

Global Mission Partners (GMP) COVID-19 Update¹ #30

These updates incorporate all nations where GMP programs (COCOA, ICP and IMA) operate. GMP programs operate independently of one another, and adhere to their own processes and practices in line with the relevant oversight bodies.

Brackets indicate figures from (6/10).

Green = No cases, or situation under control.

Yellow = Cases growing or stable but well monitored, OR cases potentially getting out of hand and a serious situation is likely to occur.

Red = Situation out of control and/or official figures cannot be trusted.

Cases have risen to 40.6m, with over 1.1m fatalities. Parts of the Middle East and Europe are experiencing a second wave, while the US (where suggestions are they are in a third wave) and South America continue to record high numbers of cases, with Argentina poised to become the sixth nation to record over 1m cases (the others are the US, India, Brazil, Russia and Spain). Figures in this report are now being recorded fortnightly, not weekly.

Australia (63²): 905 deaths; 27,399 cases. (895 deaths; 27,173 cases). Testing: 324,206 per million.

Only ten fatalities in the past two weeks, with the most significant change being that metro Melbourne has recorded single digit cases for the past four days, and has had restrictions partially – but significantly – lifted. The rolling case average in Melbourne is down to 6.4 (10.6 a fortnight ago). While community transmission is still a minor factor in NSW (where the easing of restrictions was halted), Australia (especially Victoria) has proven to be one of the few places globally that has stemmed a second wave. There is the likelihood of open borders between the States, but the travel bubble with NZ, NSW and the NT got off to a shaky start.

GMP Programs: IMA, embody.

India (3): 115,235 deaths; 7,594,284 cases. (103,600 deaths; 6,685,082 cases). T=68,700

Numbers have begun to ease in India – yesterday, there were ‘only’ 46,000 cases reported and 593 deaths, but this is well down on the peaks of a month ago of approximately 90,000 cases and 1,000 deaths. The *BBC* reports that the latest Indian mathematical model predicts that the pandemic could be controlled by February – however, this assumes people continue with mask wearing, hand washing and other measures: *But India's busy festival season is around the corner. This is when families get together. So, a few "super spreader" events and increased mobility could still change the course of the virus in two weeks. Kerala, for instance, recorded a sharp uptick in cases in September following celebrations of Onam, a harvest festival.* The next few weeks will be crucial; if measures are relaxed, the same scientists predict that active cases could be as high as 2.6m, up from the estimates of 773,000 (if the current trajectory holds true). There are lower numbers being recorded in Mumbai, as well. The race is on to get this under control before the smog-infested winters hit northern cities such as New Delhi. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP.

Bangladesh (30): 5,681 deaths; 390,206 cases. (5,375 deaths; 370,132 cases). T=13,190

Bangladesh has largely plateaued in terms of cases, with just over 1,000 cases per day (in a population of 165m) over the past fortnight. Again, these figures are not 100% indicative of the amount of cases, but the last six weeks have seen a steady decline in cases per day. Prime Minister Hasina has urged both the wearing of masks in all public settings – including mosques – and the stricter enforcement of these measures. As often stated in this report, the next few weeks will tell if Bangladesh continues moving in the right direction. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP.

Vietnam (156): 35 deaths; 1,140 cases. (35 deaths; 1,097 cases). T=12,771

Another 43 cases in the past fortnight (no deaths), with active cases in Vietnam rising to 59. The latest cases are all from arrivals and are currently under quarantine. Testing is at a high point. Vietnam continues to open its economy and its borders, with strict arrival procedures at Vietnamese airports. **GMP Programs:** ICP.

¹ Obviously, these numbers change rapidly. This is current as of 5pm on 20/10/20.

² This number indicates – in terms of fatalities – where a nation is ranked of the 217 nations/territories/international conveyances that recorded cases of COVID-19.

Indonesia (16): 12,617 deaths; 365,240. (11,253 deaths; 307,120 cases.) T=14,915 Since the last report, fatalities have risen slightly again from 650 per week to just shy of 700. There are currently over 63,000 active cases in Indonesia, and our partners report large-scale protests against government changes to working conditions, including in Bandung and Jakarta. The Home Minister, has urged people to not travel for the long weekend of Oct 28-30, as in the past holidays have led to a spike in cases. *The Jakarta Post* reported last week that one in four Indonesians (60m people) do not have access to a handwashing facility, which puts further pressure on Indonesia's ability to curb the pandemic. Our partners in Bandung also report that government officials wait outside churches to ensure that regulations are complied with. **GMP Programs:** ICP.

Fiji (185): 0 deaths, 32 cases. (2 deaths; 32 cases). T=11,371
There are currently no active cases in Fiji. **GMP Programs:** ICP.

Vanuatu: 0 deaths; 0 cases. (0 deaths; 0 cases).
Still clear of COVID-19. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP.

Thailand (141): 59 deaths; 3,691 cases. (59 deaths; 3,600 cases). T=13,999
Only 91 cases in the past fortnight even though Thailand shares a porous border with neighbouring Myanmar, where cases are steadily rising. Active cases have dropped to 144, and many of these are 'imported cases' (people returning to Thailand). There have also been four days of pro-democracy protests in Bangkok which may have an impact on cases in the coming weeks. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP

South Sudan (142): 55 deaths; 2,847 cases. (50 deaths; 2,726 cases). T=1,072
Testing is – predictably – still at appalling levels for South Sudan. Active cases have risen over the past fortnight from over 1,300 to 1,502. Reporting is occurring more regularly, but still not at a level that suggests the numbers can be up to date. According to the *BBC*, the WHO are suggesting that Africa – despite its generally poor health services – has avoided the worst of the pandemic in part due to its age profile and lack of obesity: *Covid-19 is known to have a higher mortality rate for older age groups, and among people health problems like obesity and type 2 diabetes which are also less common in Africa.* The South Sudanese pound continues to drop in value, adding pressure to businesses. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP

Zimbabwe: (98) 232 deaths; 8,159 cases. (228 deaths; 7,898 cases). T=10,917
An average of 18 cases per day over the past fortnight again suggests that Zimbabwe has possibly dodged the worst of the pandemic. Schools and restaurants have reopened, with the government suggesting that cases are decreasing. Activists suggest that, in fact, it is testing that is decreasing (my figures show a marginal increase in testing – but nothing to be bragged about). Local transmission, according to a government spokesperson, has declined. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP

Papua New Guinea: (176) 7 deaths; 581 cases. (7 deaths; 540 cases). T=3,001
There are currently 33 active cases in PNG. *The Guardian* reports: *that Papua New Guinea will fit all foreign workers coming into the country with an electronic ankle monitor for the duration of their Covid-19 quarantine, the government's pandemic controller has said. PNG has struggled to control outbreaks in the capital, Port Moresby, and Western Province, and charter flights carrying foreign workers run the risk of spreading the virus across the country.* This is partly in response to a spike in cases in the Western Province last week. **GMP Programs:** ICP

The Philippines (25): 6,675 deaths; 359,169 cases. (5,840 deaths; 324,762 cases.) T=39,980
Still a concern, with 400 deaths per week being recorded. Our partner at ICCM reports that some students have to climb trees or mountains in order to access internet in remote areas and, therefore, get access to their courses. Currently, there are over 42,000 active cases in the Philippines. **GMP Programs:** ICP