

Situation Analysis for COVID-19 Prevention and Testing



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Public Health and Social Measures

Public Health and Social Measures

Personal protective measures: physical distancing, avoiding crowded settings, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, mask-wearing;

Environmental measures: cleaning, disinfection, ventilation;

Surveillance and response measures: testing, genetic sequencing, contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine;

Physical distancing measures: regulating the number and flow of people attending gatherings, maintaining distance in public or workplaces, domestic movement restrictions;

International travel-related measures.

Nigeria's COVID Response

Feedback on Nigeria's Response

← Tweet



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus ✓

@DrTedros

Thank you @NCDCgov & the Government of #Nigeria for the swift & transparent way you have shared the #COVID19 sequence from the country's first case. This a true act of solidarity and an important step in stopping the #coronavirus from spreading further.

NCDC ✓ @NCDCgov · Mar 6, 2020

Nigeria has published the first African SARS-CoV-2 genome sequence, from the #COVID19 case in Nigeria

This was carried out in collaboration, by:

@nimrnigeria
@acegid_lab
@LUTHofficial

With coordination by:

@LSMOH
@NCDCgov
@WHONigeria
virological.org/t/first-africa...

3:30 PM · Mar 7, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

ble.ng/who-nigerias-covid-response-ranked-fourth-most-successful-worldwide

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WHO: Nigeria's COVID response ranked fourth most successful globally



August 14 08:08 2021

by Ebuloluwa Olafusi
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The World Health Organisation (WHO) says Nigeria's response to COVID-19 has been

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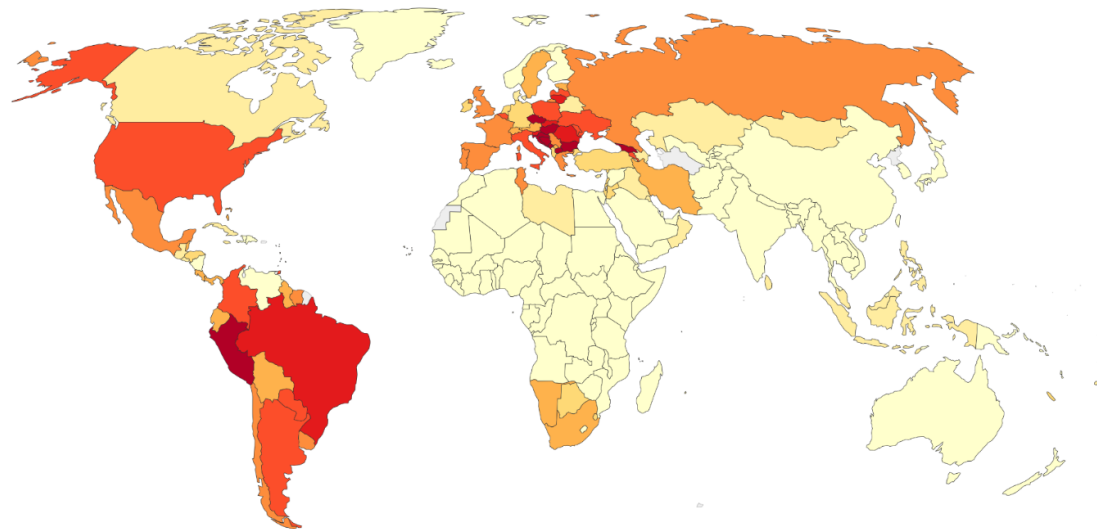
Nigeria Was Spared the Worst of COVID-19 (so far)

The number of serious illnesses and deaths from COVID-19 has been relatively low in Nigeria compared to many other countries outside Africa.

Cumulative confirmed COVID-19 deaths per million people, Feb 27, 2022

For some countries the number of confirmed deaths is much lower than the true number of deaths. This is because of limited testing and challenges in the attribution of the cause of death.

