

# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## Situation Report – 23

### Timor-Leste



Data as reported by 07 April 2020

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Currently, there is **ONE** confirmed case of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Timor-Leste. There is no local transmission yet.
- WHO has issued a revised advisory on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19. It can be accessed [here](#).
- The Government established a Crisis Management Committee (CMC) that is responsible for coordinating all COVID-19 response and all other COVID-19 related matters. The CMC is set up and operates from Dili Centro Convenções de Dili (CCD).
- In light of the global situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, H.E. President of the Republic declared the State of Emergency starting 28 March 2020 to 26 April 2020 “to avoid a public calamity caused by COVID-19”. The State of Emergency is to limit “the circulation of people and other activities that entail crowds due to the high risk of contagion”. However, citizens are allowed to have access to healthcare facilities and other commercial businesses (shops). The shops will be open based on the decree regulation from the government.
- The Monitoring and Evaluation Commission headed by the H.E. Prime Minister has been assessing COVID-19 preparedness, identifying gaps and proposing recommendations to address these. An evaluation tool-kit jointly prepared with WHO is being used to conduct this rapid assessment.
- **Surveillance & Contact Tracing:** WHO has supported the MoH in developing an online tool for contact tracing for COVID-19, which is live and functional and in use by the surveillance team. The surveillance department has recruited about 20 more newly graduated doctors in addition to the existing surveillance team. These doctors were trained by MoH and WHO technical experts. They are now integrated in the surveillance team and conducting active contact management.
- **Isolation and Quarantine:** The MoH has identified a number of places that are being used as quarantine facilities while work on the isolation facility – Vera Cruz Community Health Centre – is underway to make it fully functional. In addition to the isolation facility treatment readiness checklist, WHO along with Department of Foreign Trade and Affairs (Dfat) Australia is also supporting the development of SOPs.
- **Laboratory testing:** The National Health Laboratory (NHL) is now able to do the COVID-19 tests within the country. However, the same samples continue to be sent to Darwin for validation.

#### SITUATION IN NUMBERS

##### Total (new) cases in Timor-Leste

**1 confirmed (0)**

**0 deaths (0)**

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

#### GLOBAL SITUATION IN NUMBERS

##### Total (new) cases in last 24 hours

##### Globally

**1 210 956 confirmed (77 200)**

**67 594 deaths (4810)**

#### WHO RISK ASSESSMENT

**Global Level Very High**

WHO has provided primers and probes to the NHL to support the COVID-19 testing (1000 tests in all) within the country. In addition, WHO also provided two Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) workstations.

- **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:** A lot of senior political leadership including several members of the National Parliament and religious leaders have actively taken part in delivering video messages to the citizen. Notably, UNDP, UNICEF and WHO, and MoH jointly have recorded messages with H.E Former Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao and the H.E First Lady Cidalia Guterres among others. There have been 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. Encouragingly, many partners are now proactively taking initiatives to engage in awareness activities and distribution of IEC materials. A large amount and variety of IEC materials have been translated into Tetun by WHO and partners which is being widely used across the country now. WHO through its communication provides technical assistance to the MoH in all aspects of risk communication and community engagement. In addition, WHO has also been supporting other international agencies and organization in providing technical assistance in vetting the messaging.
- The MoH has established a hotline number – 119 – for COVID-19 on which people can call to get any COVID-19 related information.
- **Other health initiatives in response to COVID-19:** There is significant risk of disruption of routine immunization activities due to both COVID-19 related burden and strained health systems and decreased demand for vaccination because of physical distancing requirements. Disruption of immunization services, even for brief periods, will result in increased numbers of susceptible individuals and raise the likelihood of outbreak-prone vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs) such as measles. Such VPD outbreaks may result in increased morbidity and mortality predominantly in young infants and other vulnerable groups, which can cause greater burden on health systems already strained by the COVID-19 response. Therefore, Immunization services should be prioritized for the prevention of communicable diseases and safeguarded for continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic, where feasible. Accordingly, With WHO and UNICEF and other partners are supporting the MoH to

draft the guidelines for maintaining immunization activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## WHO TIMOR-LESTE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Prevent local transmission. Currently there is no reported local transmission. The only confirmed case is imported.
  - Train and equip health workers and health facilities to manage large number of cases.
  - Communicate risk and event information to all communities and counter misinformation in collaboration with partners.
  - Minimize social and economic impact through multisectoral partnerships
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## RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC

### **Wash your hands frequently**

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.

**Why?** Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

### **Maintain physical distancing**

Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and others.

**Why?** When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing is infected.

### **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth**

**Why?** Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and make you sick.

### **Practice respiratory hygiene**

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue safely immediately.

**Why?** Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

### **If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early**

Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of health authorities.

**Why?** Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.

### **Stay informed and follow advice given by your healthcare provider**

Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

**Why?** National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.

**Protection measures for persons who are in or have recently visited (past 14 days) areas where there has been local COVID-19 transmission.**

Follow the guidance outlined above.

Stay at home if you begin to feel unwell, even with mild symptoms such as headache and slight runny nose, until you recover.

**Why?** Avoiding contact with others and visits to medical facilities will allow these facilities to operate more effectively and help protect you and others from possible COVID-19 and other viruses.

If you develop fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical advice promptly as this may be due to a respiratory infection or other serious condition. Call in advance and tell your provider of any recent travel or contact with travellers.

More guidance on preventive measures is available [here](#).

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**COVID-19 Information and media queries:**

- The MoH has established a hotline number – 119 – for COVID-19 on which people can call to get any COVID-19 related information.
  - Additionally, [MoH Facebook page](#) provides timely updates on COVID-19 developments in the country.
  - WHO Timor-Leste through its [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter handle](#) also disseminates information on preventive measures, questions and answers, myth-busters and latest updates on COVID-19 globally and nationally. For media queries and interviews requests can be sent to [hasane@who.int](mailto:hasane@who.int).
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