



# COVID-19 OUTBREAK IN LIBERIA

**Situation Report**  
**22 March 2020 as of 22 hours**  
**Report No. 7\_2020**



**Date of onset of outbreak:** 16 March 2020

**Data Source:** County Incident Management & National Reference Laboratory

## I. HIGHLIGHTS

- On the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020, no new case was confirmed in Liberia
- As of the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020, a total of 31 persons have been screened for COVID-19 out of which 3 were confirmed positive
- The 3 confirmed cases are still in admission, clinically stable and there has been no death of COVID-19 in Liberia
- Twenty-four samples collected for testing (22-03-20) bringing the total sample collected to 55
- As of the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020, the total number of contacts documented is 276:
  - 49 high risk
  - 168 low risk
  - 59 pending classification
- Screening has since been heightened at all ground crossings, air and sea points of entry into Liberia
- A multi-sectorial national emergency operations center (EOC), activated continues to coordinate national response activities
- Since the 10 February 2020, about 400 travelers have been placed under Precautionary Observation Centers (POC):
  - 207 completed 14 days
  - 185 still in POC

## II. Epidemiological Situation

### Case one (Index case)

The case-patient is a 46-year-old male Liberian national who is a resident of Cabral Estate, Central Monrovia District, Montserrado County. On March 9, 2020, case travelled to Switzerland on official duty. He returned to Liberia on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020 via SN Brussels airlines flight 241 at about 6p.m. Onset of symptoms (fever and unproductive cough) was 14<sup>th</sup> March and sought over-the-counter medication on 15<sup>th</sup> March from Lucky Pharmacy, 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Sinkor, Monrovia.

The case-patient self-reported to the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) on the 15<sup>th</sup> March at about 10:43a.m. Sample was collected and tested at the National Public Health Reference Laboratory. The positive test result was received at 3am on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Within 12 hours, the case-patient had been isolated, contact identification, listing and monitoring commenced, and National Public Health Emergency declared and WHO notified.

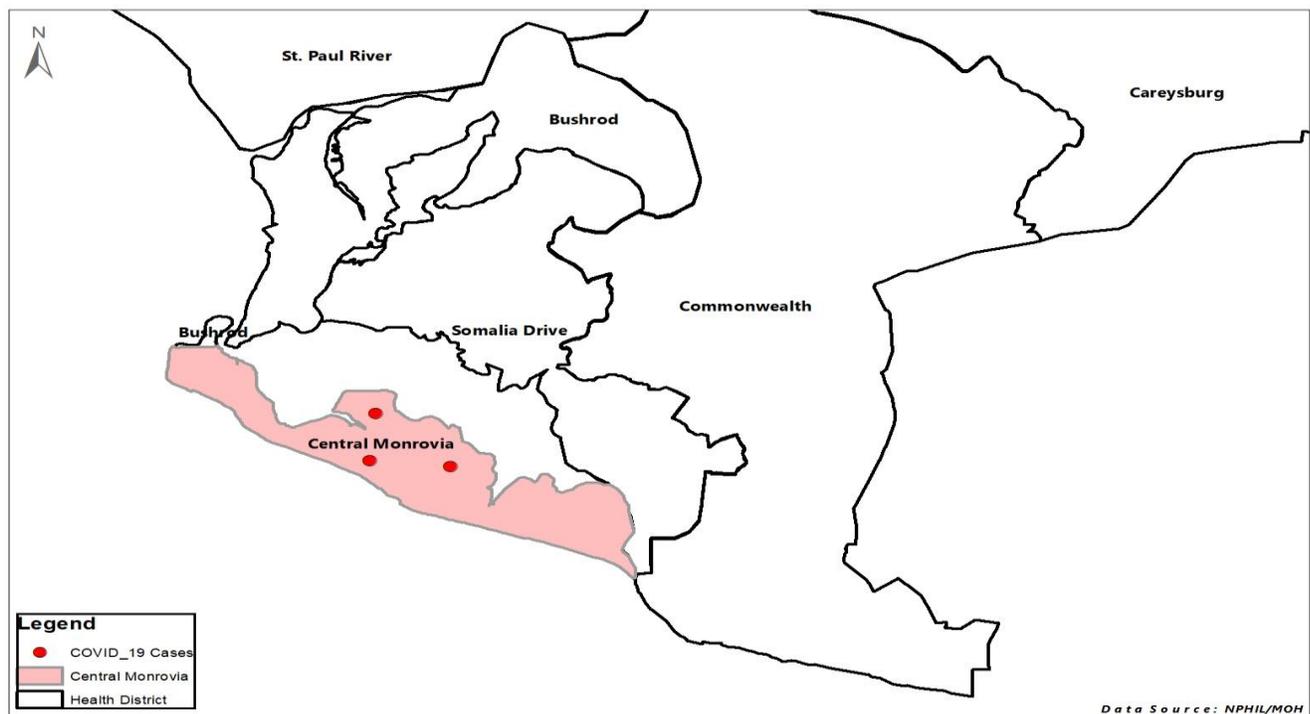
### Case two

The second confirmed case, a 57-year-old male, who resides in the Congo Town community. He was high risk contact, a domestic staff (cook) to the index case. He was tested positive on March 17, 2020. A total of eight (8) contacts were generated and line listed.

