



Directorate of Health Research (DHR), Ministry of Health

FIB Building

Kairaba Avenue

Press Debriefing on population-based Covid-19 Seroprevalence Study in the Gambia 31/08/21.

PREPARED & PRESENTED BY: DIRECTOR SANNEH - MoH

Introduction / Background:

- Since when the first case of COVID-19 was discovered in December 2019 to date, we have not still understood this Virus.
- Thus, to address this knowledge gap and provide appropriate scientific guidance for the current and future epidemic prevention and control in Africa, Africa Centers for Disease Control is providing support to assist African Union Member States in conducting standardized serological prevalence surveys of COVID-19.
- COVID-19 prevalence data are critical for planning effective mitigation strategies and understanding the true impact of the disease and relevant intervention measures in Africa, which might be quite different from regions with a different population age distribution or risk factor profile.

- The information gained from these surveys will provide critical insight into the transmission and impact of the virus in Africa and help countries to understand what factors may have influenced recent transmission.
- Standardization of methodologies will facilitate a better understanding of the differences in behavior of the virus in different geographical areas, in different climatic zones, and in different mitigation contexts.

Purpose/Aim & objectives:

AIM:

The aim of this survey is to provide estimates on **exposure** (seroprevalence) of COVID-19 in the Gambian population. Age- and sex- specific cumulative incidence of COVID-19 in the general population up to the point at which the survey is carried out will also be calculated.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Estimate the **exposure** (seroprevalence) of SARS-CoV-2 in The Gambia.
2. Determine the proportions of positive individuals that are SARS-CoV-2 asymptomatic and negative individuals that are symptomatic
3. Determine the proportions of positive and negative individuals that reported having pre-existing medical conditions

When is the study going to be conducted?

- The best time for such a study is when the population are not vaccinated.
- However due to some logistic and other technical constraints, we are doing the study at this time when some people are already vaccinated.

Where is the study going to be conducted?

- The study is a nationwide exercise, meaning the study sites are randomly selected across all regions in the country.
- In total, 115 EAs were selected and listed to determine the number of compounds and households that exists there.
- In each EA, 15 households are randomly selected for interviews.
- In each household, 1 person will be selected to participate in the study.

Who are the target study participants?

- The target population for the study is household members aged above 5 years.
- Regardless of their previous or current infection with COVID-19.
- Those who resided in the country during the period of transmission of SARS-CoV-2.
- It includes Males and females

How is the study going to be conducted?

- Through conducting interviews by trained and competent field staff
- Through conducting RDT test by trained and competent laboratory staff.

Duration of the study?

- Data will be collected in 15 days

Risks and Benefits for Subjects

- This investigation poses minimal risk to participants.
- It involves the collection of a small amount of blood.
- The primary benefit of the study is indirect, in that data collected will help improve and guide efforts to understand the extent of COVID-19 infection and better inform our risk communication and community engagement strategies to prevent further transmission of the virus.
- Participants will also be informed of their test results.