

COVID-19 in Timor-Leste

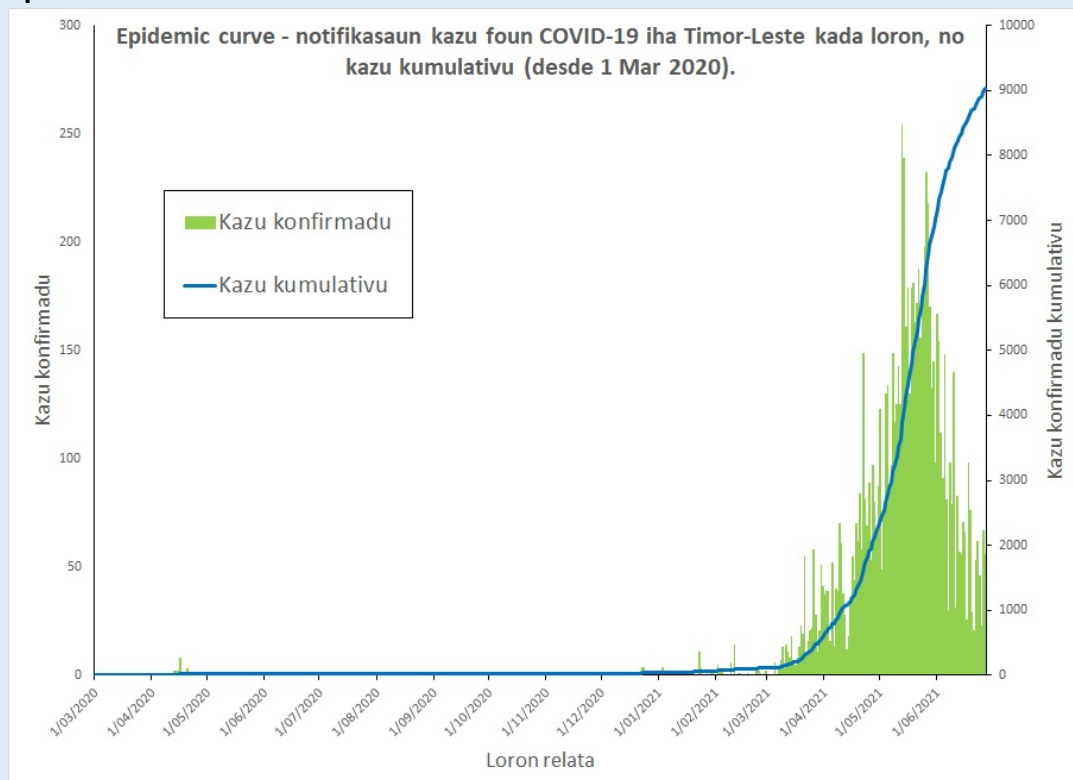
Epidemiological Brief Nº10: 21 June – 27 June 2021

A regular brief edited by: (1) Pilar 3 & Pilar 5 of the Ministry of Health (as part of the Task Force for the Prevention and Mitigation of Covid-19 Outbreak, Integrated Centre for Crisis Management, Situation Room); (2) Instituto Nacional de Saúde; (3) Menzies School of Health Research; (4) AUSMAT; (5) CoMo Consortium; (6) WHO.

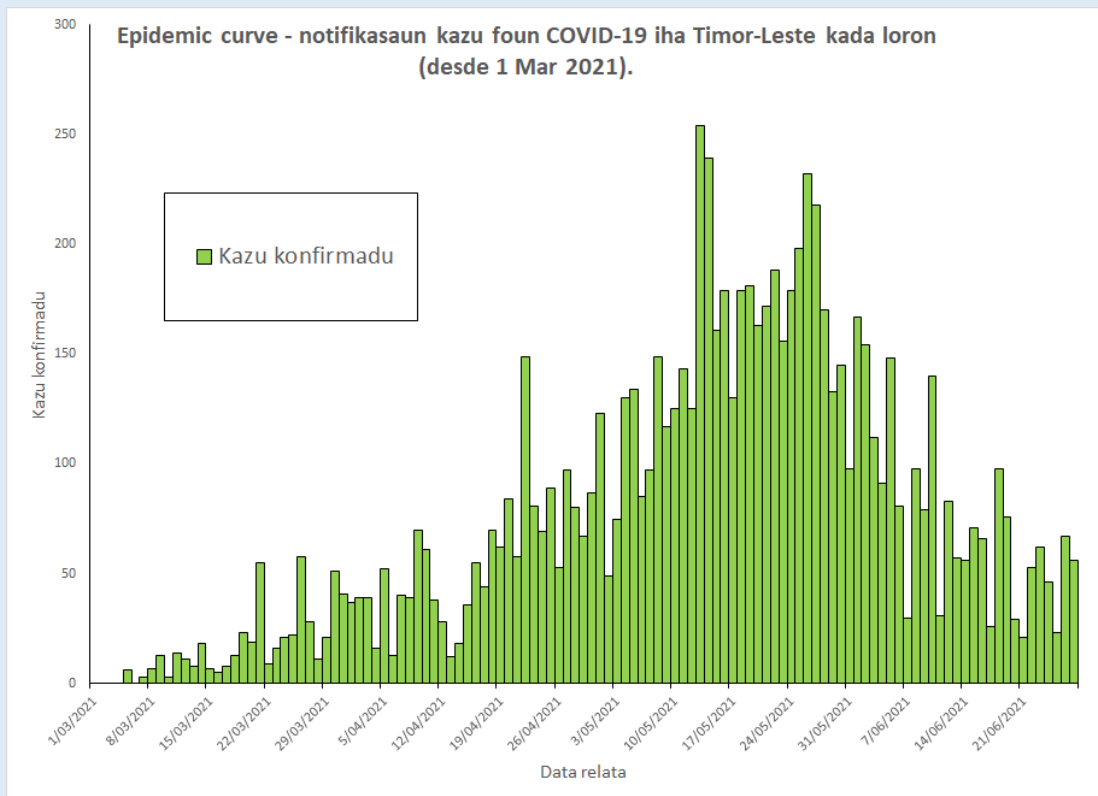
Cumulative cases: 328 (9,035 cases since last report).

