

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Situation Report – 16

Timor-Leste



Data as reported by 06 March 2020

CURRENT SITUATION

- Currently, there are **NO** cases of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- However, the Ministry of Health remains vigilant and ready to respond appropriately as the situation develops.
- Six new Member States including **Indonesia (2 cases)** reported cases of COVID-19 on March 2, 2020.

- **Coordination:** The Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee for COVID-19, established by the H.E Prime Minister's Office, held its first meeting on Thursday, 05 March 2020 and followed it up with another meeting on Friday, March 06, 2020. The Ministry of Health presided over the meeting. In addition to the members of the committee, H.E Former President Dr Jose Ramos Horta also participated in the first meeting.



In addition, the COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan was developed, approved and distributed among health development partners.

Health Cluster continues to meet per usual.

- **Surveillance & Contact Tracing:** On 5 March 2020, the Surveillance and Rapid Response Team (RRT) convened to review and update the national surveillance and response guidance and SOPs on case definition, case investigation and contact tracing, quarantine and isolation. The updated guidance document will be ready for implementation next week. Additionally, MoH and WHO team briefed the situation for COVID-19 epidemic and response to the participants of the Municipality surveillance and Health Management Information system (HMIS) coordination meeting.
- **Isolation and Quarantine:** As per the initial plans, ward(s) in Hospital Nacional Guido Valadares (HNGV) were identified and prepared for isolation and treatment facility for COVID-19 suspected and confirmed cases. However, due to the overwhelming number of patients in HNGV, these wards

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

total and new cases in last 24 hours

Globally

95 333 confirmed (2241 new)

China

80 565 confirmed (143 new)

3015 deaths (31 new)

Outside of China

14 768 confirmed (2098 new)

**85 Countries/territories/
areas (5 new)**

267 deaths (53 new)

WHO RISK ASSESSMENT

China	Very High
Regional Level	Very High
Global Level	Very High

Resources

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More information and guidance by WHO regarding the current outbreak of Coronavirus Disease – 2019 (COVID-19) can be found

are used for other purposes now. The MoH has identified two different facilities for isolation and quarantine. Preparations are underway in both the facilities to equip them to adequately respond to COVID-19 outbreak.

- **Laboratory testing:** WHO provided primers and probes to the National Health Laboratory (NHL). The 100 test kits are adequate to carry out 1,000 COVID-19 tests.

The referral system for COVID-19 testing at the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory is in place and functional. The referral SOPs have been revised and updated.



- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** WHO has provided PPE for health workers and emergency responders for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) preparedness and response to the Ministry of Health (MoH). This includes 20,000 gloves, 32,000 face masks/respirators, 1000 gown and 500 goggles. The PPEs are housed at Servico Autonomo de Medicamentos e Equipamentos de Saude (SAMES) in Kampong Alor in Dili. In addition to the contribution from WHO, the Australian Government has provided 6,600 face masks, 2000 isolation gowns, 1,500 gloves, 2,000 N95 masks, and 204 units of surgical scrub gel.
- **Risk Communication:** On 5 March 2020, the WHO Director General, announced the launching of a new social media campaign called Be Ready for COVID-19, which urges people to be safe, smart and informed.

There have been continuous and consistent advocacy and sensitization session for line ministries and government agencies, international nongovernmental organizations, health development partners, faith based institutions and communities at large. There also has been large scale distribution of information education communication (IEC) materials.

MEASURES TAKEN

Steps being taken by the government with WHO and partners' supports, to respond to the situation include:

Friday 6 March 2020

- WHO team conducted sensitization session for Serviço Nacional de Inteligência (SNI) at Caicoli, Dili. The Director General of SNI and staff participated in the session. The team also disseminated IEC materials during the session.
- The Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee for COVID-19 met on the second consecutive day to draft a National Contingency Plan. Director-Generals and senior officials of various ministries were

present in the meeting. The MoH with technical support from WHO will put together a report before a second deliberation is held.

