alarming levels of spread and severity, and by the alarming levels of inaction.

We have therefore made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic.

Pandemic is not a word to use lightly or carelessly. It is a word that, if misused, can cause unreasonable fear, or unjustified acceptance that the fight is over, leading to unnecessary suffering and death.

Describing the situation as a pandemic does not change WHO's assessment of the threat posed by this virus. It doesn't change what WHO is doing, and it doesn't change what countries should do.

We have never before seen a pandemic sparked by a coronavirus. This is the first pandemic caused by a coronavirus.

And we have never before seen a pandemic that can be controlled, at the same time."

"

□ **BREAKING** □

"We have therefore made the assessment that [#COVID19](#) can be characterized as a pandemic"-[@DrTedros](#)
[#coronavirus pic.twitter.com/JqdsM2051A](#)

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [March 11, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 11 March 2020](#)

[Periscope recording of the press conference](#)

WHO issues schools guidance with UNICEF and IFRC

10 March 2020

WHO, UNICEF and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) outline critical considerations and practical checklists to keep schools safe, with helpful tips for parents and caregivers, as well as children and students themselves.

"

In coordination with [@WHO](#) and [@ifrc](#), we've issued guidance for schools, teachers, parents and caregivers for the prevention and control of [#COVID19](#). [#coronavirushttps://t.co/LjvoLV0Dy4](#)

— Henrietta H. Fore ([@unicefchief](#)) [March 10, 2020](#)"

Key materials

[News release](#)

[Guidance: Key Messages and Actions for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools](#)

Mental health and COVID-19

10 March 2020

WHO is providing guidance to help people manage fear, stigma and discrimination during COVID-19.

In the [#AskWHO](#) film below, expert Aiysha Malik answers public questions about mental health and preventing stress during the outbreak.

"

[#AskWHO](#) on mental health during [#COVID19](#). Ask your questions to our expert Aiysha Malik. [https://t.co/7iUsK6sSE1](#)

— World Health Organization (WHO) ([@WHO](#)) [March 10, 2020](#)"

Key materials

[Guidance: Mental Health Considerations during COVID-19 Outbreak](#)

[#AskWHO Q&A with Aiysha Malik](#)

“The rule of the game is: never give up.”

9 March 2020

“We are not at the mercy of this virus,” said the WHO Director-General at the 9 March media briefing.

All countries must aim to stop transmission and prevent the spread of COVID-19, whether they face no cases, sporadic cases, clusters or community transmission.

“Let hope be the antidote to fear.

Let solidarity be the antidote to blame.

Let our shared humanity be the antidote to our shared threat”

”

“Now that the [#coronavirus](#) has a foothold in so many countries, the threat of a pandemic has become very real.

But it would be the first pandemic in history that could be controlled.

The bottom line is: we are not at the mercy of this virus”-[@DrTedros #COVID19](#)

— World Health Organization (WHO) ([@WHO](#)) [March 9, 2020](#)”

Key materials:

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 9 March 2020](#)

[Periscope recording of the press conference](#)

Interim guidance on critical preparedness, readiness and response actions

8 March 2020

Drawing on existing materials, this guidance describes the preparedness, readiness and response actions for four different transmission scenarios:

1. No cases
2. Sporadic cases: 1 or more cases, imported or locally detected
3. Clusters of cases in time, geographic location and/or common exposure
4. Community transmission: larger outbreaks of local transmission

”

Every country should urgently take all necessary measures to slow further spread and to protect health systems

from becoming overwhelmed with patients seriously ill with [#COVID19](https://t.co/4QQ7VcQPe4) <https://t.co/4QQ7VcQPe4> [#coronavirus](https://t.co/4QQ7VcQPe4) [pic.twitter.com/mO1gBlzVGz](https://t.co/4QQ7VcQPe4)

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [March 7, 2020](#)"

Key materials

- [Critical preparedness, readiness and response actions for COVID-19](#)
- [WHO Director-General Twitter thread listing examples of national containment and preparedness measures](#)

Marking 100 000 cases

7 March 2020

Marking this sombre moment, WHO reminded all countries and communities that the spread of this virus can be significantly slowed or even reversed through the implementation of robust containment and control activities.

