



Newsletter: December 2021

Welcome to Issue #4 of the iAHO newsletter!

We are excited to share the last issue of 2021 of our bi-monthly newsletter, which will keep you up to date with all the latest news from the [Integrated African Health Observatory \(iAHO\)](#). We cover issues touching on health information, health systems and services development, and the work of the Observatory with all the embedded platforms across the WHO African Region.

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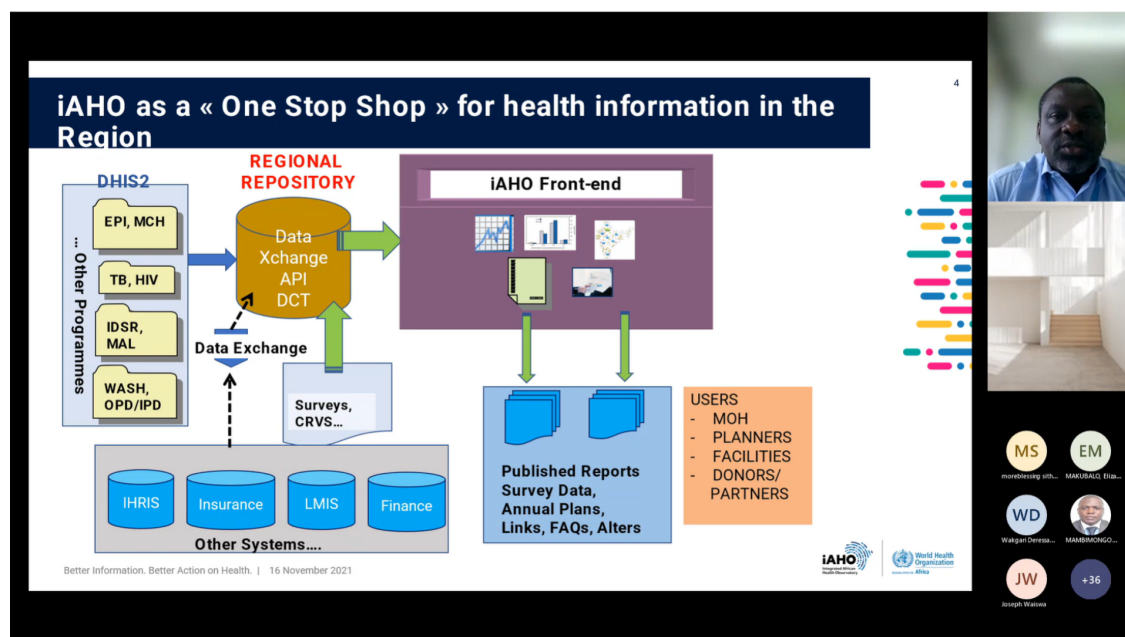
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People beyond data

[iAHO Annual Data Review](#)

From the 16th to the 30th November 2021, the annual data review of all National Health Observatories in the African region was held. In fact, during this year, several countries have been involved at various levels in updating the data and information on their NHOs and as part of the process for data quality, it was therefore important to review and validate all the health information that have been populated both at country and regional levels. Throughout two weeks, countries of the Region, with the support of the Observatory team have been able to carry out an effective review of all data and information reported by the country, correct erroneous and/or contradictory data and information as well as update and/or add to the platform recent data and information from national data sources.



The activity has also been an opportunity for countries not yet engaged to start populating their health observatories with national health data and evidence in its various forms. As recalled by the Assistant Regional Director, Dr Lindiwe

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Makubalo, during the kick-off meeting, “*this activity is of great importance a will allow for the accuracy and quality of the health data and evidence available on the integrated African Health Observatory (iAHO) and your National Health Observatories (NHOs) to be verified*”.

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[Cabo Verde: Strategic linkages and capacity strengthening](#)

Cabo Verde is among the first countries in the region to have embraced the development of a national health observatory (NHO) in 2014, two years after the Luanda Regional Committee Resolution on the establishment of national health observatories as a pillar for strengthening the health information system. The national health observatory is one of the key departments of the National Institute of Public Health with dedicated resources (four full-time staff headed by a coordinator)



