



AHBS 1st Webinar series  
**Partnerships for COVID-19 in Africa**

Session report

# Testing Tracking and Treating



**31<sup>st</sup> July 2020**



This webinar is brought to you by Africa Health Business (AHB)

AHB is a pan-African advisory, consulting and investment firm that focuses on innovative partnerships to transform health in Africa. AHB promotes the growth of the private health sector in Africa to generate affordable, accessible, and quality healthcare for all.



## MODERATOR

Dr. Amit N. Thakker  
Executive Chairman  
Africa Health Business



## KEYNOTE

Dr. John Nkengasong  
Director  
Africa CDC



## PANELIST

Mr. Marc Matthews  
Business Development  
Director Africa  
LumiraDX



## PANELIST

Ms. Renuka Gadde  
Vice President  
Global Health  
BD



## PANELIST

Ms. Manal Halwani  
Healthcare Industry Leader  
& Expert EMEA South  
SAP



## PANELIST

Ms. Ada Mwangola  
Director Social & Political  
Pillars  
Kenya Vision 2030



## PANELIST

Mr. Kennedy Njau  
Government Affairs Director  
Sub Saharan Africa  
Astra Zeneca

# Event Partners



PHARMACCESSGROUP







## MODERATOR

Dr. Amit N. Thakker  
Executive Chairman  
Africa Health Business



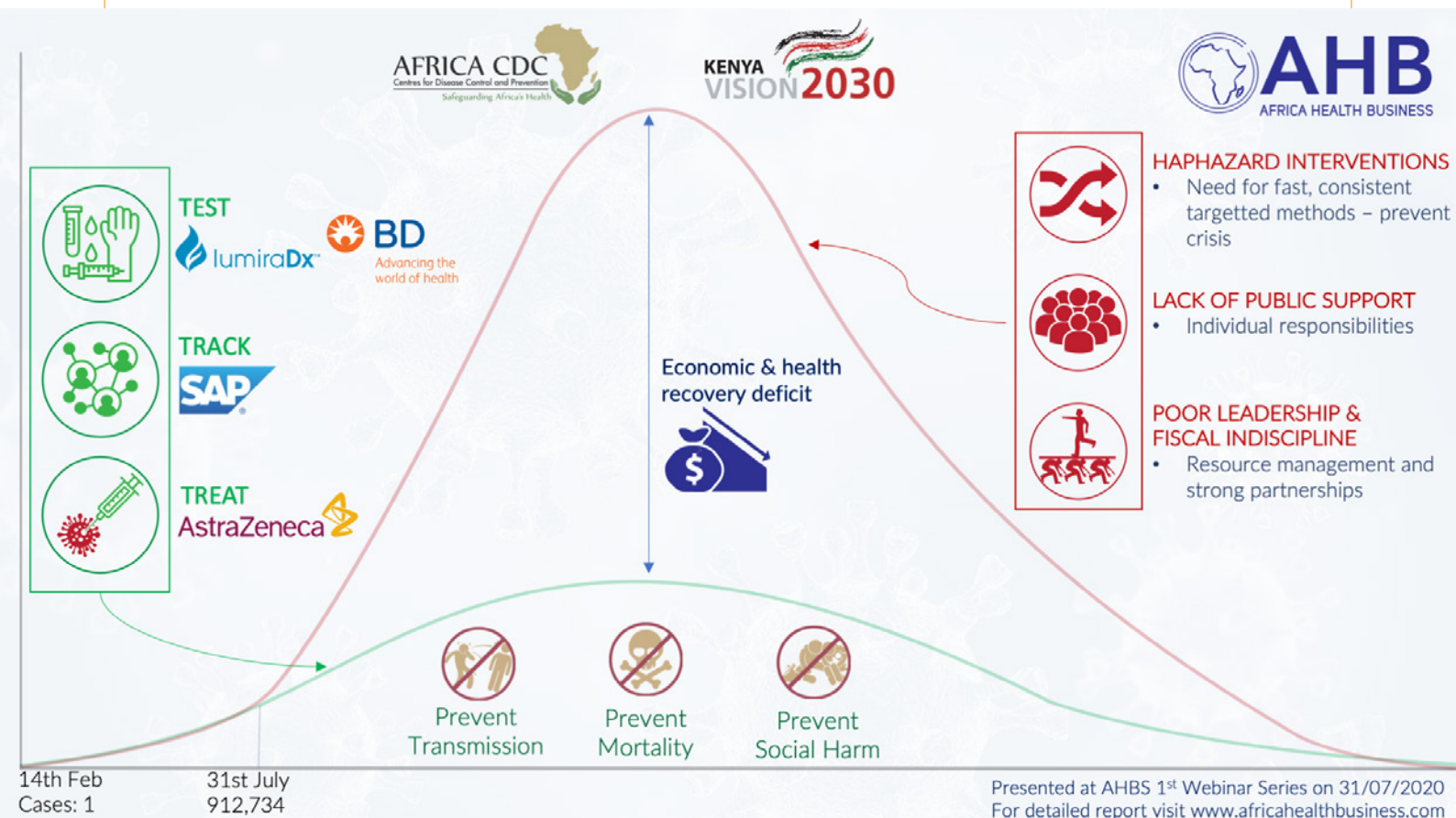
Today we are discussing an extremely important topic. The panelists, with varying areas of expertise, will take us through each one of the thematic areas in depth.