Thursday 5 March 2020

- The Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee for COVID-19 held its first meeting on Thursday, 05 March 2020. The Ministry of Health presided the meeting. In addition to the members of the committee, H.E Former President Dr Jose Ramos Horta also participated. While H.E Minister of Health outlined the roles and responsibilities of different line ministries and government agencies for a coordinated and concerted response, H.E Former President stressed on the need to act urgently.
- The MoH in partnership with UNICEF Timor-Leste and President Authority of Dili Municipality conducted a briefing on preventive measures for COVID-19 for all of Dili community leaders — Chief of Sucos, Aldeias, and village leaders. H.E Former President José Ramos Horta who was present for the event also addressed the gathering.
- WHO team conducted a briefing session for FFDTL Military Police personnel at Military Police Headquarters at Kintal Boot, Dili.
- Oxfam through its programme network in Oecusse conducted sensitization sessions for as many as five civil society organizations and helped distribute printed IEC materials to different partners in Dili.



Wednesday 4 March 2020

- H.E Acting Minister of Health held a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, and representative from the Ministry of Defense to discuss the preparedness and response for COVID-19. Furthermore, the Acting Minister of Health also assured that MoH Surveillance team continues monitor all Points of Entries (airports, ports and land borders).
- The President of Red Cross Timor-Leste and team met with H.E Acting Minister of Health to discuss how Red Cross Timor-Leste can support the MoH on COVID-19 surveillance activities as well as with quarantine facility and other resources that may be needed.

Tuesday 3 March 2020

- The Embassy of People's Republic of China in Timor-Leste provided infrared thermal scanner and hand held thermal scanners to Timor-Leste. The scanner was installed at Dili airport to replace the old one, which has helped improve the efficiency and accuracy of passenger temperature scanning.
- WHO team met the Bishop of Diocese of Maliana to brief him on COVID-19 and requested the Bishop to capitalize on the influence and reach of the Church to educate and sensitize communities about COVID-19. In addition, the team also met with the President Authority of Bobonaro Municipality and health staff of Bobonaro District Health Office. The goal of these briefing sessions is

to provide them with accurate information on COVID-19, which will enable them to pass on the information to the communities to prevent panic, spread of misinformation and rumors.

Tuesday 03 March 2020

- A meeting on Covid-19 response was convened by H.E Vice Minister for Health and Interim Minister for Health. National Directors of MoH, and District Health Directors from municipalities were present in the meeting. WHO provided the technical support. It was confirmed that Vera Cruz CHC would be designated as the Isolation facility and FDTL Metinaro as the Quarantine facility. A joint MoH-WHO team will conduct a site assessment of Vera Cruz tomorrow so that this facility can be upgraded quickly to serve as a treatment centre for suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19.

Monday 02 March 2020

- Health Cluster coordination meeting: An updated WHO risk assessment of country preparedness (as on 01 March 2020) was discussed in detail and areas with significant gaps (e.g. lack of a functional Isolation Ward and a separate Quarantine Facility) were identified. Partners agreed to contribute to specific areas (e.g. setting up temporary 'holding facilities' at land borders and the airport).
- Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) meeting: The checklist for country preparedness for Covid-19 was discussed and partners were requested to extend support in areas with gaps.



Friday 28 February 2020

- MoH and WHO jointly investigated the case of Vietnam national who was alleged to be a case of COVID-19. The person had travelled from Vietnam in a cargo ship on 12 February and arrived at Dili seaport on 24 February. The person had **NO** symptoms consistent with COVID-19. He was kept under medical observation on the ship and remains normal and poses no threat to the public health.

Thursday 27 February 2020

- To further equip communities with accurate information on Coronavirus Disease -2019 (COVID-2019) and more importantly, drive home the hygiene and prevention measures like hand washing and coughing etiquettes, a WHO team conducted a sensitization session at the mosque, Masjid Kampung Alor.



Wednesday 26 February 2020

- The Embassy of Peoples Republic of China took the initiative of production of additional printed IEC materials to be distributed to the travellers at the airport.

Tuesday 25 February 2020

- WHO conducted a briefing on COVID-19 for officials of the International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGOs) working in the country. Partners have been encouraged to spread and amplify accurate messages about COVID-19 and help stem misinformation and rumourmongering.
- International Nongovernment Organizations (INGOs) and health development partners encouragingly are also doing their bit to spread awareness about COVID-19 and hygiene & prevention measures. St John of God International Health has been playing its part in supporting the Dili community by conducting such sensitization sessions. It conducted a session for the private engineering firm, Caltech. St John of God has also been spending dedicated time with each contractor visiting their office - talking about COVID-19 and how to stay safe at home and at work. The WHO materials are distributed during these sessions and contractors are encouraged to share the information with their families, friends and local communities.