Our World
in Data



Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSE COVID-19 Data

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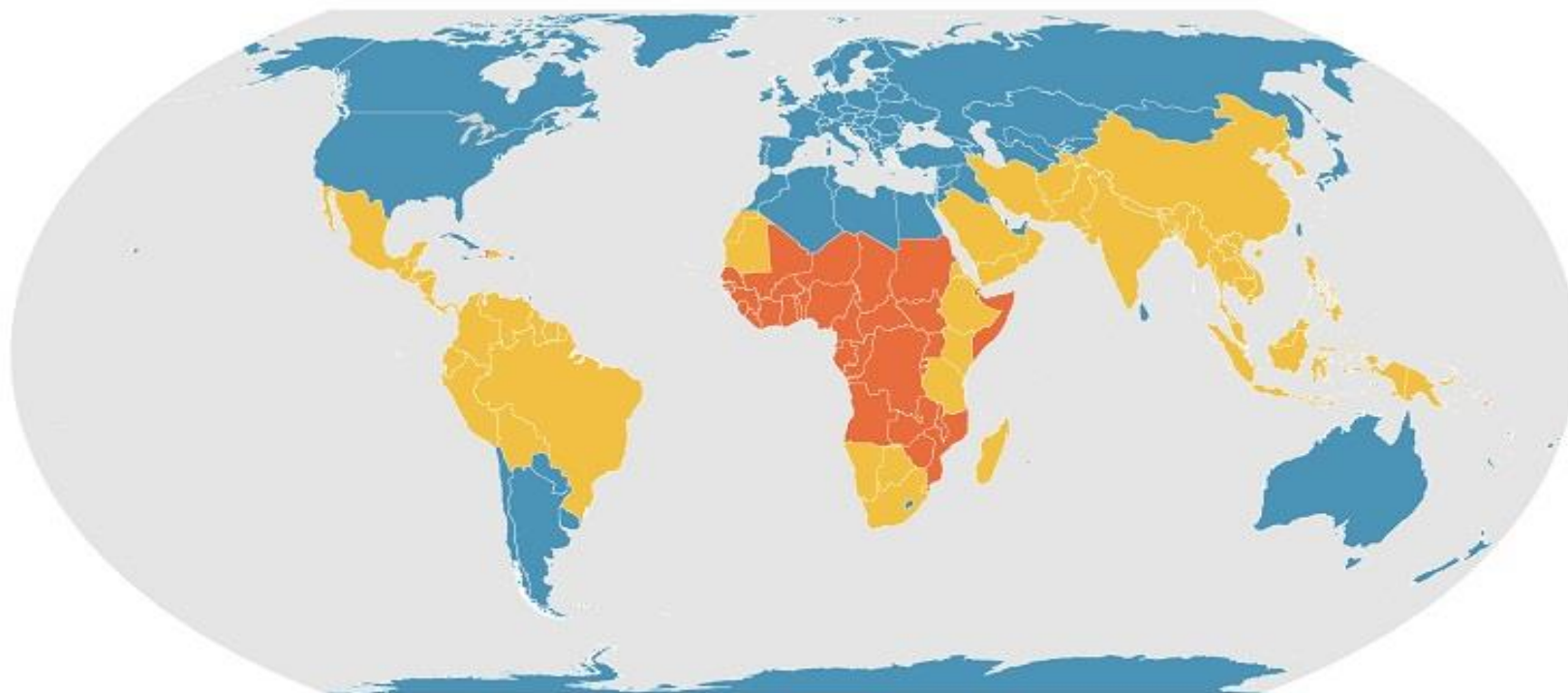
Studies from other African Countries May Help Explain What Happened in Nigeria

- A study in Malawi that looked for COVID-19 antibodies in blood samples at a blood bank BEFORE Omicron showed that 80% of the population had been infected.
- A study in Uganda and Mali showed that severe cases of COVID-19 were less likely among people with high exposure to malaria.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2022/01/28/1072591923/africa-may-have-reached-the-pandemics-holy-grail>

<https://www.devex.com/news/research-suggests-malaria-exposure-could-reduce-covid-19-severity-102106>

Map of the World Where Malaria Transmission Occurs



- Malaria transmission is not known to occur
- Malaria transmission occurs in some places
- Malaria transmission occurs throughout

What could this mean for Nigeria?