Data current as at 27 June 2021.

1. Epidemic curve



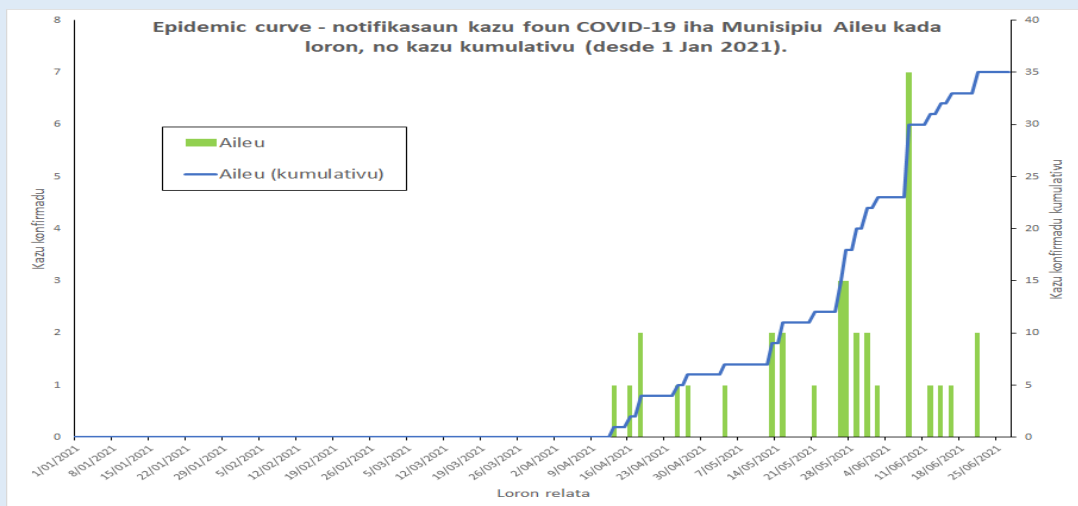
The epidemic curve shows the total case numbers for each day, in the green bars (measured against the y-axis on the left hand side of the graph). The blue line shows the cumulative total case numbers (measured against the y-axis on the right hand side of the graph), which have risen now to 9,035 since the beginning of the global pandemic (as at 27 June, 2021).



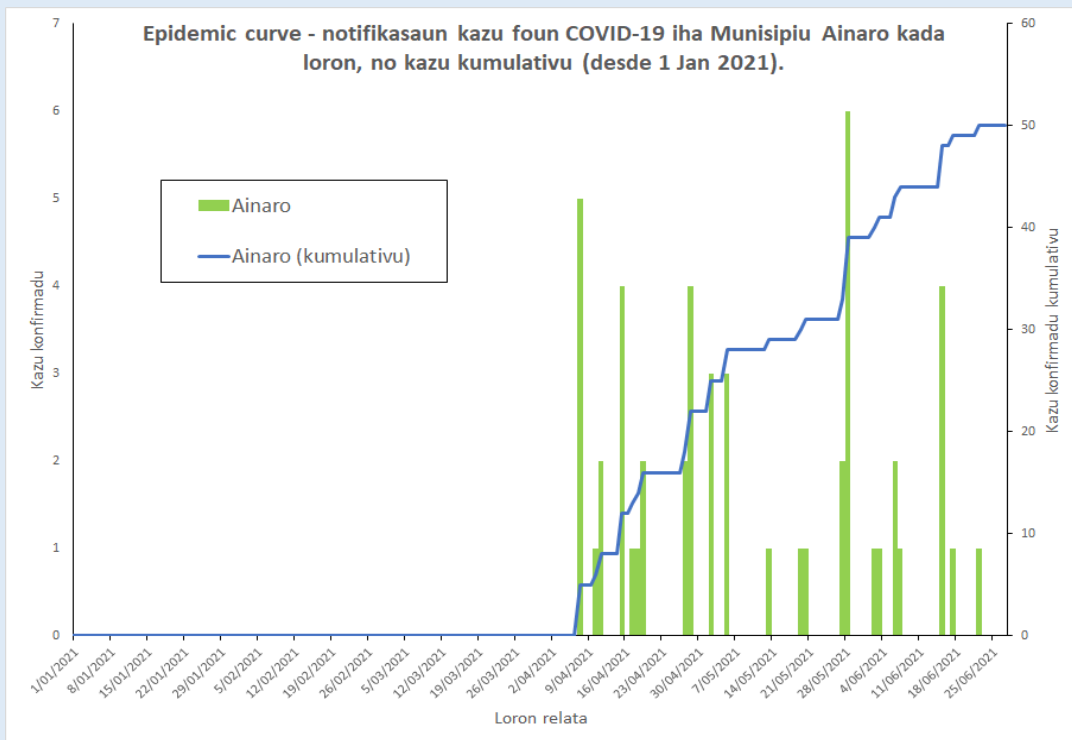
The daily number of new cases in Timor-Leste has decreased, though new cases are still being detected in every municipality.

The epidemic curve for each of the municipalities are shown below.