Every effort to contain the virus and slow the spread saves lives. These efforts give health systems and all of society much needed time to prepare, and researchers more time to identify effective treatments and develop vaccines.

Allowing uncontrolled spread should not be a choice of any government, as it will harm not only the citizens of that country but affect other countries as well.

We must stop, contain, control, delay and reduce the impact of this virus at every opportunity. Every person has the capacity to contribute, to protect themselves, to protect others, whether in the home, the community, the healthcare system, the workplace or the transport system.

"

Today for the first time 100 countries are reporting [#COVID19](#) cases. This comes after the [WHO](#) reached 100,000 cases yesterday. While very serious, this should not discourage us. There are many things everyone, everywhere can and should do now. [#coronavirushttps://t.co/7olb7FXEZ7](https://t.co/7olb7FXEZ7)

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) [March 8, 2020](#)"

Key materials

- [Statement on cases of COVID-19 surpassing 100 000](#)
- [Situation dashboard](#)

WHO publishes draft R&D blueprint draft for COVID-19

6 March 2020

"Research—implemented as policy and practice—can save lives and needs to be integrated into the response from the start."

The R&D roadmap for COVID-19 outlines research priorities in 9 key areas. These include the natural history of the virus, epidemiology, diagnostics, clinical management, ethical considerations and social sciences, as well as longer-term goals for therapeutics and vaccines.

"

The [@WHO @rd_blueprint](#) draft is on our website. Was developed by a global network of scientists and outlines knowledge gaps and key research priorities for [#COVID-19](#) <https://t.co/rfni25Yg22>

— Soumya Swaminathan (@doctorsoumya) [March 7, 2020](#)"

Key materials

- [A coordinated Global Research Roadmap](#)
- [R&D Blueprint page for COVID-19](#)
- [WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 6 March 2020](#)

Launch of Be Ready campaign

5 March 2020

WHO launches a new social media campaign called Be Ready for COVID-19, which urges people to be safe, smart and kind.

'Be Ready' was launched because everyone can prepare for COVID-19, including individuals, governments and businesses.

We're calling on people to **Be Safe** by remembering tried & tested public health measures, like regular hand washing & staying at least 1 metre (3 feet) from anyone coughing or sneezing. These ordinary measures are extraordinarily effective at fighting COVID-19.

We're asking people to **Be Smart** about COVID-19 by rejecting rumours & taking care to only share information from trusted sources. Everyone should keep informed about what is happening in their area and follow the recommendations of local authorities.

We're reminding people to **Be Kind** through addressing stigma and looking out for one another - especially the most vulnerable and those in isolation. Compassion can combat #COVID19.

Below is a tweet from footballer Paul Pogba getting involved with the campaign.

"

[#Dab](#) to beat [#coronavirus](#). Follow [@WHO](#) advice to Be Ready for [#COVID19](#) <https://t.co/Ej0FqcHbj5pic.twitter.com/4DhQ7NsZYk>

— Paul Pogba (@paulpogba) [March 13, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 5 March 2020](#)

“The whole government should be involved”

5 March 2020

Speaking at the COVID-19 media briefing, the Director-General emphasized that the COVID-19 epidemic “can be pushed back, but only with a collective coordinated and comprehensive approach that engages the entire machinery of government.”

”

Leadership from the top: We call on country leaders to mobilize their plans, coordinating every part of government, not just the health ministry – security, diplomacy, finance, commerce, transport, trade, information and more – the whole government should be involved. [#COVID19](#)

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) [March 5, 2020](#)”

Key materials:

- [WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 5 March 2020](#)
- [Periscope recording of the press conference](#)
- [Video clips for the broadcasters](#)
- [Daily COVID-19 situation report](#)

“This is unprecedented”

4 March 2020

Dr Maria Van Kerkhove, WHO's technical lead for COVID-19, outlines the wealth of knowledge generated about this new disease in just eight weeks.