The NHO e-platform hosts several key tools including the Health Geographic Information System, statistical analysis and various health determinant tracking tools. With the Covid-19 health crisis, a [situation management dashboard](#) has been added to the NHO. All these tools show that the NHO is fully integrated into the country's health system. However, discussions with the team shows that there are still points to be strengthened, in particular collaboration with key data providers in the country, and the integration of national data into the regional platform for a permanent update of the [space devoted to Cape Verde](#). With technical support from AFRO and the WHO country office, the NHO team benefited from capacity building on how to strengthen the framework for collaboration with key data providers (such as the national statistical office) and institutional technology actors (NOSI). As well as training for the appropriation of the country space management tools in iAHO. Thus, a follow-up plan has been put in place so that the achievements of the

NHO are reinforced but also and above all to increase its impact in the country in the use of health information for action

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[Ghana: NHO reestablishment](#)

Established since 2016 with the support of the Ministry of Health and the WHO, the Ghana NHO faced technical challenges that have caused the cessation of its activities for the last two years. After the official launch of the redesigned iAHO, there has been a renewed effort to reactivate and institutionalize Ghana NHO. To this end, WHO provided technical support to country to re-establish a sustainable and functional NHO in Ghana appropriated by the country.



WHO, Directorate of Research, Statistics and Information Management (MoH), Ghana Health Services and Ghana Statistical Services Teams

Through technical working sessions with the Ministry of Health and Ghana Health Services teams, the new paradigm of the integrated African observatory was discussed, a SWOT analysis was carried out to reposition the NHO, as well as a mapping of the main data producers and national data sources. The challenges/lessons learnt from the previous Ghana NHO establishment included the need for a dedicated technical working group, regular updates of national health information on NHO and establishment of a stable governance structure. In these working sessions was comprehensive training of key health staff on use of the Data Capture tool as well as in-depth overview of the iAHO portal and the [Ghana NHO exploration](#). This established a baseline for the data and knowledge resources compilation, validation and uploading in the Ghana NHO e-platform.

In this revamping process for the Ghana NHO to be fully operational a sustainable, next steps are to be taken. This include, a regular collaborat between the data producers (e.g. Ghana statistical services) and ot stak holders to be established to facilitate dissemination of up-to-date hea information. Most importantly, the Ghana NHO will have to be institutionalli as a legal element pf the Country's health system structure.

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iAHO embedded platform

[COVID-19 Information Hub](#)

Enabling policy makers to make decisions based on African realities, especially in times of a pandemic, is of paramount importance. One of the responses of the World Health Organization's Regional Office for Africa (WHO/AFRO) is the establishment of a COVID-19 Information Hub. The integrated 'COVID-19 Health Information Hub for WHO Africa Region' aims to bring together a summary of regional data and information related to COVID-19, facilitate its analysis, and produce required knowledge products, to enhance availability of evidence for decision making. This hub is drawing on information from various sources, to act as a 'one stop shop' for the African COVID-19 information and provide strategic data for policy makers and general public audience

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AT A GLANCE

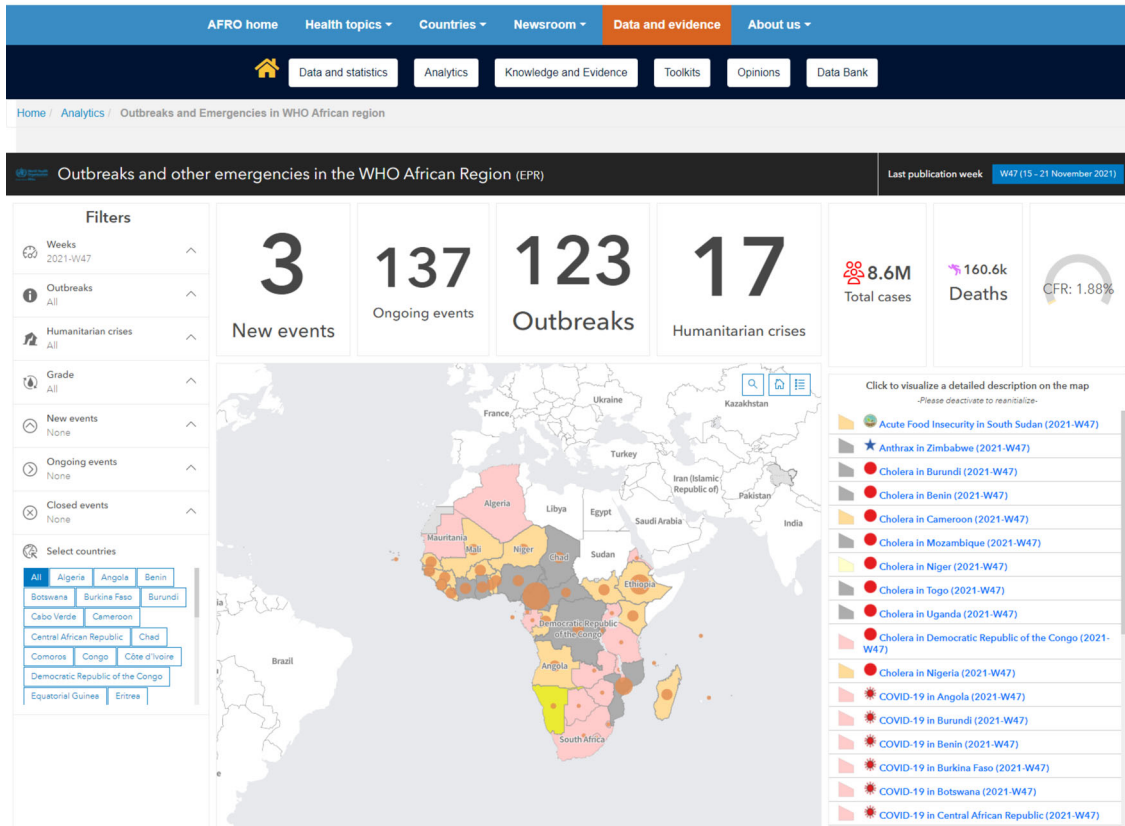
- Regional KPIs on COVID response
- Epidemiological Information
- Public Perception of COVID-19
- Country Profiles
- Evidence Synthesis
- Operational Updates
- Case Management
- Vaccination
- Impact on Essential Services
- Impact on other Sectors