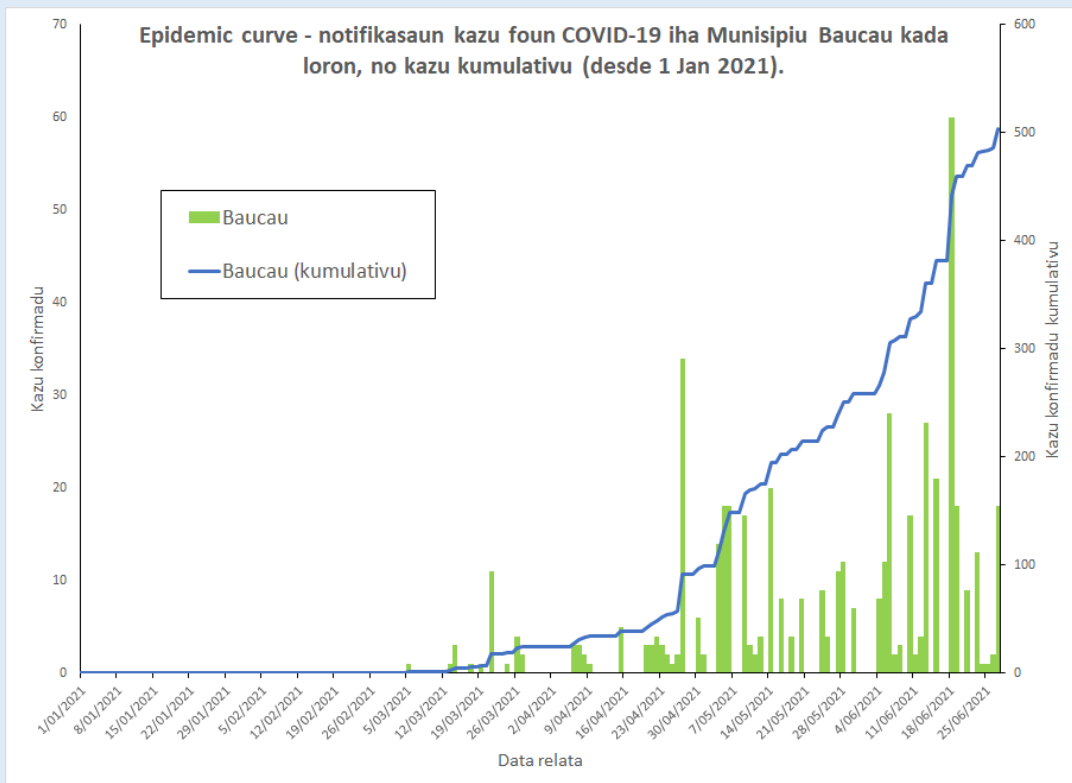
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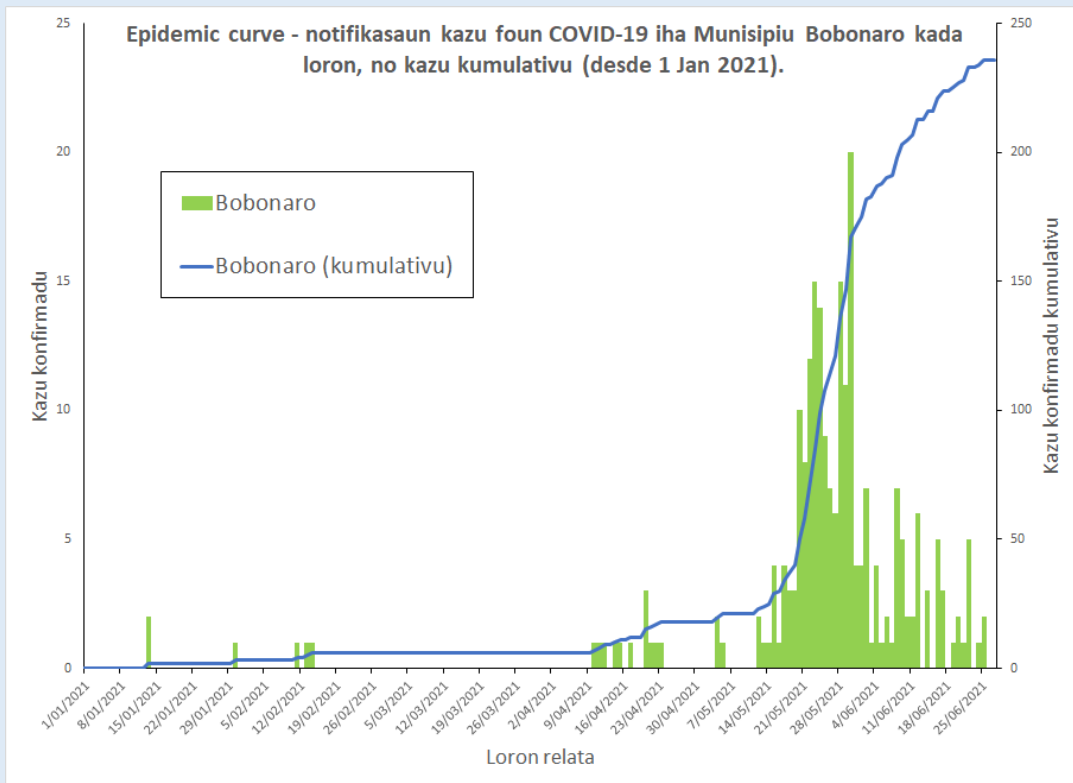
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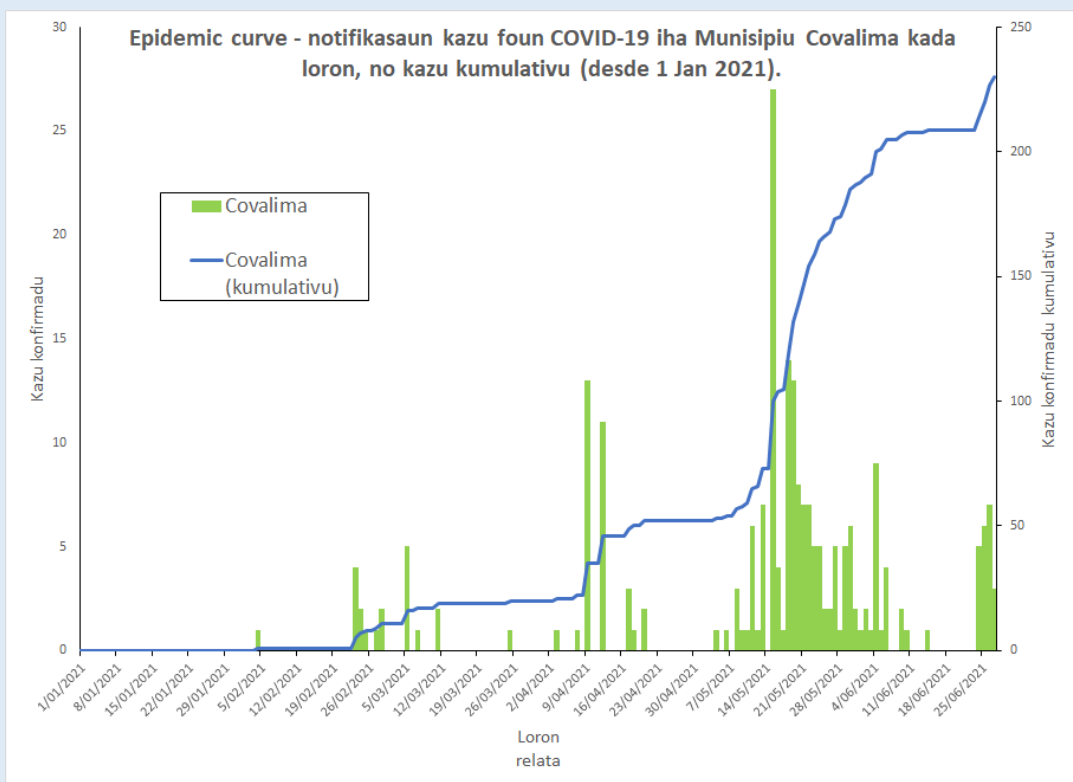
BAUCAU



