

# Novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV

## Papua New Guinea Situation Report 5



7 February 2020

This Situation Report is issued twice a week (Tuesday and Friday) by the National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) for the Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). The Report is not comprehensive and covers information that we have as of reporting date.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ❑ As of **6 February 2020**, there are **24 countries** affected by novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). It is likely that more countries will be reporting cases.
- ❑ Papua New Guinea has **no case of novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV**, to date.
- ❑ The Government of Papua New Guinea has mobilized a **Ministerial Committee on Coronavirus** involving relevant agencies. The Committee is **chaired by the Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS**.
- ❑ A **Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus** was prepared, with budget that will be submitted to the National Executive Council (NEC). The plan was developed by the National Department of Health (NDOH), with support from the World Health Organization (WHO).
- ❑ **Preparedness measures** have been implemented both at the national and provincial levels. The National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) has been activated since 27 January while the provinces have been issued an advisory to activate PEOCs, prepare health facilities and train health workers.
- ❑ Coronavirus **hotline +675 71960813** is operational 24/7 starting 24 January 2020. The hotline receives an average of 20 calls a day, mostly asking for information and self-reporting of sick people.
- ❑ The Minister for Health signed the Gazettal notices on 3 February related to appointing an isolation ward; adding novel coronavirus, MERS, and SARS as quarantinable diseases; declaring an epidemic caused by a quarantinable disease; and directing authorities at all points of entry into PNG to accomplish health declaration forms for all incoming travellers.
- ❑ A **Talkback show** on coronavirus was aired live on radio, television and Facebook on 6 February. Ministers of different agencies joined the Health Minister and WHO in addressing questions from the public. A media conference was held on 7 February 2020, participated in by NDOH A/Secretary Dr Paison Dakulala and WHO Representative Dr Luo Dapeng.

### GLOBAL SITUATION IN NUMBERS

(The numbers are based on WHO Situation Report as of 6 February 2020. The figures change very quickly.)

**Globally: 28,276 confirmed**

**China: 28,060 confirmed  
3,859 severe  
564 deaths**

**Outside China:**

**216 confirmed  
1 death (Philippines)  
24 countries**

(Australia, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA, Viet Nam)

**Papua New Guinea has no reported case as of 7 February 2020**

### RISK ASSESSMENT

China: very high  
Region: high  
Global level: high

## PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS MEASURES

The National Department of Health has activated its preparedness and response mechanisms and have put in place the following measures:

### Coordination and Leadership

- ❑ A Ministerial Committee on Coronavirus was organized by the Prime Minister James Marape to coordinate response activities. The committee is composed of the following ministries.
  - Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS Hon. Jelta Wong (Chairperson)
  - Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Trade Hon. Patrick Pruaitch
  - Minister for Information and Communication Technology Hon. Timothy Masiu
  - Minister for Civil Aviation Hon. Lekwa Gure
  - Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Border Security Hon. Westly Nukundj
  - Minister for State-Owned Enterprises Hon. Sasindran Muthuvel
  - Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Hon. William Samb
- ❑ Representatives of the Ministerial Committee met on 7 February to liaise on the various advisories issued by the various agencies and clarify the measures in place.



- ❑ The National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) continues to meet daily since its activation on 27 January 2020. The cluster leads have been identified based on the incident management system used in previous outbreaks and emergencies.
- ❑ Starting 10 February, the meetings at the NEOC will be streamlined based on the new schedule (refer to the right box).
- ❑ An advisory has been sent to the provinces to re-activate their provincial EOCs and incident management system, prepare the hospitals and other health facilities and train health workers to manage patients.

#### **National Emergency Operations Center for novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**

##### **Daily Operations Meeting (for Cluster Leads and WHO technical counterparts only)**

- ❑ 8:30 – 9:00 AM

##### **Every Wednesday: Government Inter- Ministry Committee**

- ❑ 9:00 – 10:00 AM

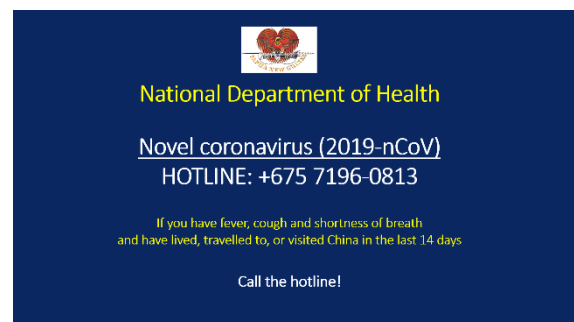
##### **Every Friday: All Partners' Meeting on Coronavirus**

