

FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19 IN AFRICA: POSITIVE LESSONS FOR FUTURE PANDEMICS FROM GHANA

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Introduction: The novel coronavirus which causes COVID-19 has affected all continents, Africa inclusive. In Ghana, the first two cases of COVID-19 were recorded on 12th March, 2020; after which the Government took measures to limit and stop importation of the virus. We wanted to document experiences of Ghana during this pandemic to provide future guidance. **Methods:** We conducted a review of publicly available information on measures taken by Ghana to reduce the spread of coronavirus, and care for the sick. **Results:** On 30th March 2020, a 14-day partial lockdown was imposed in affected regions in Ghana, along with other measures (closure of borders, mandatory wearing of facemasks, etc). Three major laboratories, as well as other government hospital laboratories, served as stations for COVID-19 testing. Some hospitals had been dedicated as COVID-19 treatment centres, whilst other major hospitals served as support centres. In July, 2020, Ghana opened its first Infectious Disease Isolation and Treatment Centre. The Government of Ghana introduced measures to facilitate local production of face masks, medical scrubs, hospital gowns and head gear. Additionally, the Food and Drugs Authority in Ghana fast-tracked testing and approval of alcohol based hand sanitizers. As at 28th August, 2020, Ghana had recorded 43,949 COVID-19 cases, with only 270 deaths (case fatality of 0.6%). **Discussion:** We believe Ghana serves as a good example of a low- and middle-income country that has made relevant strides in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, setting-specific approaches are important in the fight against this pandemic.