We have not had a better opportunity in Africa before now to cement our efforts on testing, tracking and treating. We have had significant learning since the start of the outbreak of the virus and we need to capitalize on this and continue learning in order to move forward.

On 14th February 2020, Africa had its first COVID-19 case. As of today, we are at almost 1 million cases. It is alarming to see the way the number of cases are accelerating, but we don't need to panic. Instead of the flight approach, Africa needs to take the fight approach. The speakers today are examples of those who are choosing to fight this illness. The three fundamental pillars are to prevent transmission, prevent mortality, and prevent social harm.

Our heads of state have had to make very difficult decisions to reduce the damage that may be caused by a higher number of cases and deaths. As we move ahead as a continent, we need to avoid haphazard interventions, such as inconsistent messages and non-targeted public health approaches, in order to avoid damaging crises. It is also essential to have public support of the interventions and people need to take individual responsibility. Leadership is going to be tested during this time, and financial indiscipline will result in the loss of lives.

Here at Africa Health Business, we are dedicated to building strong partnerships, bolstering private sector engagement, and enhancing resource mobilization to help us flatten the curve.





## KEYNOTE

Dr. John Nkengasong  
Director  
Africa CDC

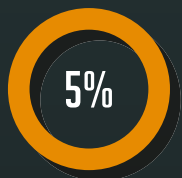


AHB has shown wonderful leadership during this pandemic by leading these discussions that are lively, engaging, and action oriented.

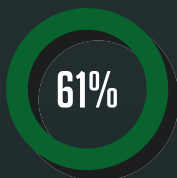
As a continent, Africa has had around 100,000 short of 1 million cases (908,000 cases in total). Of these cases, 19,000 people have died and 556,000 have recovered. The number of recoveries is important to focus on. In challenges like this, celebrating the successes leads to endurance, character and hope. Without hope, there is no chance to address this virus.

Additionally, of the 55 countries that make up the African Union, 37 are reporting less than 5,000 cases, and 7 countries are reporting between 5,000 and 10,000 cases. This is important because we still have a strong window of opportunity to effectively mitigate the impact of the virus. We need to look at the facts and go out and fight. It is absolutely essential for us to know the details of the pandemic, knowing who is infected, how they were infected, how they responded, and who has recovered.

In April, Africa had conducted a total of only 350,000 tests out of 1.3 billion people. With the launch of the Partnership to Accelerate Covid Testing, we have now conducted 8.3 million tests, with Africa CDC having distributed about 5 million of them. This is still not enough. As a continent, we should test at least 13 million people.