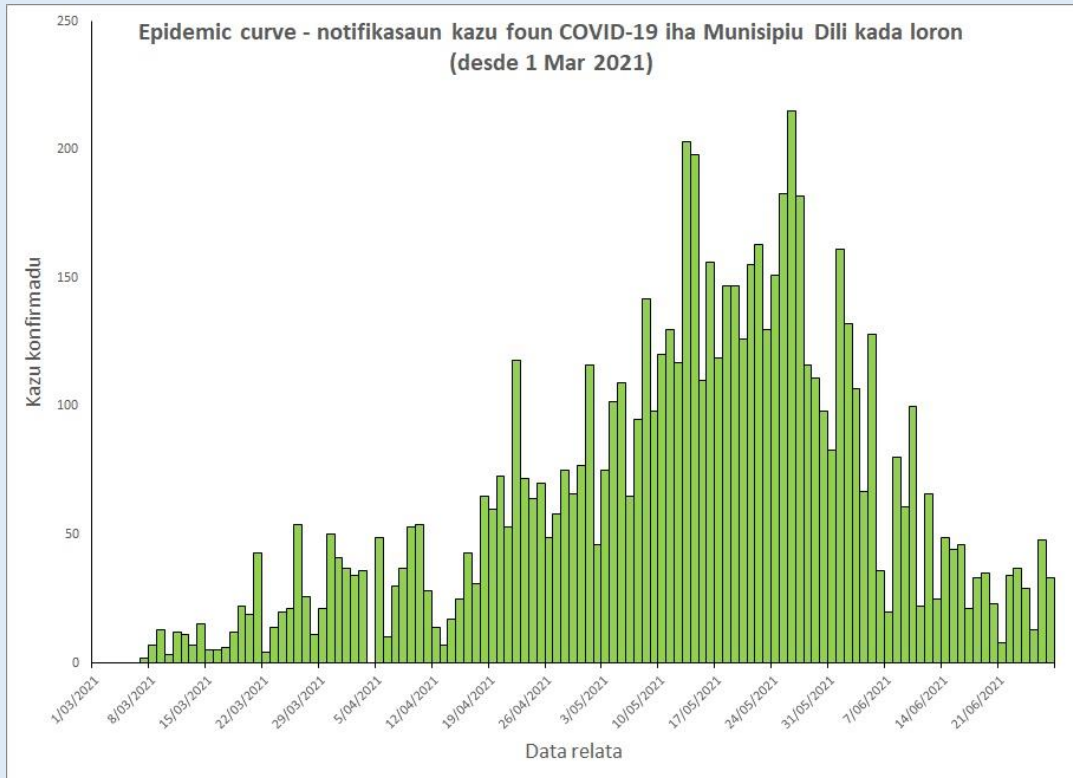
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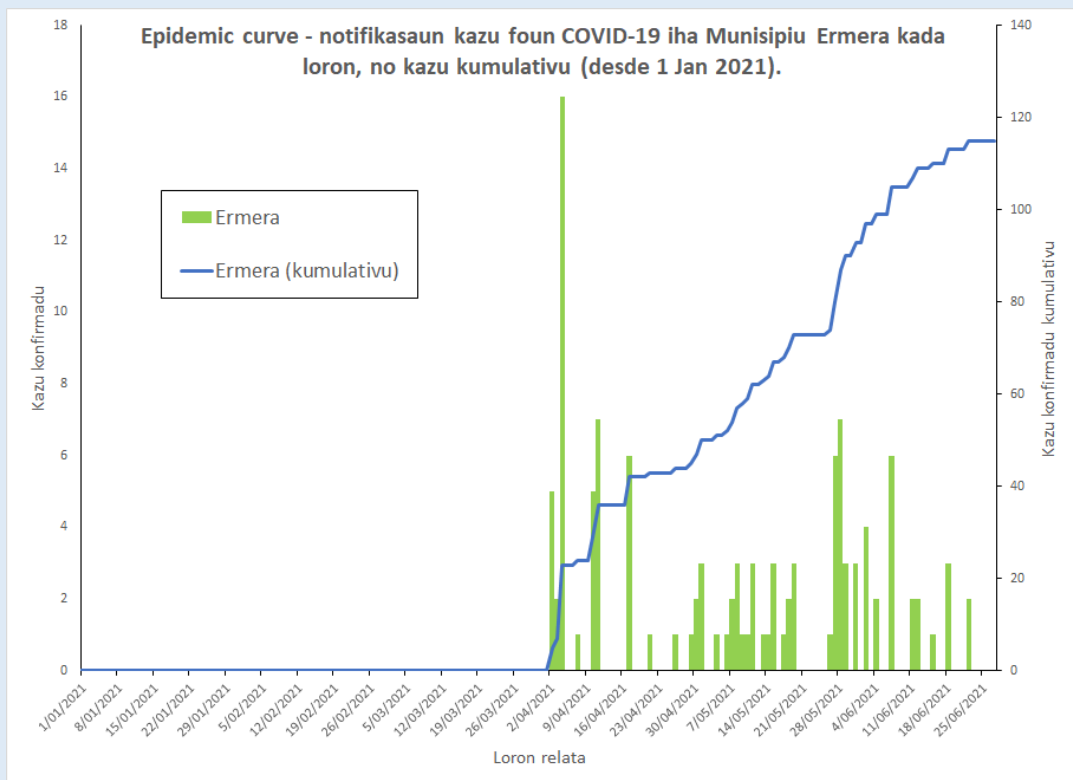
COVALIMA