Friday 21 February 2020

- The Prime Minister's Office on Friday, through the state gazette, Jornal da Republica announced the decision to establish an Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee to "prevent and control" COVID-19 in Timor-Leste. The committee will comprise the following line ministries and government agencies and will be presided over by the Ministry of Health:
 - a) Ministry of Health
 - b) Ministry of Finance
 - c) Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
 - d) Ministry of State Administration
 - e) Ministry of Transport and Communication
 - f) Ministry of Defence and Interior
 - g) Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
 - h) Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
 - i) Secretariat of Social Communication
 - j) Chief of Armed Forces
 - k) Commander General of Policia Nacional Timor-Leste (PNTL) and, Integrated Centre for Crisis Management

Monday 24 February 2020

- For COVID-19 preparedness and as part of the WHO Twinning Partnership for Improvement (TPI) program, the HNGV and WHO organized an orientation and training for physicians, nurses and infection prevention focal points at the HNGV. The training covered infection prevention and control, waste management and water sanitation and hygiene with special focus on COVID-19 preparedness and response.

Sunday 23 February 2020

- As a part of community outreach and sensitization for COVID-19, the Embassy of Peoples Republic of China, the Chinese Medical Brigade, the Chinese Merchant Association, Chinese Youth Entrepreneurs Association and WHO organized a sensitization session and medical check-up for community members in Bairro-Pite Aldeia.



Friday 21 February 2020

- Vice Minister of Health for Strategic Health Development, H.E Bonifacio Maukoli Dos Reis in a meeting with the WHO, Executive Director, Hospital Nacional Guido Valadares (HNGV), Dili Health Director, and senior officials from the MoH decided that the Formosa Community Health Centre (CHC) will be the dedicated isolation facility for COVID-19 cases. In addition, the MoH has identified two new places for creating isolation facilities in Batugade and Metinaro. The team reached the consensus that the facilities should be ready as soon as possible so as to deal with COVID-19 cases if there are any.
- A team of WHO officials including the WHO Representative held a sensitization session on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) for the Policia Nacional Timor-Leste (PNTL) personnel, immigration officials at the Ministry of Interior (MoI).
- The seventeen Timorese students who were studying in Wuhan, China and later quarantined in Whangaparaoa, New Zealand returned to Timor-Leste on 21 February 2020. None of them have displayed any respiratory symptoms. The Government of New Zealand had evacuated the 17 students from China along with other nationalities. See [Situation Report – 3](#) dated 5 February 2020.
- Following the request from the MoH, WHO has made available adequate number of personal protective equipment (PPE) to the MoH as a part of preparedness plan. The PPEs arrived in Dili on 21 February 2020. In addition, the Australian Government has donated a sizeable number of PPEs to the MoH.
- A review of the preparedness (including assessment of Infection Prevention and Control measures) was conducted at Hospital Nacional Guido Valadares (HNGV) and community health centre (CHC) Formosa on 21 February 2020. This was led by senior staff and officials of both facilities including a technical team from WHO. Suggestions were made to immediately improve and equip the facilities to be ready to handle COVID-19 cases management, and infection prevention and control.



Thursday 20 February 2020

- The Ministry of Health (MoH) and WHO conducted an orientation session for doctors, nurses, and laboratory technicians from community health centres (CHCs) from Dili municipality. Notably, the surveillance protocol for COVID-19 was introduced and discussed.
- WHO Representative made a presentation to the senior leadership of the Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (FFDTL) on COVID-19.



Wednesday 19 February 2020

- The Vice Minister of Health and Interim Minister of Health, Dra Élia A.A dos Reis Amaral SH presided over the council of directors meeting to update them about the meeting with the Office of the Prime Minister regarding the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). The Minister urged the national directors to closely collaborate with the WHO for preparedness and response against COVID-19. The Minister also spoke about the need to share accurate and timely information with the public in coordination with the Secretariat of Social Communications and all the other possible means of communication to equip people with correct information on COVID-19.
- WHO Representative along with surveillance programme focal point appeared on the national television Radio Televiasun Timor-Leste's (RTTL) morning show Café Dader to address speak about COVID-19, present facts and dispel misconceptions and misinformation.
- A series of sensitization briefings held the US Embassy Officials, USAID, and their partners and staff on COVID-19, preparedness plan preventive measures that are in place in the country.