The primary aim of the hub is to provide consolidated and harmonized view of data and information, with an overview of the regional and country's status, in terms of key attributes, and provide a platform to deep dive and un-package any information, through various stratification and analytical products. The information hub has specific tabs on Epidemiological Information (including COVID projections for countries), Case management, Public Perception, Country Profiles, Evidence Synthesis, Operational Updates, Vaccination, Impact on Essential Services, and Impact on other Sectors. For each of the pages, links are provided to users for further reading and in-depth review of contents.

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[Outbreaks and other emergencies Dashboard](#)

The WHO/AFRO Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) cluster has developed an interactive dashboard now available on iAHO. We can track week by week all the relevant information about the outbreaks and other emergencies happening in the region, click on <https://aho.afro.who.int/outbreaks-and-emergencies-who-africa/af> and visit the dashboard.



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Zooming:WHO E2P Summit 2021

The WHO Global Evidence-to-Policy (E2P) Summit 2021 brought together stakeholders to discuss the ways evidence is used as a catalyst for policy and societal change. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence and its use to inform decision-making is more critical than ever as Member States seek to build forward better and as the global community looks towards more equitable, resilient and sustainable global health.

On the Summit's second day, the WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO) hosted a side-event emphasizing efforts to promote evidence-driven health policy-making and sharing lessons learned from COVID-19 evidence-to-policy processes. Co-chaired by Dr Flavia Senkubuge, the Chair of the African Advisory Committee on Health Research and Development (AACHRD), Prof Moustafa Mijiyawa, Honourable Minister of Health of Togo, and Dr Lindiwe Makubalo, the AFRO Assistant Regional Director (ARD), the session focused on tackling health

emergencies and challenges in the African Region using evidence.

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ARD officially opened the side-event, providing key insights and orientations on E2P opportunities and approaches, particularly as they relate to collaboration and exchange between vital stakeholders. Dr Humphrey Karamagi, Team Leader of the Data, Analytics, and Knowledge Management (DAK) unit shared reflections on the path to institutionalization of evidence-informed policy-making in the African Region. Knowledge translation was highlighted as a significant area of work in terms of support to the COVID-19 response in the region. Aminata Seydi, Knowledge Officer, presented experiences with the production of rapid policy briefs, evidence-sharing webinars, predictive modelling, as well as other forms of country support and information exchange. The iAHO was highlighted as a key platform to enhance access to information for EIDM in the context of COVID-19 and well beyond. Experts from the health policy and research space presented country-specific case studies, covering Cameroon, Nigeria and Central African Republic. After a Q&A moderated by Dr Joseph Okeibunor, Team Leader of the Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) unit, Dr Karamagi took participants through a discussion pertaining to moving the agenda of E2P post-COVID-19, after which ARD closed the side-event.