908,000  
CASES



556,000  
RECOVERED

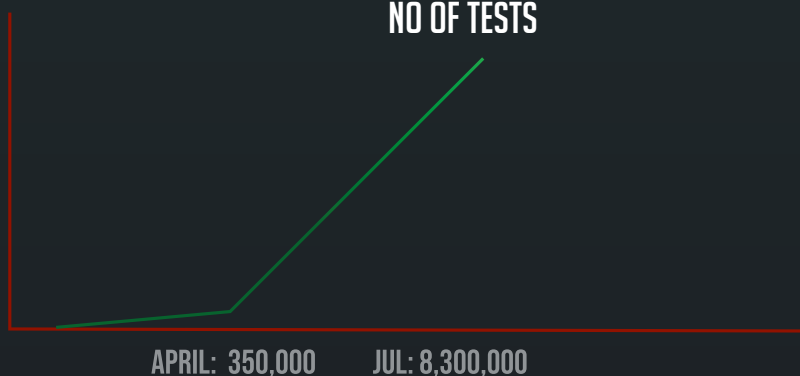


19,000  
DEATHS

### CASE DISTRIBUTION



### NO OF TESTS



# AFRICA

Beyond that, if we test but then do not trace the people that they have been in contact with and conduct quarantines, then the test becomes an ineffective tool. With this in mind, the Africa CDC called for the continent to deploy one million community health workers to do contact tracing to find the cases, isolate them and treat those who are infected.

We need to apply innovation in order to adapt our hospitals so they can continue addressing COVID-19 without disrupting existing services. When we developed the joint continental strategy that was endorsed by heads of states, it was based on the need to cooperate, collaborate, coordinate and communicate effectively. It was based on three goals:

1. to limit transmission
2. to limit deaths
3. to limit harm -- both economic harm as well as negative effects on other diseases.

We need to remember that about 1.2 million Africans die each year due to HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. Pandemics have a unique way of disrupting other areas of health, including immunizations. For example, around 1 million children went unvaccinated due to the ebola crisis.

So as we ease the lockdown, what should we be collectively doing as a continent? The Africa CDC and the African Union Commission will be launching a campaign called Saving Lives, Saving Economies, underpinned by knowing your status. Similar to HIV/AIDS public health campaigns, by knowing your status, you protect yourself and those around you. This will focus on:

1. protecting borders and travelers
2. protecting the economy using technology
3. protecting our children's education

This includes testing, tracking and treatment across these three areas. We cannot protect our borders without increased testing. Following testing, there must be a strategy for responding effectively if a person tests positive. A plan needs to be in place. Technology should be deployed so that businesses can stay open but still resist the virus through surveillance. The test, trace and treat approach will drive the overall approach as we ease lockdowns, saving lives and saving economies. Lastly, looking at schools, we have to ensure we protect the future. If we open up schools, we need to have effective testing and surveillance.

We are going to go through a series of waves, locking down and opening up until we are rid of the virus. This will require a whole of society approach. We need to develop community leaders and cooperate with them so that people understand what governments are doing. Individuals will then not see it as punishment that they have to get tested or wear masks. Individuals will see it as playing their part for the broader good.

There are several things that are essential moving forward:

1. Broad access to testing.
2. Deploying a large number of community health workers to trace.
3. Building relationships with community leaders. Contact tracing, even with community health workers, will not work if the community leaders have not sensitized their populations.
4. Increased mask wearing at all levels. This will save lives and save economies. By wearing masks, we're able to open up economies without sacrificing public health.
5. Good political leadership that exhibits boldness, wisdom and courage.

We will be fighting this virus for a long time. This is not a several month crisis. We will be living with COVID-19 for some time and we need to approach this with a long-term vision.



## PANELIST

Ms. Renuka Gadde  
Vice President, Global Health  
BD



BD Global Health is focused on equitable access to healthcare to enable all people to live healthy lives. BD has been in existence since 1897 and has seen many viruses in their time and how they can be addressed collectively. They have worked in Africa for over 50 years, with strong teams on the ground in South Africa, Kenya and Ghana.

The program Labs for Life focuses on strengthening lab systems in capacity and quality, assisting them in getting accreditation. They have worked to improve clinical practices, such as blood collection and infusion practices. This work has been done for many years, but is as important as ever during this pandemic.

For years, BD has been looking at collaboration, specifically with Dr. Nkengasong. A big part of what they do depends on leadership and vision. Early on, they have prioritised public-private partnership. There is no question that, as COVID-19 continues, BD will be working with government leadership in public-private partnership even more. As an example, they have been working to address antimicrobial resistance (AMR), working in 19 countries in 98 laboratories. This reinforces the need for strong labs. The WHO has found that 72% of cases, COVID-19 cases have been treated with antibiotics unnecessarily. Even areas of health that are not directly related to the COVID-19 virus have overlapping challenges.