Tuesday 18 February 2020

- A sensitization session on COVID-19 was organized for Embassies Security Group of Timor-Leste at the European Union premises.

Infection Prevention and Control

- In the coming week, health workers from three health facilities; Riamare Community Health Centre, Baucau, Baucau Referral Hospital, and Hospital Nacional Guido Valadares (HNGV) will undergo training on infection prevention and control (IPC), waste management (WM) and water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) with specific focus on preparedness for COVID-19. A preparatory meeting which held on 12 February has started the process of draft detailed action plan on IPC, Waste Management and WASH for the three health facilities as part of the Twinning Partnership for Quality Improvement between Timor-Leste and Macau.



Monday 17 February 2020

- The Office of the Prime Minister convened a meeting comprising several line ministries including the Ministry of Health (MoH), WHO and the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) for the formation of a National Task Force (NTF) for “prevention and coordination to combat Coronavirus Disease – 2019 (COVID-2019)”. In addition, MoH and WHO made presentations on the current scenario vis a vis COVID-19 at global, regional and country level.
- The sensitization session on Coronavirus Disease – 2019 (COVID–2019) for National Parliament staff and took place on 17 February 2020. Notably, a handful of Members of Parliament also took attended the presentation session.



- There was also a session at the Institute of Superior Cristal in Balide where more than a hundred students, along with teachers, attended the presentation made by the MoH and WHO officials. The sensitization drive aims to equip the communities with accurate information on the disease and prevent the spread of misinformation and rumourmongering.



- The MoH, with support from WHO, will be setting up a makeshift medical camp facility at the Nicolau Lobato Dili International Airport to screen and attend the suspected cases till they are transferred to the dedicated quarantine facility at the Hospital Nacional Guido Valadares (HNGV).

Friday 14 February 2020

- Some news reports in the past 24 hours have reported a sudden increase in the number of cases of Coronavirus Disease -2019 (COVID-19) and deaths in China. Overnight there were 14,840 cases including 13,332 clinically diagnosed cases from Hubei. This increase is in large parts due to a change in how cases are being diagnosed and reported at the country level. WHO, however, for the sake of consistency is reporting only laboratory-confirmed cases.
- WHO team met with the Diocese Baucau regarding Coronavirus Diseases 2019 (COVID-19) and collaborating with the Church for community awareness on the disease and precautions that community member can take. The team also met with the Baucau municipality staff and presented on COVID-19.
- WHO Representative met with the Secretary of State for Social Communication to explore ways of collaborating to further ramp up awareness on COVID-19. The office of the Secretary of State for Social Communication has assured the use of different state-owned platforms – television, radio and online – under its purview to reinforce messaging on COVID-19 targeting the communities.
- FFDL Lieutenant Colonel, Chief of Military Health in a meeting with WHO sought more information on COVID-19 and also requested sensitization sessions for army personnel in Dili as well as across the country. There are five more army bases in Timor-Leste where Ministry of Health (MoH) and WHO will hold sensitization sessions for army personnel. In addition, there will be tailor-made technical sensitization sessions for army doctors and health care providers.
- Two officials from WHO appeared on GMN TV's daily live show Café Kmanek to address questions on COVID-19 and dispel misconceptions and confusions about the disease and also give an update on preparedness and response. A weekly media briefing was kicked off on 14 February 2020 for COVID-19 especially. Beginning 14 February, 2020 will be weekly press briefings every Friday - addressed jointly by the MoH and WHO.
- A WHO technical team presented prevention and control measures for the Secretary of State for Civil Protection, Ministry of Defence, acting Director General for Civil Protection and National Director of Disaster Management and their staff in addition to the National Directorate of Disaster Management and Fire Fighters (Bombeiros). In all, more than a hundred people attended the sensitization session.



