Total confirmed COVID-19 deaths per million people, Sep 9, 2020

Limited testing and challenges in the attribution of the cause of death means that the number of confirmed deaths may not be an accurate count of the true total number of deaths from COVID-19.

First, the good news:

Africa (mostly) beat COVID

Source: European CDC – Situation Update Worldwide – Last updated 11 September, 15:35 (London time)
OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY
How did Africa do it?

• Undercounting?
  • But no evidence of excess mortality
  • Hospitals not overflowing…

• Biological explanations?
  • Younger population
  • Some form of immunity?

• Delayed exposure?
  • Fewer international travelers

• Better/faster policy response?
  • Lockdowns imposed at same time as in Europe
  • Experience with contact tracing from Ebola
  • Cooperation among countries through the WHO
  • High compliance with mask wearing
  • Tanzania puzzle?
Bad news is: COVID disrupted everything nevertheless

Average mobility in Transit stations

Note: Baseline mobility is the median mobility for each day of the week between Jan 3–Feb 6, 2020. Southern Africa doesn't include South Africa.
Source: Google COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports.
Bad news is: COVID disrupted everything nevertheless

Average mobility in Transit stations

Note: Baseline mobility is the median mobility for each day of the week between Jan 3–Feb 6, 2020. Southern Africa doesn’t include South Africa.
Source: Google COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports.
The other ways COVID-19 can be deadly…

• Negative impact on endemic disease programs
  • HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, routine immunization, and non-communicable diseases.
• Loss of income, increase in food insecurity
• School-age children not learning
  • School closures in March 2020
    • Digital divide: remote learning difficult
    • Young girls at risk of dropping out permanently if get pregnant
  • Kenya: “school year 2020 cancelled”; Ghana: Sep 2020 start pushed to Jan 2021
• Economic slowdown, decline in export prices
• Global recession
What explains Africa’s relative success in averting COVID-19 deaths so far?

What do we know about the magnitude of the human and economic impacts?

What does the road to recovery look like?

What role for global institutions like the WHO, the World Bank?
COVID-19: The Impact in Africa

Belinda Archibong
Assistant Professor of Economics, Barnard College, Columbia University

Agnes Binagwaho
Vice-Chancellor, the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE)

Albert G. Zeufack
Chief Economist for Africa, the World Bank

Pascaline Dupas
King Center Faculty Director and Professor of Economics, Stanford University