The BD Max System is a molecular platform for COVID-19 and MDR-TB (RIF INH). This has a simply automated workflow with pre-loaded test strips. This is a lab-based solution and, therefore, has its limitations. With this in mind, they have just launched a point-of-care platform that is portable, easy to use and gives accurate results in 15 minutes with an 84% sensitivity and 100% specificity. Some of the challenges are how to take this internationally to those who need the test the most. They are hoping to come back with good news very soon that they will be providing tests for Africa.

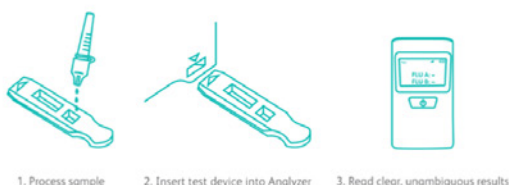
This is the time to think about public-private partnerships. It's one thing to have access to solutions and another thing to actually carry them out. In order to roll out solutions, we need to work with the entire health system -- industry, governments, and the communities themselves.

It is very important to think about COVID-19 vaccination preparedness. BD has a history of working in vaccination innovation. As the continent is responding to the pandemic, we need to plan now to have the correct, safe supplies to provide the vaccination to as many people as possible. BD is having discussions around these topics and is committed to saving lives and saving livelihoods.

## The BD Veritor™ Plus System Rapid, reliable SARS-CoV-2 testing at the point of care

The portable, easy-to-use BD Veritor™ Plus System provides reliable SARS-CoV-2 results in **15 minutes**

Easy, streamlined sample processing reduces potential manual errors.



### Clinical Performance<sup>1</sup>

| PPA                   | NPA                   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 84%                   | 100%                  |
| (95% C.I.<br>67%–93%) | (95% C.I.<br>98–100%) |



## PANELIST

Ms. Manal Halwani  
Healthcare Industry Leader  
& Expert EMEA South  
SAP



SAP is a technology company that operates in multiple industries. Many of their customers have needed help during the COVID-19 crisis in their core operational processes, which include things to do with their people, resources, logistics, and so on. SAP is present in around 190 countries, including throughout Africa.

So how can technology support tracking, tracing and testing? Once a patient tests positive, a coordinated and organized response is needed in order to actually stem the spread of the virus. There are four main areas where SAP can help.

1. When it comes to the patient, they need to be identified and their information needs to be handled.
2. The practitioner needs to be able to work effectively and be listened to. How can technology enable them to share what is and is not working in the COVID response?
3. The health provider needs to handle their employees, their capacity, and also their resources.
4. Lastly, governments need to be able to have analytics in order to respond effectively, promote coordination and promote public health.

SAP has supported the development of remote health questionnaires. Sometimes there isn't enough testing capacity in certain areas, or not enough workers to perform testing. In these cases, public health authorities could rely on symptoms reporting to estimate the number of COVID-19 cases. Technology can help administer these questionnaires very quickly at a regional or even national scale. The data comes in real time and can be analyzed in order to determine possible outbreaks.

Although this is not as accurate as testing, it is still useful for making predictions and requires much less capacity. This works best in areas where there is high mobile phone penetration or community health workers who can distribute the questionnaires. This real-time data can help public health leadership visualize trends. Additionally, if a person has COVID-19 symptoms but are not able to be tested, they can at least be encouraged to isolate and, with permission, the patient can be followed up with by SMS. This same technology can be used for case management. For example, triage forms can be distributed in the same way as symptom questionnaires.

After testing and patient identification, contact tracing is necessary. Firstly, this can be done through self reporting, where someone who has tested positive reports their contacts and then health workers reach out to the impacted people and continue the process from there. By doing this, there is a systematic way to prevent the spread of the disease. The health worker can recommend those that have been in contact with the infected person to either self isolate or come in for a test. Significant data is received through this process.