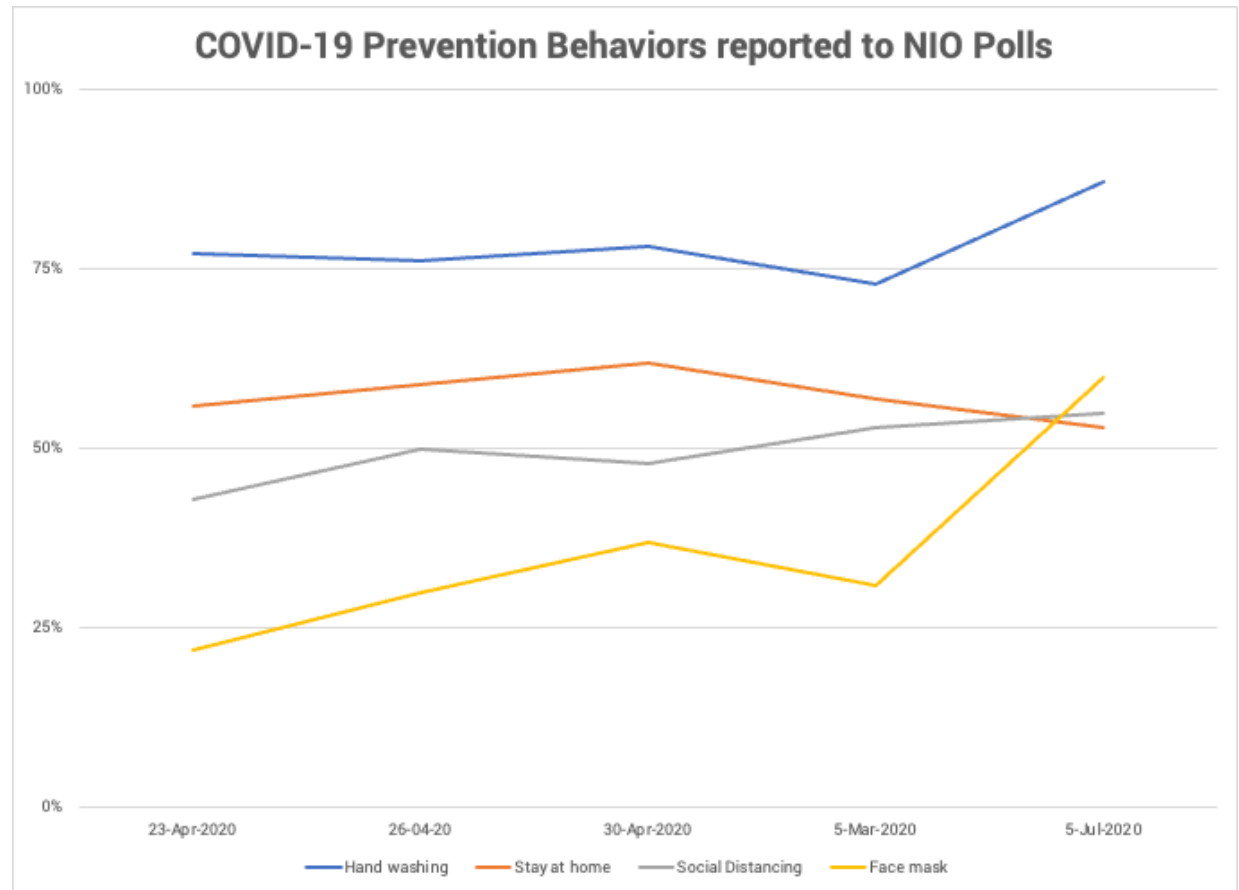
Majority of Nigerians have been exposed to malaria at some time in their life, and for many Nigerians frequent bouts of malaria is common.

Is it possible that most Nigerians have already been exposed, like Malawi, but only had mild or asymptomatic cases like in Mali and Uganda?

COVID-19 Prevention in Nigeria

A look back in time

In the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak, when prevention messages were at their peak, COVID-19 prevention measures were mixed.



The storm never came...

- Once it was clear that COVID-19 was not going to hit hard, most people relaxed and face masks were hardly seen in public anymore.
- Nowadays, face masks are only seen in places where mandated by management (grocery stores, offices, restaurants).
- For most people, everyday life has moved on from COVID-19
- Efforts to promote COVID-19 prevention behaviors among the general population may not be worth the challenge.

COVID-19 Prevention in a Post-Pandemic Context

- Prevention behaviors could be better targeted at those who are confirmed or may be infected in order to stop the spread to others.
- This would include people who are symptomatic, or exposed to a confirmed case.
- Could also include health care workers and vulnerable populations (elderly, those with comorbidities).
- This approach would change the general messaging of COVID-19 prevention from a stand alone behavior, to one that becomes integrated with testing for COVID-19.

COVID-19 Testing in Nigeria

Testing is Available but may not be Seen as Accessible or Affordable

Rapid Testing and PCR tests are available for free within the public sector. Results for PCR take a long time.

Rapid Testing and PCR tests in the private sector are available at a high cost (around N40,000 for PCR) with quick turn around.

The government requires PCR test for departing and arriving international travellers.