”

We are eight weeks into this [#COVID19](#) outbreak: yet we have identified the virus, we have the genetic sequence, PCR & serological assay in use. This wealth of knowledge is unprecedented for a new disease.[#coronavirus](#) pic.twitter.com/dNAlepNEek

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [March 5, 2020](#)”

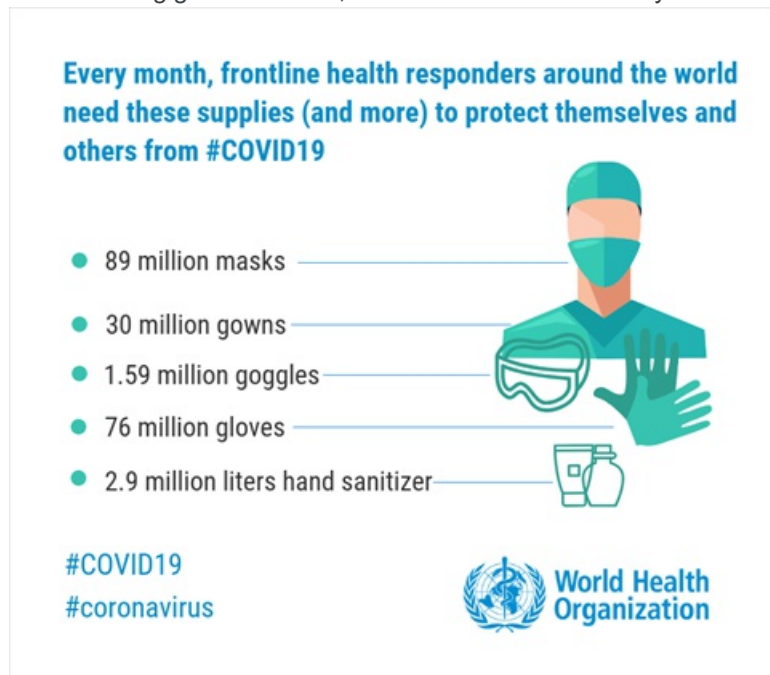
Shortage of personal protective equipment endangering health workers worldwide

3 Mar 2020

WHO has shipped nearly half a million sets of personal protective equipment to 47 countries, but the global supply is rapidly depleting.

Shortages are leaving doctors, nurses and other frontline workers dangerously ill-equipped to care for COVID-19 patients, due to limited access to supplies such as gloves, medical masks, respirators, goggles, face shields, gowns, and aprons.

To meet rising global demand, WHO estimates that industry must increase manufacturing by 40 per cent.



Key materials:

- [News release](#)
- [Interim WHO guidance: Rational use of personal protective equipment for COVID-19](#)
- [WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 – 3 March 2020](#)
- [Periscope recording of the press conference](#)
- [Video clips for the broadcasters](#)
- [Daily COVID-19 situation report](#)

“There’s no choice but to act now”

2 March 2020

Speaking at the COVID-19 media briefing, the Director-General emphasized that the virus is capable of community transmission but can be contained with the right measures.

“

Our message to all countries is: this is not one-way street. We can push this [#coronavirus](#) back.

Your actions now will determine the course of the [#COVID19](#) outbreak in your country.

There’s no choice but to act now. pic.twitter.com/osNPVas2Tr

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) [March 2, 2020](#)

Key materials:

- [WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 2 March 2020](#)
- [Periscope recording of the press conference](#)
- [Video clips for the broadcasters](#)

- [Daily COVID-19 situation report](#)

Mission of WHO experts arrive in Iran

2 March 2020

Landing in Tehran, the experts aim to identify transmission dynamics and at-risk populations, as well as provide guidance on strengthening and scaling up the response and readiness efforts.

The mission arrived along with a shipment containing medical supplies and protective equipment to support over 15,000 health care workers and enough laboratory kits to test and diagnose nearly 100,000 people.

The mission will build on the COVID-19 preparedness and response work already underway by WHO's country office in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"

A team of [@WHO](#) experts has landed in Tehran, IR [#Iran](#) to work w/ health & other authorities to review/support the ongoing response to [#COVID19](#) outbreak in [□□](#). The plane carrying the team also contained a shipment of medical supplies & protective equipment [□□](#) <https://t.co/Kb8Hug4INd> [pic.twitter.com/zRBS0pfqpc](https://t.co/zRBS0pfqpc)

— WHO EMRO (@WHOEMRO) [March 2, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[EMRO news release](#)

UN releases US\$15 million for COVID-19 response

1 March 2020

UN Humanitarian Chief Mark Lowcock released US\$15 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to WHO and UNICEF to help fund global efforts to contain the COVID-19 virus.