Thursday 13 February 2020

- The United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and WHO Representative met with the His Excellency, the Prime Minister on 13 February 2020 to apprise him of the latest situation in regard to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The Prime Minister's office has been requested to establish a National Task Force (NTF) to review, guide and coordinate the incident response. In addition, the need for better communication by and among Ministries was also emphasized as well as communication by the Secretariat of State for Social Communication to keep the community informed with accurate information.
- The referral system for testing for Coronavirus at the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory, Melbourne, Australia was successfully established and functional with support from the Australian Embassy in Timor-Leste. The test sample from Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (FFDTL) personnel tested negative for the COVID-19.
- The Ministry of Health convened a multisectoral meeting comprising Director Generals and National Directors from different line Ministries and the Health Cluster Team (HCT) to review the preparedness plan and also seek support from the line ministries to respond to this situation more effectively. The MoH also recommended roles and responsibilities for each Ministry to consider as and when need arises. An update on Timor-Leste's implementation progress with the International Health Regulation 2005 (IHR 2005) was also provided by WHO technical staff.
- On 12 February 2020 a video was widely shared on social media (Facebook and WhatsApp mainly) of a Chinese national collapsing in a shop in Timor Plaza. The video was shared with an accompanying message that the person was infected with COVID-19. Investigations by the Ministry of Health (MoH) concluded that the person suffered a minor stroke and did NOT have COVID-19 infection. He was admitted to a private clinic. The MoH on its Facebook page issued the same clarification.
- WHO met with the Chinese Ambassador to share updates on the preparedness and response to COVID-19 and the current situation. The Chinese Embassy in turn shared updates on the Chinese community. One of the main issues addressed were community networking to strengthen case identification.
- Day four of the sensitisation drive on Coronavírus-2019 (COVID-19) by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and WHO began at the Secretariat of State for Equality and Inclusion. It continued with Secretariat of State for Vocational Training and Employment, and Universidade Oriental Timor Lorosae.



- WHO presented on COVID-19 to the staff of the Archdiocese of Dili and made a request for using the influence and reach of the Church to educate and sensitise communities about COVID-19 for which WHO and MoH would provide all the necessary support.

Wednesday 12 February 2020

- There is now a name for the disease: COVID–19.
- WHO, in a meeting with the National Health Laboratory (NHL) reviewed the procedure to send samples for testing for COVID–19 to Victorial Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory in Melbourne, Australia – a WHO reference laboratory. WHO also informed NHL of the procedure to use WHO shipment funds mechanism through “World Courier”.
- WHO will be providing the NHL with 10 test kits (1000 tests). Additionally, NHL has placed an order for CDC COVID–19 kit reagents which are available to Timor-Leste via the International Reagent Resource (IRR) system. WHO provided protocols for both test kits (WHO and CDC). Both assay are based on the realtime RT-PC and could be performed by National Health Laboratory. For quality assurance, every laboratory initiating the testing needs to send samples to a Reference Laboratory.
- A technical team from WHO and the surveillance team from the MoH met with Stamford Clinic director and team of doctors to brief about the MoH surveillance protocol, and discuss the cases coming to the clinic.
- The sensitisation drive being carried out by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and WHO entered the third day as the joint team of the Ministry of Health and WHO presented at the Secretariat of State for Affairs of Combatants of National Liberation, Secretariat of State for Arts & Culture, Secretariat of State for Cooperatives, and Secretariat of State for Youth and Sport. The goal of these sessions is to provide the public and officials alike with accurate information on 2019-nCoV and prevent the spread of misinformation and rumormongering. The sensitisation drive is being conducted for all the line ministries and government agencies.



Tuesday 11 February 2020

- More than 75 health workers from all over the country comprising district health directors, rapid response teams (RRTs), and surveillance focal points underwent a day-long workshop on 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019 – nCoV). The objective of the workshop is to equip health workers with accurate technical information on Novel Coronavirus - nCoV 2019, strengthen the emergency preparedness and response and put in place mechanisms for community surveillance. Another important aspect is to give accurate information to the public and dispel myths. The workshop was organised jointly by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and WHO.



- The MoH in partnership with WHO is conducting sensitization session for ministries and government agencies on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019 – nCoV). The goal of these sessions is to provide the public and officials alike with accurate information on 2019-nCoV and prevent the spread of misinformation and rumormongering. On 11 February 2020, the joint team of MoH officials and WHO technical experts presented to the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Ministry of Interior, Secretary of State Security and Civil Protection, Ministry of Petroleum and Minerals, Ministry of Commerce, Industries and Environment, and Secretary of State for Environment.