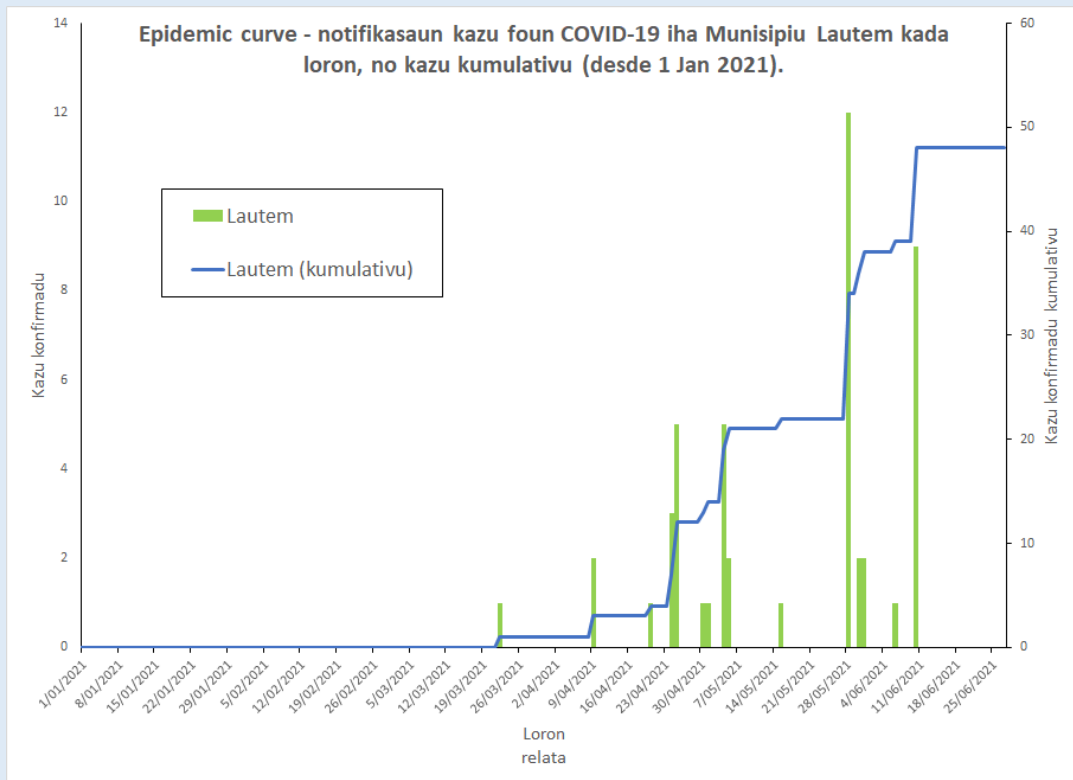
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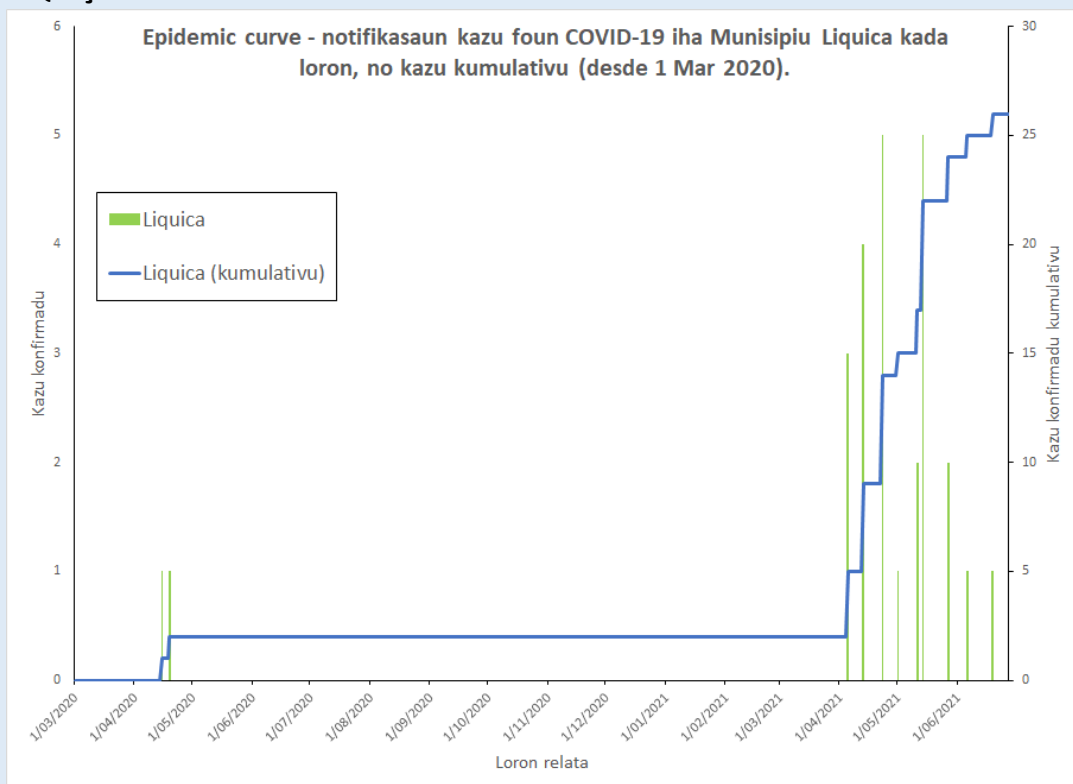
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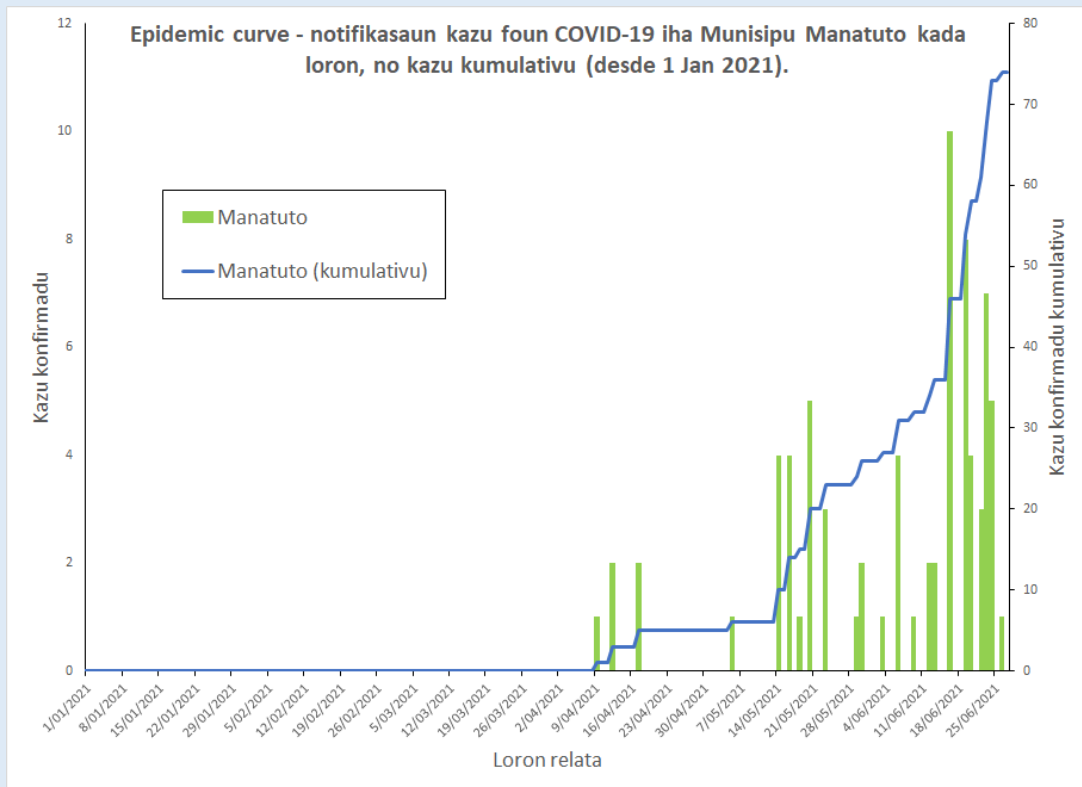