- ❑ 9:00 – 10:00 AM

- ❑ A preparedness and response plan is drafted, with budget developed. Color-coded scenarios and appropriate scale of response had been developed for PNG as basis for the preparedness and response planning.
- ❑ Following the site visit on 31 January by Acting Secretary, WHO Representative to the airport, St John Ambulance and Port Moresby General Hospital (PMGH), key ministers from various agencies conducted their own site visits on 3 February to confirm that processes are in place.
- ❑ The Minister for Health and HIV/ AIDs signed the following Gazettal notices on 3 February:
  - Appointing an isolation ward at Port Moresby General Hospital under the Quarantine Act 1953 for a period of 60 days.
  - Declared novel coronavirus, MERS, and SARS a quarantinable disease under the Quarantine Act 1953 and an infectious disease under the Public Health Act 1973.
  - Declared that an epidemic caused by a quarantinable disease or danger of such an epidemic exists in PNG. This allows the Minister for Health and HIV/ AIDs to take actions as necessary to control and eradicate the epidemic.
  - Directed authorities at all points of entry into PNG to distribute a form to all incoming travellers and collect said forms.

### Surveillance

- ❑ Coronavirus hotline **+675 71960813** is operational 24/7 starting 24 January 2020. This serves as a mechanism to report any person who has met case definition. The hotline receives approximately 20 calls per day. Telecom companies are requested to provide toll-free numbers so public can call with no cost for the caller.
- ❑ Collection and analysis of health declaration forms of arriving passengers at the Jacksons International Airport ongoing.
- ❑ Both event-based and syndromic surveillance systems are monitored by the NDOH and Provincial Health Authorities. NDOH routine surveillance for influenza like illnesses (ILI) at sentinel sites is also ongoing. For any suspected ILI cases, nasopharyngeal swab is collected for laboratory diagnosis.
- ❑ A team of trained surveillance officers (rapid response team) are mobilized to conduct case investigation and contact tracing. The National Capital District is deploying additional staff for surge capacity for rapid response.



### Measures at the Points of Entry

- ❑ The health screening at Jacksons International Airport continues: Some of the measures in place are starting 28 January 2020.
  - Providing advisory to all arriving passengers through the airline announcement.
  - Requiring all inbound passengers to fill out mandatory health declaration forms.
  - A Health Desk is operational at the Jacksons International Airport. Health staff are positioned as soon as passengers disembark (before Customs) and they also check travellers with history of travel to China.
  - Protocol for isolation and quarantine of patients is developed.
  - Advisory to airlines operators for measures in case a passenger gets sick on board an aircraft.

- Roster of 6-7 NDOH staff currently on rotational arrangement to screen international flights. Over 600 passengers per day are screened and declaration forms are processed by the surveillance team using an algorithm for decision and action.
- To date, around 10 passengers have been referred to rapid response team for action and home follow ups.
- ❑ To date, the health screening at Jacksons International Airport has generated the following:
  - An average of 7-9 flights are screened every day
  - Since the start of the operation, about 6,000 inbound passengers have been screened.
  - About 110 persons underwent rigorous screening and 3 out of the 110 are under investigation and samples have been collected for testing.
- ❑ On 29 January, the Foreign Affairs and International Trade has established a health desk for people affected by the outbreak. The email address is [helpdesk.dfait@gmail.com](mailto:helpdesk.dfait@gmail.com) and the phone numbers are: 3014131 and 3014115.
- ❑ On 3 February, Ministry of Immigration and Border Security issued public notices regarding entry to Papua New Guinea for those with travel history to China and refusal of entry at all shipping ports except Motukea, Lae Main Wharf and the Rabaul Wharf
- ❑ On 5 February, the Department of Transport issued a direction and notice to all international ship and port facility and facilities serving international vessels
- ❑ On 7 February, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade issued a media release updating the public of the status of PNG students evacuated from Wuhan, China by the New Zealand Government and the PNG citizens currently in China.