Monday 10 February 2020

- The MoH in partnership with WHO is conducting sensitization session for ministries and government agencies on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019 – nCoV). The goal of these sessions is to provide the public and officials alike with accurate information on 2019-nCoV and prevent the spread of misinformation and rumormongering. Today's sessions begun with Ministry of Transport and Communication and were followed by sessions at the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Public Works, and Ministry of State Administration, and Ministry of Planning and Strategic Investment.



Saturday 08 February 2020

- On late Friday evening there were unconfirmed reports of a suspected case and death due to 2019-nCoV infection in Vemasse in Baucau. The said person arrived on 19 January from Shanghai via Bali to Dili to Vemasse. The person was already monitoring his temperature as mandated by his company, which was normal as per the records. He did have cough but had recovered already. The person showed no -other symptoms neither did anyone else who came in contact with him. The case was further examined at Baucau Referral Hospital for fever, x-ray and blood count, which came out to be normal. It was assuredly concluded that the person was not a suspected case of nCoV. His medical lab results were communicated to the local community health centre (CHC). The Ministry of Health will soon address the incident in a press conference.

Friday 07 February 2020

- The Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) convened the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) meeting on Friday to ascertain the latest situation on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019 – nCoV). The advisor to the Secretary of



State for Civil Protection, a number of international development partners, international non-governmental organizations, faith groups, and diplomatic missions took part in the meeting. WHO updated the participants on the latest on 2019 – nCoV, the response internationally as well as at the country level in Timor-Leste. WHO also informed the group of UN's in-country support focusing on strengthening collaboration for preparedness, capacity building of health system, provision of regular and accurate public information, enhanced surveillance and testing of suspected cases.

- The Ministry of Health (MoH) and WHO conducted a National Media Workshop on Novel Coronavirus 2019 (2019–nCoV) in Dili. About 50 journalists from across media platforms like TV, radio, newspapers, community radio, websites and the MoH communication focal points from the municipalities. The objective of the workshop was to equip journalists with accurate information on nCoV and provide guidance on finding reliable sources to gather information on nCoV to prevent any misinformation and rumours.
- The MoH, WHO, Chinese Merchant Association, the Chinese Embassy and the Chinese Medical Brigade met to discuss community networking to strengthen case identification, quarantine, and case treatment.
- To sensitize and increase awareness about 2019–nCoV among the government officials, a team of WHO doctors and personnel from the Department of Health Promotion, MoH are going ministry to ministry making a presentation, dispelling myths and answering questions. This awareness drive will be conducted across ministries and government agencies.
- In the Council of Directors meeting, chaired by the Primary Health Care and Acting Minister of Health and Vice Minister of Strategic Health Development, the Acting Minister of Health summarized the measures taken by the Ministry for preparedness against 2019–nCoV. The Minister also called upon all the senior officials to be fully alert and prepared at all the point of entries.
- A collaboration meeting for members of the National Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) was convened by the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) to update the HCT about the development of this outbreak globally, emergency preparedness in Timor-Leste and ways of joint working to support the incident response. WHO briefed the HCT and identified priorities for partner contributions.
- Efforts are in progress by the MoH (in collaboration with WHO) to identify sources and partners for continuing to augment our stocks of personal protective equipment.



Thursday 06 February 2020

- Thirty-two officials of the National Medical Emergency team (including clinical directors of all five referral hospitals, doctors, nurses, mid-wives and senior officials from the Department of Ambulance and Medical Emergency) held technical discussions and participated in refresher training to manage potential nCoV cases. WHO technical experts conducted the training, which covered measures for prevention, clinical management, surveillance and the use of protective gear.
- Scores of public health officials from the Ministry of Health (MoH) underwent refresher training on nCoV and risk communication for nCoV.



