

Abuja, Nigeria, June 27 (Infosplusgabon) – Nigeria has recorded uptick on the number of Coronavirus (COVID-19) sample tests in the country with 125,090 as of Friday. On Thursday, the figure was 122,155 samples.

This is a huge departure where only 256 tests could be conducted in the first 30 days of the first Index Case being recorded in Nigeria.

Today, the number of Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) laboratories has increased to 38, in about 110 days.

When Nigeria's COVID-19 Index Case was confirmed in Lagos State on 27 February 2020, the country had only five laboratories in four States of the federation able to test for the virus.

The Index Case was a 44-year old male Italian citizen who returned from Milan, Italy, on 24 February. He was presented at a health facility on 26 February 2020.

Following the confirmation of the Index Case, 216 people were identified as contacts to be followed up. Of these, 45 travelled out of Nigeria and one of the remaining 176 contacts was confirmed to be positive for COVID-19 on 9 March 2020.

Meanwhile, as of 3 May 2020, 2,558 cases have been reported in the country across 35 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), opting to ramping up testing capacity, says it targets to test about two million Nigerians.

“To achieve this ambitious target, we have to perform 50,000 tests per State. This would require enormous investment and we are working with our partners to achieve this,” said NCDC Director-General Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu.

NCDC is urging Nigerians to adhere to public health measures to slow COVID-19 spread, adding that it recognised the need to pay closer attention to the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions as they were most vulnerable.

The health agency said that the use of face shields without the face mask was not an effective way of preventing COVID-19 infection.

According to NCDC, “face shield is not a fashion accessory and must be combined with a mask to provide significant protection. The face shield protects only the face but face mask curbs the spread of respiratory droplets.”

The health agency said that clothes masks are a convenient substitute to medical masks, but they should not be worn by individuals who are at a high risk for complications.

“Handle them properly to avoid the spread of COVID-19,” it said

As of Friday, 684 new cases of COVID-19 were recorded across the country, which brought the number of infections to 23, 298. Out of the 23, 298 confirmed cases, 14, 491 are active cases, 8,253 cases have been treated and discharged while 554 deaths were recorded in 35 States and the FCT.

On Thursday, Nigeria recorded 594 new cases of COVID-19, which brought the total number of infections in the country to 22,614. And out of the confirmed cases, 14,243 cases were active, 7,822 cases were treated and discharged while 549 deaths were recorded.

NCDC said that of the 684 new cases from 19 States, Lagos State reported the highest number with 259 cases, followed by Oyo with 79 new infections.

Others were: Katsina-69, Delta-66, Rivers-46, Ogun-23, Edo-22, Osun-22, Ebonyi-21, FCT-20, Kaduna-16, Ondo-10, Imo-9, Abia-9, Gombe-5, Plateau-4, Bauchi-4, Ekiti-2 and Anambra-1.

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