### Case three

The third confirmed case, a 63-year-old female, Liberian and a resident of Sinkor, Monrovia. The Case-patient presented at the J-F. K Memorial Hospital with signs and symptoms of fever, cough, weakness vomiting, diarrhea and loss of appetite on the 19 March, 2020.

Preliminary investigation shows that she attended a beach party hosted by a friend on March 8, 2020 and had contact with a traveler from Italy. Date of symptoms onset was March 12, 2020. Medical history further revealed that she consulted Aspen Medical Clinic and Laboratory Clinic (12 & 17 March respectively) but to no avail. As condition persisted, she revisited Aspen Medical Clinic on 19 March 21, 2020 but was referred to J.F.K Memorial Hospital for advance care. Sample was collected and tested positive on March 20, 2020. This case has no link with the first two confirmed cases.



**Figure 1: Geographical Distribution of Confirmed Cases by Health Districts, Montserratado County**

<b>Table 1: COVID-19 Summary, From March 16-22, 2020</b>	
<b>Number of new confirmed case on the 22 March, 2020</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Number of confirmed cases</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Number of Counties with Confirmed case/s</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total number of Health Districts with Confirmed Case/s</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total in Admission/Isolation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total suspected cases</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Number of new contacts on 22 March, 2020</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total Contacts under follow up</b>	<b>276</b>
<b>Number of high-risk contacts in quarantine</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Total Number of High-risk contacts</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Number of Lab. Samples collected on the 22 March, 2020</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Cumulative number of samples collected</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Number of samples tested</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Number of sample/s result pending</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Number of deaths in confirmed</b>	<b>0</b>

### **III. Public Health Actions initiated following confirmation**

#### **1. Coordination:**

- Public Health Emergency Management System/ Public Health Emergency Operation Center activated to level 1 at National and County level (Montserrado County) led by NPHIL. Incident Management System meetings are held daily at 10.00 a.m. (*Consideration for a virtual meeting*)
- Ministerial press briefing held twice weekly
- The Special Presidential Advisory Committee on COVID-19 (SPACO) was officially launched, chaired by His Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic
- National Strategic Response plan/IAP updated and extended to 9 months to include recovery
- Coordination meeting held daily

#### **2. Epidemiology and Surveillance:**

- Airport continues at the international port until the dead line date
- Deployed additional case investigators to support Montserrado county team to investigate and trace/monitor contacts
- Daily sitrep production and dissemination
- Plans to scale up pneumonia-like surveillance in all counties

**Suspected case:**

Any person with

- History of travel to any affected country within 14 days OR
- Close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 infection within 14 days OR
- Exposure to healthcare facility in a country where hospital associated CoVid-19 infections have been reported with or without fever, cough, difficulty breathing

**Community Case Definition:**

- Any person with hot skin, cough, not breathing well, and who has travelled outside Liberia recently OR who has taken care of sick person in Liberia

**Probable case:**

- A suspected case for whom testing for COVID-19 is inconclusive or for whom testing was positive on a pan-coronavirus assay

**Confirmed case:**

Any person with laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 infection with or without signs and symptoms

**2. Case Management & IPC:**

- No new case for the 22 march 2020
- Total of 3 confirmed cases are in admission and clinically stable
- Over 200 clinical staff trained in case management and IPC
- Completed training for staff at treatment facility (14 Military Hospital)

**3. Risk communication:**

- Trained over 700 health promoters to be deployed on the 23-24 to over 100 communities in Montserrado hot spot communities
- Airing of jingles, talk shows and drama intensified
- Media monitoring and responding to media queries
- Training conducted for over 200 traditional leaders including

**4. Laboratory**

- 24 samples collected bring the total samples collected to 55
- Total sample tested is 31 and 24 pending

**Table 2: Distribution of travellers in POCs, March 22, 2020**

<b>Precautionary Observation Center</b>	<b>Completed 14days in POC</b>	<b>Under Observation</b>	<b>Total</b>
POC 1	84	19	103
POC 2	47	19	66
POC 3	45	17	62
POC 4	13	17	30
POC 5	18	0	18
POC 6	0	10	10
POC 7	0	49	49
POC 8	0	28	28
POC 9	0	4	4
POC 11	0	22	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>392</b>

#### **IV Challenges and Next Steps:**

##### *Challenges*

- Limited capacity to follow up a fast-increasing contact identified because of limited resources to deploy surge capacity
- Limited holding facility for high risk contacts
- Limited resources to support preparedness efforts of counties in alert mode

##### *Next Steps*

- Share critical needs for the next 48-72 hours to partners to escalate response strategy
- Scale up contact tracing and active case finding
- Conduct County Rapid Response Team training
- Implement alert county hospital readiness checklist
- Update public health advisories (*See latest Advisory 21-03-20*)
- Continue media monitoring and
- Mobilize additional resources to support on-going response effort

**For comments or questions, please contact**

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