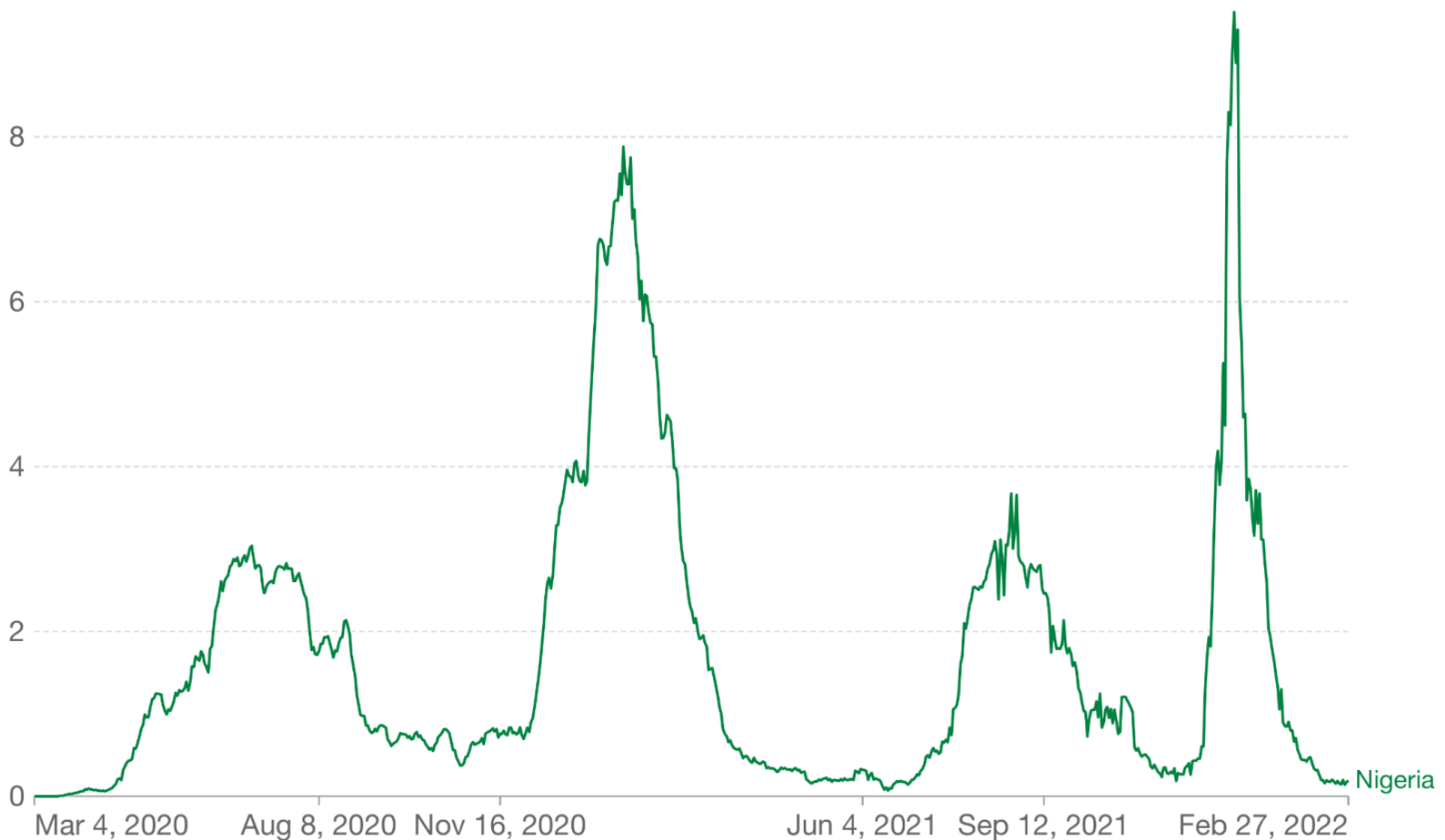
Do the confirmed COVID-19 rates follow seasonal travel patterns? What percent of confirmed cases are coming from public sector?

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in Nigeria

Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people

7-day rolling average. Due to limited testing, the number of confirmed cases is lower than the true number of infections.

Our World
in Data



Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSE COVID-19 Data

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Where are the confirmed cases coming from?

Waiting for data on how many people getting tested in public sector

Are most confirmed cases coming from international travellers (because they are more likely to get tested)?

This suggests that most confirmed cases are coming from people who can afford the cost of a PCR test and international travel.

The average Nigerian with COVID-19 is most likely asymptomatic, and even those who are symptomatic are unlikely to pay for an expensive test at a private facility or go through the hassles of testing in a public facility - and may not know that the COVID-19 RDT at the public facilities is free and fast.

Promoting COVID-19 testing in Nigeria

1. Target people with COVID-19 symptoms or those exposed to a confirmed case
2. Promote the free and fast RDT available at public health care facilities (including creating awareness around which facilities have it)
3. Promote COVID-19 prevention to these same symptomatic, confirmed or suspected cases to contain the further spread of infection.

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