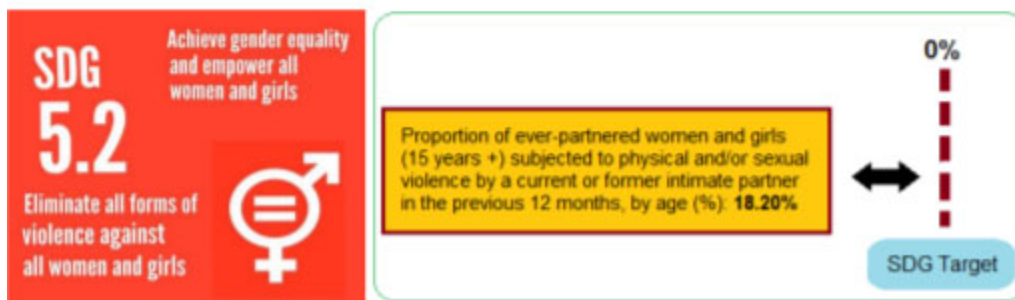
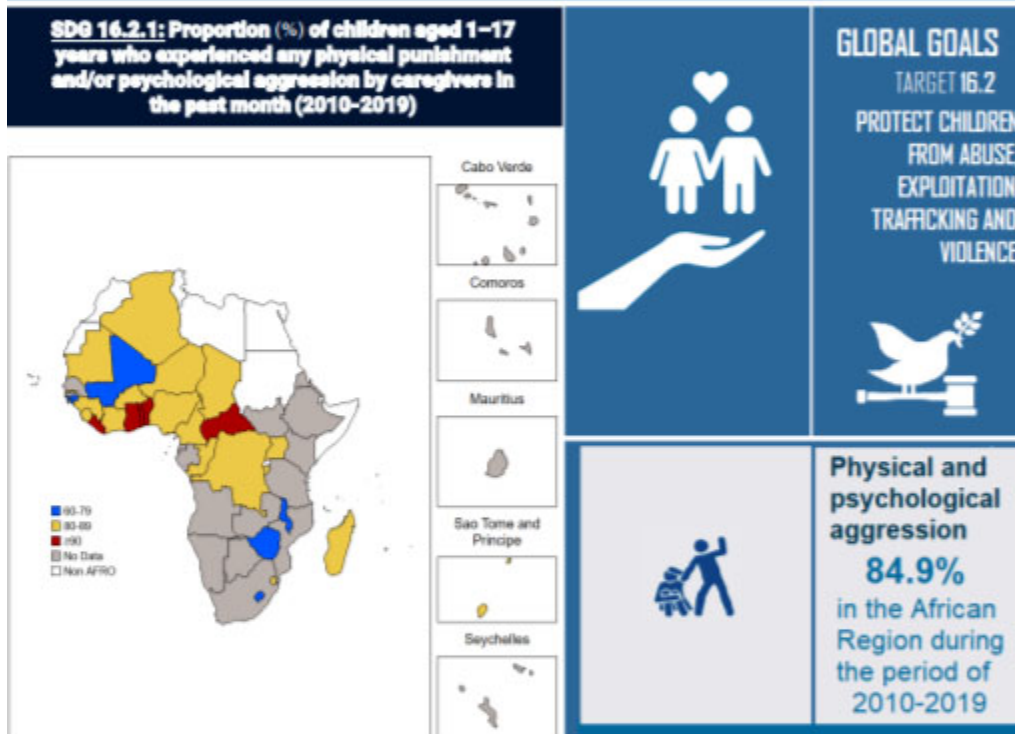
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Latest Data

Eye health in the African Region : key visual [health indicators](#) have been added to the iAHO using data compiled by countries. Check it out!

[Regional Fact sheet on Violence, Injuries and Disabilities Regional Factsheet](#)

1. Violence; UNSTATS, 2020



Find out more on the iAHO platform: <https://aho.afro.who.int/uhc-briefcase/af>

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Blogs from AHOP National Centres & AFRO

Covid 19 has highlighted the importance of having reliable information when time is of essence. [Find](#)



[out more](#) on how, in Nigeria, the Health Policy Research Group has been a key actor in information dissemination to both technical and non-technical audiences:

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The Essential Emergency and Critical Care framework can improve Kenya's critical care system. Find out more in this [blog](#).

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With the [new approved malaria vaccine](#), countries have an additional opportunity for malaria control. The next few months will therefore be critical for the rollout of the vaccine in the African region and its introduction into countries' immunization schedules:

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