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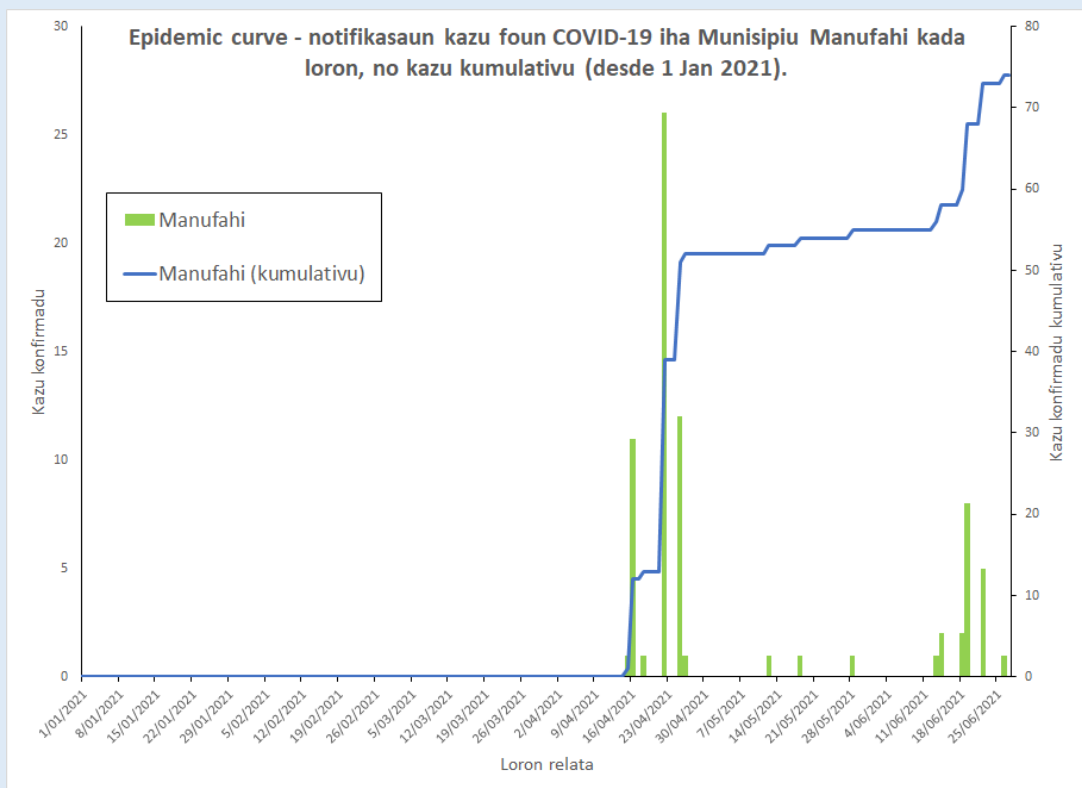
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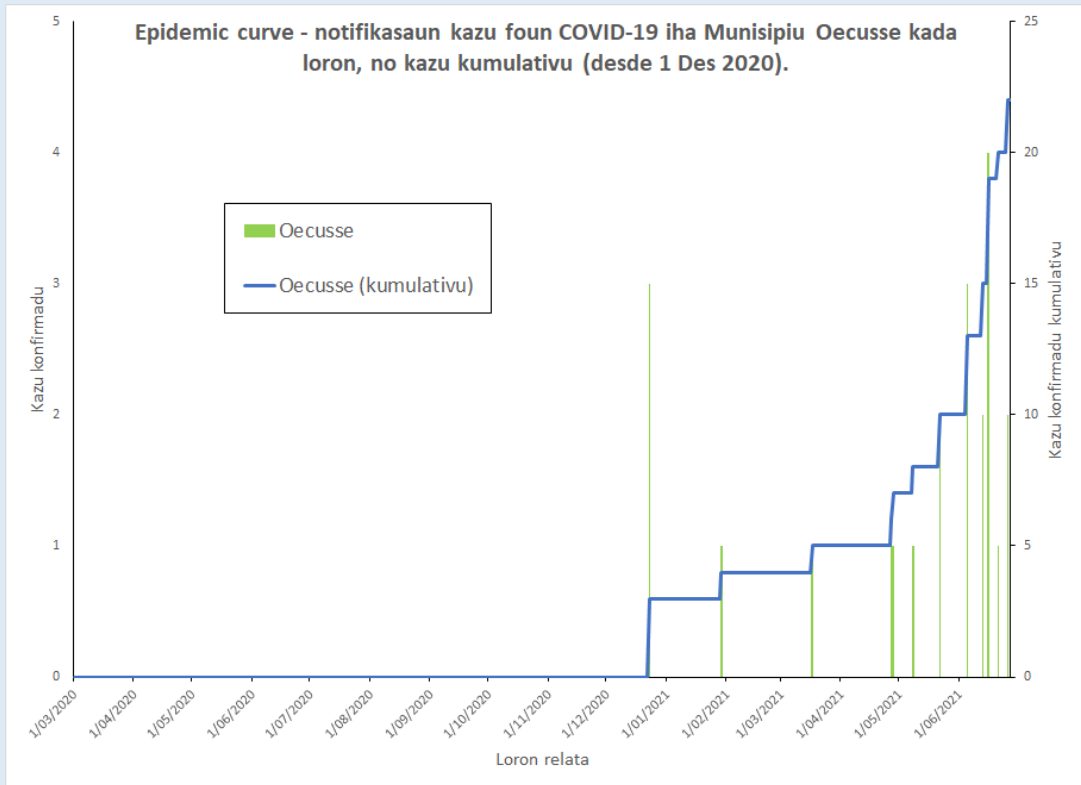
MANATUTO