This grant will help countries with fragile health systems boost their detection and response operations. It will fund essential activities including monitoring the spread of the virus, investigating cases, and the operation of national laboratories.

"

\$15 million has just been released from [@UNCERF](#) to help fund global efforts to contain the [#coronavirus](#).

The funds will help countries with fragile health systems boost their detection and response operations. [#COVID19](#) <https://t.co/J4qWgZVG9R>

— UN Humanitarian (@UNOCHA) [March 1, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[WHO-OCHA-UNICEF news release](#)

What every individual can do to protect themselves and others

28 February 2020

In a daily COVID-19 press briefing the WHO Director-General said that more than 20 vaccines are in development globally,

and several therapeutics are in clinical trials. But we don't need to wait for vaccines and therapeutics. There are things every individual can do to protect themselves and others today.

"

"There are 10 basic things that you should know.

1) Clean your hands regularly with an alcohol-based hand rub, or wash them with soap & water.

Touching your face after touching contaminated surfaces or sick people is one of the ways the [#coronavirus](#) can be transmitted"-[@DrTedros](#) [pic.twitter.com/Ty8J0zoGKS](https://twitter.com/Ty8J0zoGKS)

— World Health Organization (WHO) ([@WHO](#)) [February 28, 2020](#)"

Key materials

- [WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 28 February 2020](#)
- [Periscope recording of the press conference](#)
- [Video clips for broadcasters](#)
- [Daily COVID-19 situation report](#)

What every country should be asking itself

27 February 2020

Discussing preparedness for COVID-19, the WHO Director-General listed questions every health minister should be able to answer. Here are a selection:

- Are we ready for the first case?
- Do we have enough medical oxygen, ventilators and other vital equipment?
- How will we know if there are cases in other areas of the country?
- Do our health workers have the training and equipment they need to stay safe?
- Do we have the right measures at airports and border crossings to test people who are sick?
- Do our labs have the right chemicals that allow them to test samples?
- Are we ready to treat patients with severe or critical disease?
- Do our hospitals and clinics have the right procedures to prevent and control infections?
- Do our people have the right information? Do they know what the disease looks like?

"

Daily media briefing on [#COVID19](#) with [@DrTedros](#) [#coronavirus](#) <https://t.co/0MwL15ofKt>

— World Health Organization (WHO) ([@WHO](#)) [February 27, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

- [Periscope recording of press conference](#)
- [WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the mission briefing on COVID-19 - 27 February 2020](#)
- [Video for broadcasters](#)

Get your workplace ready for COVID-19

26 February 2020

WHO has issued new COVID-19 guidance for businesses and employers, which outlines simple ways to prevent the spread of

the virus, things to consider when employees travel and how to get your business ready in case COVID-19 arrives in your community.

Key materials:

[Workplace guidance](#)

#AskWHO about COVID-19

26 February 2020

Watch Dr Maria Van Kerkhove, WHO's technical lead on the new coronavirus, answer questions from the public about COVID-19. She begins by explaining how the virus spreads and how to protect yourself from COVID-19. Dr Van Kerkhove was a member of the recent joint mission of experts to China to learn more about the outbreak.

"

LIVE [#AskWHO](#) on [#COVID19](#) with [@mvankerkhove](#) [#coronavirus](#) <https://t.co/ZxbbOq5hLE>

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [February 26, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[WHO advice on how to protect yourself](#)

Do your part to stop stigma and combat COVID-19

25 February 2020

The WHO Director-General has repeatedly called for "solidarity, not stigma" to address COVID-19.

WHO has worked with UNICEF and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies on a guide to preventing and addressing the social stigma associated with the disease.

It's vital to fight stigma because it can drive people to hide the illness, not seek health care immediately and discourage them from adopting healthy behaviours.

This guide includes some tips and messages, as well as dos and don'ts on language when talking about COVID-19.