### Clinical Management and Infection Prevention and Control

- ❑ An isolation area (8 beds now that can be expanded to accommodate more) at PMGH is being prepared as the designated ward for any suspected case. Anyone suspected of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) will be isolated as soon as detected at Jacksons International Airport.
- ❑ St John's Ambulance is contracted and on standby to transport any sick passenger to the designated area. Pathway for patient movement from the airport and area for safe patient assessment and care is in place.
- ❑ 35 PMGH staff have been trained on PPEs. Trainees include clinicians, nurses, radiology staff; and support services staff.
- ❑ An advisory will be provided to all health care facilities on the management of persons that meet the case definition.
- ❑ **PPE supplies are not sufficient.** Procurement is underway but it will take time to arrive in the country. Call for assistance is made for business houses, corporate entities, and our stakeholders to support.

### Laboratory Testing

- ❑ The PNG Institute of Medical Research (PNG IMR) virology laboratory is designated to test for novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). It is the designated laboratory for influenza.
- ❑ Viral RNA extraction test kits already provided to IMR.
- ❑ Three samples have been collected from persons under investigation for pan-coronavirus testing.





## Risk Communication

- ❑ Media conferences and orientation are held regularly:
  - 30 January 2020, by NDOH A/Secretary and WHO Representative.
  - 3 February 2020, media orientation was to clarify terminologies used in reporting and get support in allaying people's fears
  - 7 February 2020, by NDOH A/Secretary and WHO Representative
- ❑ A Talkback show on coronavirus was aired live on radio, television and Facebook on 6 February. Ministers of different agencies joined the Health Minister and WHO in addressing questions from the public.
- ❑ Advisory on the prevention measures have been disseminated to the public through the media and social media platforms.
- ❑ To cater to the requests of schools for information materials, UNICEF will link with Ministry of Education and will be asked to support in adapting WHO infographics and messages for children and schools.
- ❑ Discussion with mobile companies is still being explored for text blasting of messages and toll-free hotline.



## SUPPORT FROM PARTNERS

### From the World Health Organization

- ❑ High-level technical briefing to Government and partners on the nCoV situation and action:
  - Ongoing update to Health Minister Jelta Wong and A/Secretary Dr Paison Dakulala
  - Briefing to Prime Minister James Marape, along with Minister of Health and NDOH Secretary on the situation and preparedness for PNG – 29 Jan 2020
  - Briefing to the Ministerial Committee on Coronavirus – 1 Feb 2020
  - Briefing to the Diplomatic Corps and Heads of Development agencies on 30 Jan, Heads of Missions on 5 Feb, and UN Staff on 7 Feb
- ❑ Technical support in development of the PNG nCoV Preparedness and Response Plan, with costing. Budget for submission to the Cabinet on 6 Feb 2020
- ❑ Technical, operational and material support to the Government:
  - Activation of the NEOC – with people supporting various functional clusters based on the incident management system
  - Measures at the airport (people, PPE, health declaration forms and IEC materials)
  - Hospital preparedness (assessment for readiness of isolation wards, training of health workers; provision of PPE)
  - Surveillance and rapid response team (case investigation, contact tracing and deployment of staff)
  - Hotline management (putting in place system and follow-up and human resources)
  - Risk communication (advise to the Government, development of materials and talking points). Organizing media conferences and orientations.
  - Partner engagement including support in developing situation reports.
- ❑ Sharing and updating Government on technical guidelines and advising on public health measures including non-application of travel and trade restrictions
- ❑ Repurposing of staff to support the Government (supporting airport operation, surveillance and RRT, communication, partner coordination and incident management)

### From Other Partners

- ☐ Government of New Zealand evacuated PNG students in Wuhan and putting them on quarantine.
- ☐ UNICEF will support in printing information, education and communication materials (IEC) on hand washing, especially those for children. This will be done in coordination with the Ministry of Education.
- ☐ Discussion with Australia High Commission on possible technical support.

## ADVISORY TO THE PUBLIC

During previous outbreaks 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 infections 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.
- ☐ When visiting live markets in areas currently experiencing cases of novel coronavirus, avoid direct unprotected contact with live animals and surfaces in contact with animals;
- ☐ The consumption of raw or undercooked animal products should be avoided. Raw meat, milk or animal organs should be handled with care, to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked foods, as per good food safety practices.