Wednesday 05 February 2020

- WHO, on behalf of the Ministry of Health (MoH), met about ten senior officials of the Cuban Medical Brigade (CMB) for information sharing and technical exchange on the investigation, management and surveillance of suspected, nCoV cases. Some members of the CMB also represented selected municipalities.
- The government of New Zealand is evacuating 17 Timorese students from Wuhan, China along with citizens of other countries including New Zealand as well. The students will be kept in isolation for 14 days in Whangaparaoa before returning to Timor-Leste.



Tuesday 04 February 2020

- Rapid assessment of alternate quarantine facility: A technical team from WHO visited and assessed preparedness at Formosa community health centre (CHC). In terms of surge capacity, this facility will be used to quarantine suspect cases of nCoV. Arrangements for staff, amenities, protective gear and medical supplies are underway.
- Surveillance measures: a meeting was held between the MoH disease surveillance team and WHO technical staff to design tools for active surveillance and identify personnel for this activity.

Monday 03 February 2020

- Training provided to about 40 responders from Dili District (clinical staff from the five CHCs, ambulance crew, airport staff, seaport staff, animal and plant quarantine officers) and 10 health specialists from the Chinese Medical Brigade in Dili on the important aspects of the management of this illness.
- Briefing to UN staff on the current situation, emergency preparedness in Timor-Leste and protective measures for individuals and important considerations for business continuity. Two sessions were held – chaired by the UNRC and delivered by a WHO staff.

- WHO observed the function and operation of Dili Airport in screening the passengers, collecting and reviewing the health declaration cards and reporting possible suspected cases if any. Overall the screening process is going on as planned, but there are some limitations in the office space.
- The Chinese Medical Brigade team and WHO colleagues met to discuss the preparedness plan including active surveillance, community awareness raising and networking of Chinese practitioners across Timor-Leste. This is a team of medical specialists working in the National Hospital, and they were briefed on the WHO guidelines of clinical management, infection control measures and preventative activities by WHO officials.



Saturday 01 February 2020

- Meeting with Health Minister for Primary Health Care and Acting Minister of Health with all relevant departments of the Ministry of Health, autonomous health agencies, WHO and UN Resident Coordinator to review preparedness and response plans to address the Coronavirus emergency.
- Meeting with H.E Ambassador of Peoples Republic of China to Timor-Leste, United Nations Resident Coordinator and WHO to discuss how each agency can support Government of Timor-Leste to mitigate the effects of possible nCoV introduction.



Friday 31 January 2020

- Hands-on interactive training provided to about 150 doctors and nurses from the national hospital in Dili (HNGV) and the national Laboratory (NHL) on the important aspects of the management of nCoV. This includes general preventive measures, the use of protective gear, patient safety, clinical

management of cases, follow-up of close contacts and environmental cleaning and decontamination. This training was provided by technical experts from WHO.

Thursday 30 January 2020

- Presentations to the UN Country Team inform of the situation and solicit possible support.
- Refresher training and simulation exercise for all relevant MoH officials on use PPE and transport of patients at HNGV.

Tuesday 28 January 2020

- Meeting with the Ministry of Education (MoE) authorities with MoH officials to develop a communication plan to get support from school authorities to disseminate information and messages through school system.
- Visit to Dili Airport with MoH officials for rapid assessment of Emergency Preparedness.
- Meeting with all development partners to inform the situation and solicit possible support.

Monday 27 January 2020

- A 10 bedded ward was identified to be turned into a quarantine facility at HNGV for isolating and managing 2019 nCoV suspected and cases. Another meeting on the same day with the NHL to ascertain the lab's needs and support required for confirmation of suspected cases.
- The logistical arrangements to send the samples to Melbourne, Australia was discussed and agreed upon.
- Emergency and Health Cluster meeting chaired by the DG Health Services and UN agencies agreed to streamline the response.

Friday 24 January 2020

- WHO Representative wrote to the Minister of Health on urgent priorities in case of nCoV outbreak in the country. IEC materials and Health Declaration Cards were handed over to Point of Entries such as Dili International Airport, Oecusse Airport and other main Point Entries in the countries (land crossing and sea ports).
- MoH (Point of Entry Program Manager and Airport Health Officer) and WHO TLS team developed the SOP for the procedure to check all incoming passengers at Dili Airport and other Point of Entries in the country.

Thursday 23 January 2020

- Statement put out on the meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee regarding the outbreak of nCoV 2019.