"

Given that [#COVID19](#) is a new disease, it is understandable that its emergence and spread cause confusion,

anxiety and fear among the general public. These factors can give rise to harmful stereotypes.<https://t.co/7kH9y0NViC> #coronavirus pic.twitter.com/5CQK2OSNih

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) February 25, 2020"

Key materials:

[Guide to preventing and addressing social stigma](#)

WHO-China joint mission shares findings and recommendations

25 February 2020

The team of 25 international and Chinese experts travelled to several different provinces, with a small group going to Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak.

Among the team's findings was that the epidemic peaked and plateaued between the 23rd of January and the 2nd of February, and has been declining steadily since then. The team also estimates that the measures taken in China have averted a significant number of cases.

In a press conference in Geneva on Tuesday 25 February, Dr Bruce Aylward, the mission's lead, reported back on what China has done, its impact and implications.

Key materials:

- [Periscope recording of Dr Aylward's press briefing](#)
- [WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the mission briefing on COVID-19 - 26 February 2020](#)
- [Report of the WHO-China Joint Mission on Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

WHO-led team of experts travel to Italy

24 February 2020

A team of experts from WHO and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) will focus on: understanding how events developed, learning from the Italian experience and supporting control and prevention efforts by the authorities.

To limit further human to human transmission, WHO experts will provide support in the areas of clinical management, infection prevention and control, surveillance and risk communication.

"

Joint team of [@WHO_Europe](#) and [#ECDC](#) is set and ready to help [@MinisteroSalute](#) on the ground with ☐ clinical management ☐ infection control ☐ surveillance ☐ risk communication. Top priority to understand and retain [#Covid_19](#) transmission.

— Hans Kluge (@hans_kluge) February 23, 2020"

Key materials:

[WHO Regional Office for Europe news release](#)

UN Secretary-General visits WHO

24 February 2020

UN Secretary-General António Guterres met with the WHO Director-General and other WHO leaders, receiving a briefing on COVID-19, Ebola and polio. He expressed great admiration for health workers, including in China, who are working tirelessly to save lives. The UN Secretary-General also stressed that there is no space for stigma and discrimination and said we must be guided by science and human rights-based interventions.

"

As our [@WHO](#) colleagues continue their relentless work in response to the [#coronavirus](#) outbreak, I urge people worldwide to continue following their advice.

We need to rely on science and facts, not stigma and discrimination to get through this [#COVID19](#) outbreak.
pic.twitter.com/BDgMSA7C4i

— António Guterres (@antonioguterres) [February 24, 2020](#)"

"

"My strong appeal to all countries is to assume their responsibilities and to know that they can fully count on the [@WHO](#) to support them in that effort," – UN Secretary-General visits the World Health Organization, meets with [@DrTedros](#), discusses [#COVID19](#) outbreak. pic.twitter.com/gHghffgvLi

— UN Geneva (@UNGeneva) [February 24, 2020](#)"

WHO leaders address AU and Africa CDC Emergency Meeting

22 February 2020

WHO's Director-General and Regional Director for Africa addressed an emergency meeting of ministers of health to agree on a continental strategy for Africa to strengthen preparedness and responses to the COVID-19 outbreak.

"

It's great to see African leadership in action. Today's meeting on [#coronavirus](#) convened by the [@_AfricanUnion](#) and attended by [@WHO](#) and partners is a powerful demonstration of collective political commitment to tackling [#coronavirus](#) pic.twitter.com/crsYAZIC1F

— Dr Matshidiso Moeti (@MoetiTshidi) [February 22, 2020](#)"

11 000 African health care workers have been trained on COVID-19

22 February 2020

During the past month about 11 000 African health workers have been trained using WHO's online courses on COVID-19, which are available free of charge in English, French & other languages.

"

"During the past month about 11,000 African [#healthworkers](#) have been trained using WHO's online courses on [#COVID19](#), which are available free of charge in English, French & other languages at <https://t.co/RjHSBkVjIH>"-[@DrTedros](#) [#coronavirus](#)

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [February 22, 2020](#)

"

Special envoys on COVID-19 selected

21 February 2020

The WHO Director-General appointed six special envoys on COVID-19, to provide strategic advice and high-level political advocacy and engagement in different parts of the world.