**Lukautim yu na femli long sik coronavirus:**

 Wasim han wantaim sop na wara

Karamapim nus na maus bilong yu taim yu laik kus 


 Stap longwe na noken go klostu long ol lain husat i gat kus na fiva


Kukim gut olgeta abus bifo yu laik kaikai 


 Noken holim natin ol animol we oli save stap lo bus





**Reduce your risk of coronavirus infection:**


 Clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub

Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with tissue or flexed elbow 

 Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms

Thoroughly cook meat and eggs 

 Avoid unprotected contact with live wild or farm animals



## Responses to Frequently-Asked Questions

The new coronavirus is a respiratory virus which spreads primarily through contact with an infected person through respiratory droplets generated when a person, for example, coughs or sneezes, or through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose. It is important that everyone practice good respiratory hygiene. For example, sneeze or cough into a flexed elbow, or use a tissue and discard it immediately into a closed bin. It is also very important for people to wash their hands regularly with either alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

### How does 2019-nCoV spread?



People living or travelling in an area where the 2019-nCoV virus is circulating may be at risk of infection.

At present, 2019-nCoV is circulating in China where the vast majority of people infected have been reported. Those infected from other countries are among people who have recently traveled from China or who have been living or working closely with those travellers, such as family members, co-workers or medical professionals caring for a patient before they knew the patient was infected with 2019-nCoV.

### Who can catch the 2019-nCoV virus?



While we still need to learn more about how 2019-nCoV affects people, thus far, older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as diabetes and heart disease) appear to be more at risk of developing severe disease.

### Who is at risk of developing severe symptoms from 2019-nCoV?



As with other respiratory illnesses, infection with 2019-nCoV can cause mild symptoms including a runny nose, sore throat, cough, and fever. It can be more severe for some persons and can lead to pneumonia or breathing difficulties.

### How dangerous is the 2019-nCoV?



Yes, the 2019-nCoV causes respiratory disease and can be transmitted from person to person, usually after close contact with an infected patient, for example, in a household workplace, or health care centre.

### Can the 2019-nCoV be transmitted from person to person?



For any updated information and updates, check out the links below:

NDOH Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/PNGNDOH/>

WHO Papua New Guinea Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WHOPapuaNewGuinea/>

WHO Website: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/>

**PNG National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC)**  
**Preparedness and Response for Coronavirus: Cluster Leaders and Contact Details**

Function	NDOH Cluster Lead	WHO Technical Counterpart
Incident management	<b>Dr Daoni Esorom</b> (Incident Manager and National Coordinator) Mobile: +675 72313983 Email: <a href="mailto:daoniesorom@gmail.com">daoniesorom@gmail.com</a>	<b>Dr Anup Gurung</b> Mobile: +675 71009914 Email: <a href="mailto:gurunga@who.int">gurunga@who.int</a>
Surveillance, rapid response and contact tracing	<b>Mr Berry Ropa</b> Mobile: +675 71291609 Email: <a href="mailto:bropa2013@gmail.com">bropa2013@gmail.com</a>	<b>Ms Nola Ndrewei</b> Mobile: +675 79261425 Email: <a href="mailto:ndrewein@who.int">ndrewein@who.int</a>
Clinical management, IPC, hospital preparedness and ambulance	<b>Dr Gary Nuo</b> Mobile: +675 73028350 Email: <a href="mailto:geregana@gmail.com">geregana@gmail.com</a>	<b>Dr Anup Gurung</b> Mobile: +675 71009914 Email: <a href="mailto:gurunga@who.int">gurunga@who.int</a>
Points of entry (airport, seaports and land crossing)	<b>Dr Mathias Bauri</b> Mobile: +675 70056293 Email: <a href="mailto:mathiasbauri@gmail.com">mathiasbauri@gmail.com</a>	<b>Dr James Wangi</b> Mobile: +675 72804900 Email: <a href="mailto:wangij@who.int">wangij@who.int</a>
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Operations and logistics	<b>Ms Loina Yafai</b> Mobile: Email:	---
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