The second way of doing contact tracing is more automated, and requires very strong privacy. SAP has developed a mobile phone app where everyone who has the app who was in close proximity to an infected person will be notified (without communicating who the infected person is). This inspires trust in society. Citizens are ensured that their patient info remains safe and they know they are helping the community as a whole. This can help when it comes to opening up economies because it empowers the communities to take care of themselves. This is one of the most advanced and accurate ways of effective tracing. Additional technology can be added to further enhance this, including visualization at a national level to identify trends.





## PANELIST

Ms. Ada Mwangola  
Director Social & Political  
Pillars  
Kenya Vision 2030



Kenya Vision 2030 is coordinating Kenya's development agenda. The Big 4 Agenda was launched in 2018 and includes universal health coverage. They are working to provide social health protection, access to health insurance, access to fully equipped health centers, reducing the number of kilometers needed to travel to access care, establishment of 10 new referral hospitals, and increasing the number of health facilities at the community level, including mobile health services. The overall goal is equitable, affordable and quality health care of the highest standards.

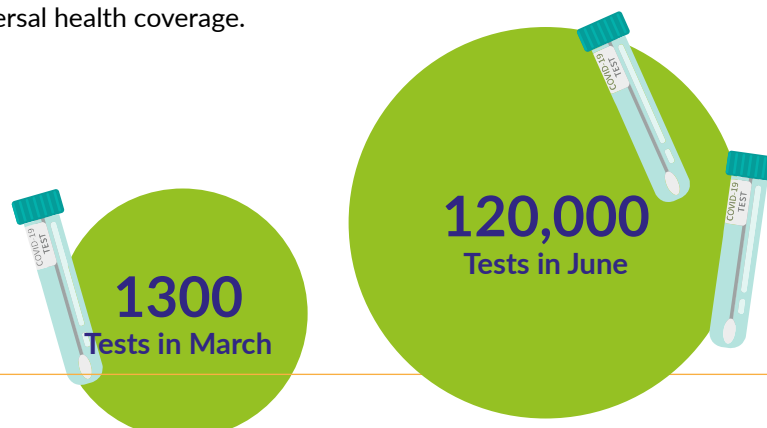
Kenya's COVID-19 response since their first reported case in March has been very inclusive in terms of stakeholders. The National Coordination Committee on the Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic (NCCRCP) updates the population daily on the numbers of cases and other details about how the virus is affecting the population. The COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund mobilizes funds from partners, especially the private sector, and the board reflects private sector participation. This fund has helped the country to be prepared, including providing public education materials, essential supplies, equipping health facilities, and improving laboratories. The fund is responsible for much of the scale up in terms of testing, tracking and treating.

As of yesterday, Kenya has tested close to 300,000 people. The number of infections have gone up, but there is still a huge gap between those that have been tested and those that have tested positive. The number of deaths remains quite low and we are working to ensure that this remains so. We still need to do more testing. There has been improvement, though, from as low as 1,300 in March and in June when there were about 120,000 tests.

The Kenyan government is very open to partnership with the private sector in several areas when it comes to addressing the pandemic. Opportunities for partnership include providing high quality medical care, medications, digital solutions, financial resources and the manufacturing of affordable commodities and technologies. Additionally, in order to ensure effective testing, tracking and treating, the government is interested in partnering with the private sector to set up isolation centres, participate in food and nutrition services, support both physical and mental wellbeing, implement public health measures (such as hand washing stations and provision of face masks), and to support counties to meet government requirements to help curb the spread of the virus.

The government has worked to create an enabling environment for private sector participation in the health sector during this pandemic. Currently, global supply chains are changing and the government is committed to ensuring that the private sector is able to participate in those global supply chains. There are also negotiations with the U.S. and U.K. regarding bilateral trade. Kenya needs to be self sufficient when it comes to medical commodities. The manufacturing sector is quickly adjusting to this. Kenya must produce competitively to be a competitive nation. Investments in infrastructure and energy are receiving significant attention from the Kenyan government.

Kenya Vision 2030 is ready for opportunities to partner in scaling up testing, tracking and tracing as a step towards achieving universal health coverage.