The six envoys are:

- Professor Dr Maha El Rabbat, former Minister of Health of Egypt;
- Dr David Nabarro, former special adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Climate Change;
- Dr John Nkengasong, Director of the African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention;
- Dr Mirta Roses, former Director of the WHO Region of the Americas;
- Dr Shin Young-soo, former Regional Director of the WHO Region of the Western Pacific;
- Professor Samba Sow, Director-General of the Center for Vaccine Development in Mali.

"

To reinforce political advocacy on **#COVID19** around the globe, **@WHO** named 6 global envoys. Africa is ably represented by Dr **@JNkengasong**, director of **@AfricaCDC**, Dr Samba Sow, DG of the Centre for Vaccine Development in **#Mali** +Prof Maha El Rabbat, former Health Min of **#Egypt**. pic.twitter.com/lmyED8YLmz

— Moussa Faki Mahamat (@AUC_MoussaFaki) February 22, 2020"

"

I am pleased to be appointed as one of the **@WHO** Special Envoys for the global **#COVID19** response. Thank you for the opportunity. I will contribute as best I can to the collective response effort. <https://t.co/XdpqYAld4g>

— Dr David Nabarro (@davidnabarro) February 22, 2020

"

Key materials:

[WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the 21 February 2020 media briefing](#)

WHO Director-General warns that the window of opportunity is “narrowing”

21 February 2020

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus emphasised that the window of opportunity to contain the outbreak is “narrowing” and that the international community needs to act quickly, including through financing.

"

Countries with weaker health systems need the ☐’s focus & support now, due to the potential for **#COVID19** to spread to those locations.

We must take advantage of the window of opportunity we have to contain the outbreak. We don’t want to look back later & regret failing to act.

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) February 21, 2020"

WHO and countries are engaged in massive preparedness activities

18 February 2020

WHO has shipped supplies of personal protective equipment to 21 countries.

By the end of this week, 40 countries in Africa and 29 in the Americas are due to have the ability to detect COVID-19.

....

Key materials:

- [WHO Director-General's remarks](#)
- [Periscope recording of press briefing \(34m52s\)](#)
- [Video for broadcasters](#)

WHO issues guidance on mass gathering and taking care of ill travellers

17 February 2020

Based on lessons from H1N1 and Ebola, WHO has outlined planning considerations for organizers of mass gatherings, in light of the COVID-19 outbreak. It has also issued advice on how to detect and take care of ill travellers, who are suspected COVID-19 cases.

Interim guidance:

- [Key planning recommendations for Mass Gatherings in the context of the current COVID-19 outbreak](#)
- [Management of ill travellers at Points of Entry – international airports, seaports and ground crossings – in the context of COVID -19 outbreak](#)

WHO Director-General calls for solidarity at Munich Security Conference

15 February 2020

"We must be guided by solidarity, not stigma. The greatest enemy we face is not the virus itself; it's the stigma that turns us against each other. We must stop stigma and hate."

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called on the international community to use the window of opportunity to prepare for COVID-19 at the [Munich Security Conference](#), a leading global forum on preeminent crises and future security challenges.

"

"We are encouraged that the steps [#China](#) has taken to contain the outbreak at its source appear to have bought the world time – even though those steps have come at greater cost to China itself," says [@DrTedros](#) in his update on [#COVID19](#) at [#MSC2020](#). [@WHO #coronavirus pic.twitter.com/tThddMnxkj](#)

— Munich Security Conference (@MunSecConf) [February 15, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

- [WHO newsWHO news release](#)
- [WHO WHO Director-General's remarks at the Munich Security Conference](#)
- [MSC video recording of the WHO Director-General's remarks](#)

UN activates WHO-led Crisis Management Team

12 February 2020

The Crisis Management Team (CMT) mechanism brings together WHO, [OCHA](#), [IMO](#), [UNICEF](#), [ICAO](#), [WFP](#), [FAO](#), the [World Bank](#) and several UN Secretariat departments.