Wednesday 22 January 2020

- WHO epidemiologist briefed the WHO Timor-Leste staff on the current status of nCoV outbreak in China and other parts of the world. Following the briefing, WHO Timor-Leste Emergency Preparedness and Surveillance teams met to go over the nCoV Readiness checklist, which was then submitted to the regional office. WHO Timor-Leste also issued a press advisory on nCoV.

Tuesday 21 January 2020

- International Health Regulation (IHR 2005) focal point, point of entry (PoE) program manager met with the Vice Minister of Health Primary Health Care and Acting Minister of Health, Dr. Elia dos Reis Amaral to update on the current situation of nCoV and proposed activities that Timor-Leste should undertake to prepare if there there's a confirmed case detected in the country. Besides, identification of a dedicated isolation facility to admit confirmed cases should there be one, personal protective equipment (PPE) provisions and availability in case of transportation of confirmed case(s). The team also requested the Minister to support the team in coordination with other line ministries such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Ministry of Interior to collaborate for tackling this new problem.

Monday 20 January 2020

- WHO updated the rest of the UN Country team members in the nCoV situation in the country.

Friday 17 January 2020

- International Health Regulation (IHR 2005) focal point, point of entry (PoE) program manager, risk communication focal point, executive director of the National Health Laboratory (NHL), head of surveillance department, ministry of health held a brief meeting with the Airport authorities which include immigration & Customs, Animal and Plant health quarantine, airport security officers and Flight Agencies with goal of collaborating with the airport authorities implementing preventive measures through active surveillance and case detection. And to introduce health declaration card to airport authorities and seek their support to case detection by checking possible infected passengers through information that have been provided in the health declaration card. The meeting also sought to decide to work with Airline Agencies with support and permission from Airport Authorities to distribute health declaration card and nCov brochures and set up banners at the airport and other main Point of Entries in the country.

Wednesday 15 January 2020

- International Health Regulation (IHR 2005) focal point, point of entry (PoE) program manager, risk communication focal point, executive director of the National Health Laboratory (NHL), head of surveillance department, ministry of health, and the WHO Country Office Timor-Leste met with the Director General (DG) Health Services, Ministry of Health, Dr Odete Da Silva Viegas to brief her about the Novel Coronavirus (2019 – nCoV) outbreak in China and other affected countries.
- In addition, the meeting was also to discuss Timor-Leste's preparedness should there be a confirmed case in the country. One of the outcome of this meeting was to come up with brochures and banners for increasing health awareness, and health declaration card for case detection purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC

During previous outbreak due to other coronavirus (Middle-East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), human-to-human transmission occurred through droplets, contact and fomites, suggesting that the transmission mode of the 2019-nCoV can be similar. The basic principles to reduce the general risk of transmission of acute respiratory include the following:

- Avoiding close contact with people suffering from acute respiratory infections.
- Frequent hand-washing, especially after direct contact with ill people or their environment.
- Avoiding unprotected contact with farm or wild animals.
- People with symptoms of acute respiratory infection should practice cough etiquette (maintain distance, cover coughs, and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing, and wash hands).
- Within healthcare facilities, enhance standard infection prevention and control practices in hospitals, especially in emergency departments.

WHO does not recommend any specific health measures for travellers. In case of symptoms suggestive of respiratory illness either during or after travel, travellers are encouraged to seek medical attention and share their travel history with their healthcare provider.

Should you wear a mask?

YES, if you are experiencing uneasiness in breathing, cough

YES, while caring for persons with respiratory (breathing) symptoms

YES, all health workers should while attending to persons with respiratory symptoms

NOT required for general public without respiratory symptoms



Protect others from getting sick

Cover mouth and nose with tissue, sleeve or elbow when coughing or sneezing



Throw tissue into closed bin after use

Clean hands after coughing or sneezing and when caring for the sick



Protect yourself from getting sick

Avoid unprotected contact with sick people (including touching one's eyes, nose or mouth) and with live farm or wild animals



Protect others from getting sick



Avoid close contact when you are experiencing cough and fever

Avoid spitting in public



If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing **seek medical care early** and share previous travel history with your health care provider



Wash your hands

Wash your hands with soap and running water when hands are visibly dirty



If your hands are not visibly dirty, wash them with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand cleanser