## PANELIST



Mr. Kennedy Njau  
Government Affairs Director  
Sub Saharan Africa  
Astra Zeneca

Partnership and collaboration is needed to ensure that Africa is not left behind. This is an essential part of the pandemic response. AstraZeneca's COVID-19 response is based on four primary objectives:

1. Providing emergency relief and humanitarian support based on urgent needs
2. Helping ensure continuity of care and patient safety and strengthening capacity of health systems
3. Protecting our staff and critical operations to ensure the continued supply of our medicines to the patients who needed them
4. Contributing our own research and development to global and national efforts to combat the virus

Astrazeneca has donated more than nine million face masks as well as surgical gloves, monitors, medicines, and other medical supplies. They have partnered with the World Economic Forum and the WHO to identify the needs and to respond in an agile manner.

Africa has not been left behind in their efforts. They have worked with ministries of health to support health workers. The number one thing that we can do for our frontline health workers is to keep them safe. With this in mind, Astrazeneca has worked with the ministries of health in Kenya and Uganda. Additionally, about 35,000 masks landed in Addis Ababa earlier today and the same will happen in Ivory Coast soon. They are committed to supporting health professionals so that those on the frontlines can have confidence in the work they are doing. They are also delivering testing equipment to governments throughout Africa.

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and Astrazeneca has been impressed with many African governments that have remained committed to delivering care for NCDs, despite the urgency of COVID-19, because they acknowledge the seriousness of these illnesses. Collaborating with the National Cancer Control Program (NCCP) in Kenya, Astrazeneca has supported continued cancer care during the pandemic. This is in line with the country's commitment to universal health coverage.

The second thing we need to do for our health workers is to empower them. There is so much new information coming through daily about COVID-19. Health workers need to be empowered with the necessary knowledge to effectively care for their patients. This has been an Africa-wide effort. Astrazeneca is working in collaboration with each society to ensure they are supported to deliver important information that is dynamic and developing constantly. They have had about 71 educational events that have been attended by almost 20,000 people. The health workers on the continent have been incredibly agile when it comes to pivoting toward digital solutions, whether in the public or private sector. Through Astrazeneca's education services, they have been able to connect partners across the globe for further knowledge sharing.

Astrazeneca is committed to working with governments and businesses to ensure supply continuity so that patients get the medications they need. They are also focused on partnerships to develop diagnostic equipment (in partnership with GSK), conduct antibody research and investigate potential treatments (with academia, governments, and biotech companies), and develop and distribute a potential vaccine (in collaboration with Oxford University).

As a company, they are committed to equitable supply and access. They are aware that the global need will not be satisfied by just one company. There are many manufacturing networks that will develop supply chains that will avail the vaccine to as many people as possible.

# Parting Shots

## Mr. Marc Mathews

The 13 million test target mentioned by Dr. Nkengason should not be a negotiable number. We understand the value of testing, but also tracing and treating. Decentralizing the three elements into communities, building a good, strong community response to the pandemic and reinvesting in primary healthcare are also non-negotiable. This is not just for this pandemic, but to manage other areas of disease burden and also to prepare for future pandemics.



## Ms. Renuka Gadd

The time to act is now -- if we don't, it will result in lost lives and lost livelihoods. Public-private partnerships are essential. If we haven't solved COVID-19 in Africa, we haven't solved it anywhere else in the world. COVID-19 anywhere is COVID-19 everywhere, so coming together now is more important than ever.

## Ms. Manal Halwani

The use of technology in coordinating and managing the response and reaching difficult-to-reach communities is very important, both in bringing solutions, prevention, as well as knowledge.



## Ms. Ada Mwangola

Kenya is focused on achieving universal health coverage by 2022. COVID-19 has come as a disruption, but the country is still focused. We need partnership to successfully test, track and treat.

## Mr. Kennedy Njau

Astrazeneca is a global pharmaceutical company but is very much committed to Africa. Their research and development is ongoing to address this crisis, including working with GAVI to ensure a future vaccine is available in an equitable way and the company has committed to doing this without making a profit from the vaccine.



## Dr. John Nkengasong

We can beat this beast if we work collaboratively in a coordinated fashion. The whole of society is critical because it involves collective responsibility and accountability. Test, trace and treat is the primary toolkit. Leadership of the continent is absolutely essential. The African Union leadership has been exemplary. Africa CDC is looking forward to driving their Saving Lives, Saving Economies, know your COVID-19 status campaign.





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