The CMT will be managed by the Executive Director of WHO Health Emergencies Programme, Dr Mike Ryan. It will help WHO focus on the health response while the other agencies will bring their expertise to bear on the wider social, economic and developmental implications of the outbreak.

Key materials:

[Situation report - 23](#)

Research and innovation forum sets priorities for COVID-19 research

12 February 2020

More than 400 experts and funders met at WHO's Geneva HQ to accelerate research to stop the COVID-19 outbreak. Featuring updates from the frontlines of the response in China, the meeting addressed issues such as: developing easy-to-apply diagnostics, accelerating existing vaccine candidates and preventing infection.

"

Last week, I was honoured to be part of the global research and innovation forum on [#COVID19](#) convened by [@WHO](#). The discussions we had and decisions made will be key in defining outbreak response activities now and in the long term

[#NCDSundayReflections](#) pic.twitter.com/VRDlzjEI1B

— Chikwe Ihekweazu (@Chikwe_I) [February 16, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

- [WHO news release](#)
- [R&D Blueprint webpage](#)

Novel coronavirus disease named COVID-19

11 February 2020

Guidelines mandated that the name of the disease could not refer to a geographical location, an animal, an individual or group of people. It also needed to relate to the disease and be pronounceable. This choice will help guard against the use of other names that might be inaccurate or stigmatizing.

"

□ **BREAKING** □

"We now have a name for the [#2019nCoV](#) disease:

COVID-19.

I'll spell it: C-O-V-I-D hyphen one nine – COVID-19"

-[@DrTedros](#) [#COVID19](#) pic.twitter.com/Kh0wx2qfzk

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [February 11, 2020](#)"

Global community asks for US\$675 million to help protect vulnerable countries from outbreak

5 February 2020

With the 2019-nCoV outbreak set to test the resilience of countries, the US\$675 million [Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan](#) (SPRP) aims to protect states with weaker health systems.

Covering areas ranging from international coordination to country readiness to research and innovation, the SPRP aims to limit transmission, provide early care, communicate key information and minimize social and economic impacts.

Key materials:

- [WHO news release](#)
- [Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan](#)
- [Video for broadcasters: WHO press conference](#)

Public Health Emergency of International Concern declared

30 January 2020

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus declared the 2019-nCoV outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, following a second meeting of the Emergency Committee convened under the International Health Regulations.

Acknowledging that cases have been reported in five WHO regions in one month, the Committee noted that early detection, isolating and treating cases, contact tracing and social distancing measures – in line with the level of risk – can all work to interrupt virus spread.

Key materials:

- [Statement on the second meeting of the International Health Regulations \(2005\) Emergency Committee](#)
- [WHO Director-General's statement](#)
- [Press conference video for broadcasters](#)

WHO and China leaders meet in Beijing to discuss coronavirus outbreak

28 January 2020

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus met with China's President Xi Jinping in Beijing about the coronavirus outbreak.

Dr Tedros was joined by WHO Regional Director Dr Takeshi Kasai and Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme Dr Mike Ryan, and also met State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi and Minister of Health Ma Xiaowei.

The discussions focused on continued collaboration on containment measures in Wuhan, public health measures in other cities and provinces, conducting further studies on the severity and transmissibility of the virus, continuing to share data, and for China to share biological material with WHO. These measures will advance scientific understanding of the virus and contribute to the development of medical countermeasures such as vaccines and treatments.

The two sides agreed that WHO would send international experts to visit China as soon as possible to work with Chinese counterparts on increasing understanding of the outbreak to guide global response efforts.

"

Stopping the spread of the new [#coronavirus](#) both in [#China](#) and globally is [@WHO](#)'s highest priority. We are working closely with the [□□](#) government on measures to understand the virus and limit transmission.
<https://t.co/WGadkXEpP5>

— Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (@DrTedros) [January 28, 2020](#)

"

Key materials:

[News release](#)

Launch of free online introductory course on the novel coronavirus

25 January 2020

Covering topics such as why the novel coronavirus is a global threat to human health and how to effectively engage communities in the response, this free online course gives an introduction to the novel coronavirus. It is available for free and online in English, French, Spanish and Chinese.

[WHO_nCoV_Introductory Video](#) from [openWHO](#) on [Vimeo](#)

Key materials:

OpenWHO course: [Emerging respiratory viruses, including nCoV: methods for detection, prevention, response and control](#)

First meeting of Emergency Committee regarding the novel coronavirus outbreak

23 January 2020

On 22-23 February, the WHO Director General convened the Emergency Committee to consider the outbreak of the novel coronavirus in China, with cases also reported in the Republic of Korea, Japan, Thailand and Singapore.

Several Committee members considered it still too early to declare a Public Health Emergency of International Concern

(PHEIC), given its restrictive and binary nature. Among other recommendations, the Committee advised that it be recalled in approximately 10 days.

Key materials:

[Statement on the first meeting of the International Health Regulations \(2005\) Emergency Committee](#)

WHO makes field visit to Wuhan, China

21 January 2020

The delegation observed and discussed active surveillance processes, temperature screening at Wuhan Tianhe airport, laboratory facilities, infection prevention and control measures at Zhongnan hospital and its associated fever clinics, and the deployment of a test kit to detect the virus.

The delegation also discussed public communication efforts and China's plan to expand the case definition for the novel coronavirus, which will build a clearer picture of the spectrum of severity of the virus.

At the end of the visit, the Chinese Government released the primers and probes used in the test kit for the novel coronavirus to help other countries detect it. Chinese experts also shared a range of protocols that will be used in developing international guidelines, including case definitions, clinical management protocols and infection control.

Key materials:

[Statement](#)

First case of novel coronavirus outside of China confirmed

13 January 2020

Officials confirmed a case of the novel coronavirus in Thailand. It was not unexpected that cases of the novel coronavirus would emerge outside of China and reinforces why WHO calls for active monitoring and preparedness in other countries.

"

On 13 January 2020, the [Ministry of Public Health @pr_moph](#) reported the first imported case of lab-confirmed novel [#coronavirus](#) (2019-nCoV) from [#Wuhan](#), [#China](#) <https://t.co/Wr6VZTnCj2> [pic.twitter.com/U7Njua8gvr](https://t.co/Wr6VZTnCj2)

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [January 14, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[News release](#)

China makes genome sequencing of novel coronavirus publicly available

12 January 2020

China shares the genetic sequence of the novel coronavirus, which will be very important for other countries as they develop specific diagnostic kits.

"

Whole genome sequences for the novel [#coronavirus](#) (2019-nCoV) from the Chinese [authorities](#) were shared

with WHO and have also been submitted by Chinese authorities to the GISAID platform so that they can be accessed by public health authorities, laboratories and researchers. pic.twitter.com/wmtGf4dWI

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [January 11, 2020](#)"

Key materials:

[Disease outbreak news item](#)

WHO issues its first guidance on the novel coronavirus

10 January 2020

Developed with reference to other coronaviruses, such as [SARS](#) and [MERS](#), WHO issued a tool for countries to check their ability to detect and respond to a novel coronavirus.

This information is to help with identifying main gaps, assessing risks and planning for additional investigations, response and control actions.

Key materials:

[National capacities review tool](#)

WHO reports on pneumonia of unknown cause in China

5 January 2020

WHO published its risk assessment and advice and reported on the status of patients and the public health response by national authorities to the cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan.

Key materials:

[Disease outbreak news item](#)

WHO responding to a cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan

4 January 2020

WHO announced it would work across its 3 levels – country office, regional office and HQ – to track the situation and share details as they emerged.

"

[#China](#) has reported to WHO a cluster of [#pneumonia](#) cases —with no deaths— in Wuhan, Hubei Province □□ . Investigations are underway to identify the cause of this illness.

— World Health Organization (WHO) (@WHO) [January 4, 2020](#)"

Pneumonia of unknown cause reported to WHO China Office

31 December 2019

At the close of 2019, the WHO China Country Office was informed of a pneumonia of unknown cause, detected in the city of

Wuhan in Hubei province, China. According to the authorities, some patients were operating dealers or vendors in the Huanan Seafood market.

Staying in close contact with national authorities, WHO began monitoring the situation and requested further information on the laboratory tests performed and the different diagnoses considered.

Key materials:

Disease outbreak news item

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