MANUFAHI

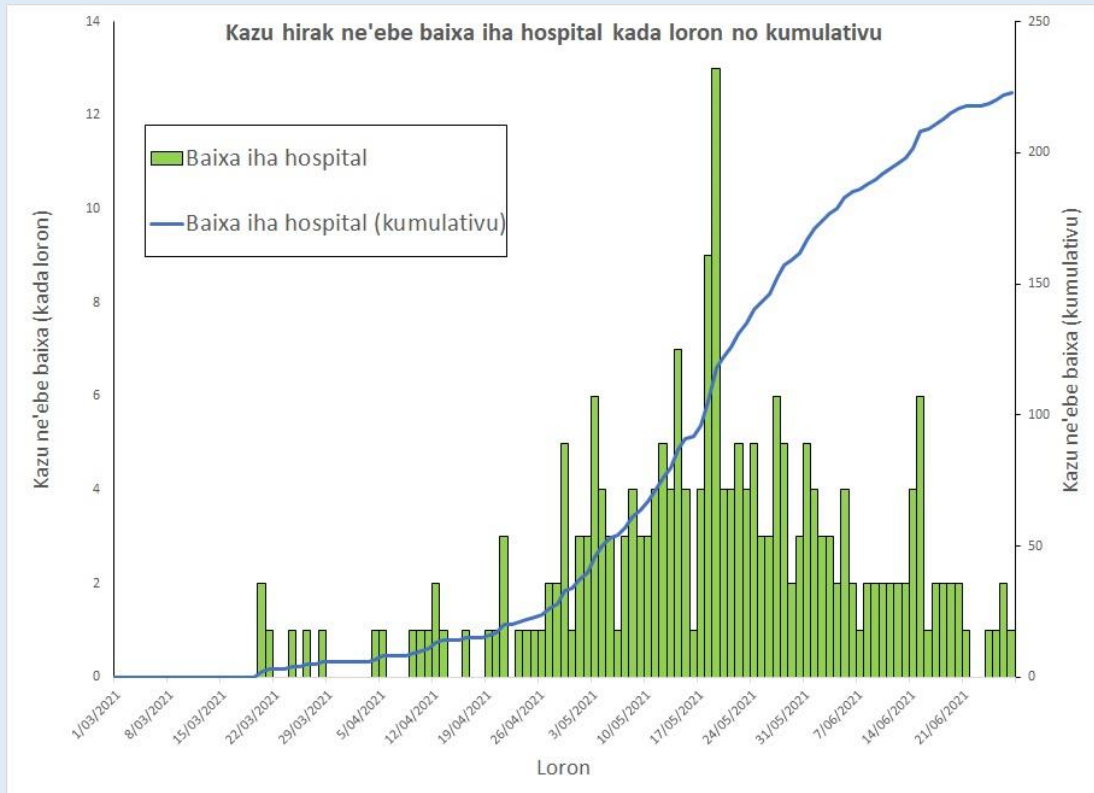


RAEOA



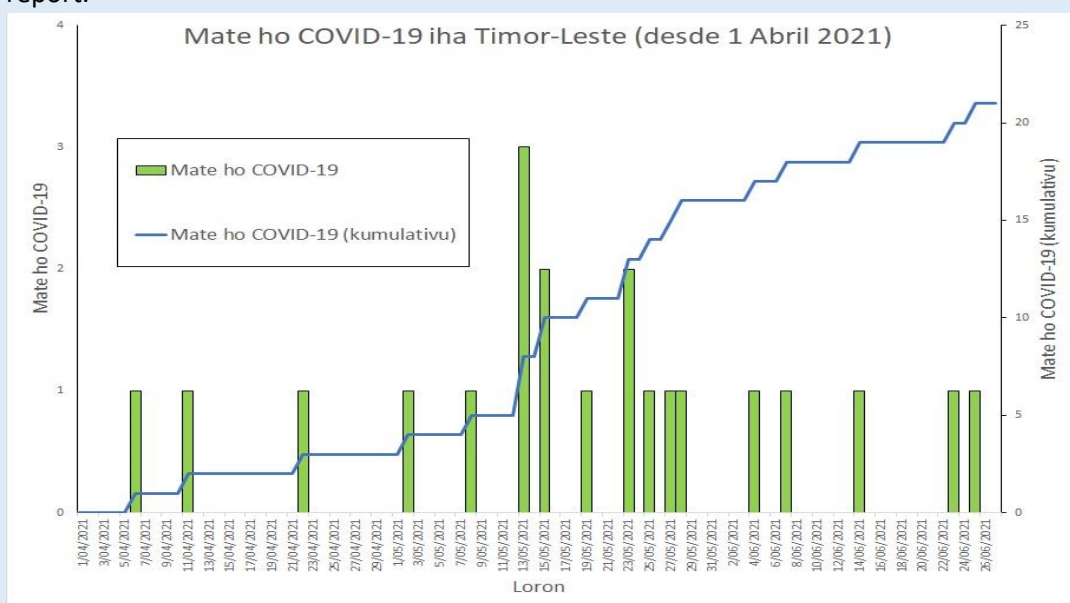
2. Hospitalisations and mortality

Since 1 March 2021, there have been 223 people with COVID-19 who have required hospitalisation. Hospitalisation numbers only include those with moderate, severe and critical disease, who need treatment in specialised healthcare facilities for COVID-19.



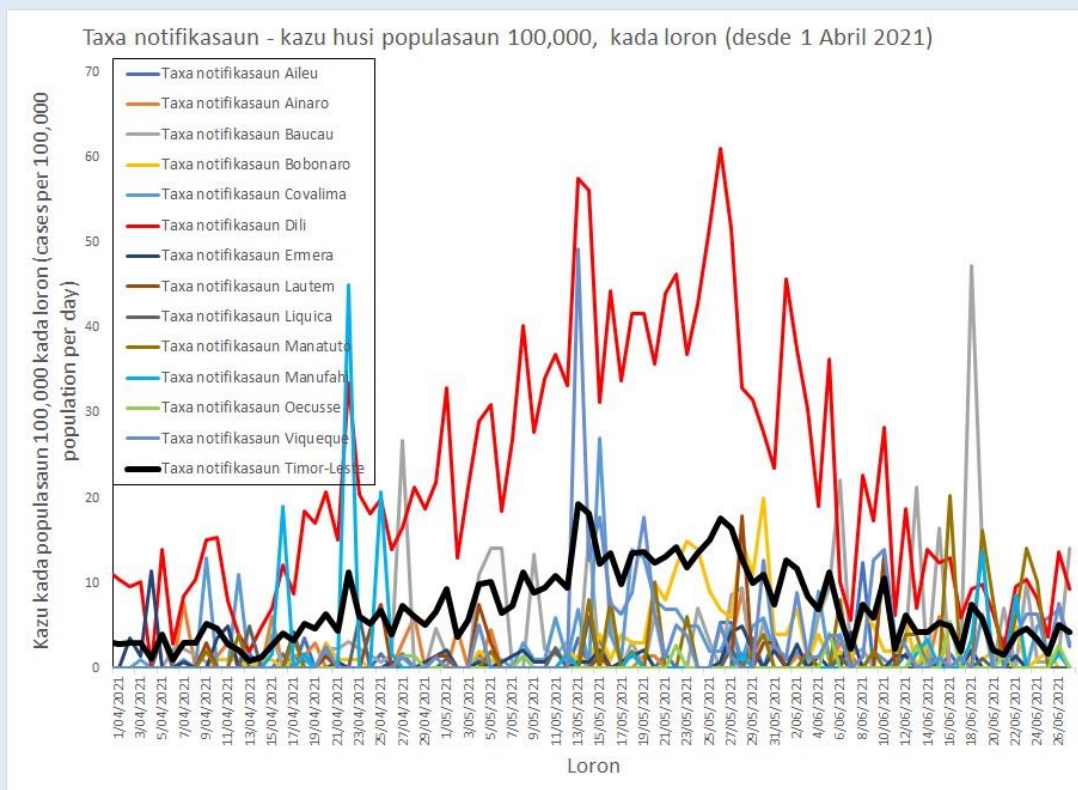
This graph shows the cases that have needed hospitalisation since March 2021 in green bars. The blue line shows the cumulative number of people who have needed hospitalisation.

There have been 21 people who have died with COVID-19 including 2 who died since the last report.



3. Incidence rate estimates

The incidence rate measures the number of confirmed cases in a population, per day, and is usually measured as cases per 100,000 people per day. The average daily notification rate for Timor-Leste over the past 7 days (21 June – 27 June 2021) was 3.6 cases per 100,000 population per day, compared to 4.6 cases per 100,000 population per day in the previous reporting period.



The notification rate in all municipalities over the last 7 days is reported in the table below.

Municipality	Rate per 100,000 population per day, from 21 June – 27 June 2021
Aileu	0.5
Ainaro	0.2
Baucau	4.9
Bobonaro	1.3
Covalima	3.0
Dili	8.2
Ermera	0.2
Lautem	0.0
Liquica	0.0
Manatuto	4.6
Manufahi	1.5
Oecusse	0.6
Viqueque	4.0
Timor-Leste	3.6

The incidence rate has decreased in Timor-Leste, which is related to increasing vaccination of the population, and the impact of public health measures which have reduced the number of interactions between people and reduce the likelihood of transmission.

4. Test positivity rate

Over the last week, 5.3% (240/4,511) tests in NHL were positive (compared to 5.4% in the previous reporting period).

In Baucau, 6.5% (30/459) tests were positive over the last week (compared to 11.4% in the previous reporting period).

5. Vaccination update

As of 25 June 2021, there have been 193,129 first doses of COVID-19 vaccine given in Timor-Leste, representing 25.6% of the eligible population of people aged 18 years and above. Approximately 51% of people aged 18 years and above in Dili have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Approximately 58% of people in high-risk groups have received their first dose of vaccine in Timor-Leste.

Second doses of vaccination have commenced for those who received their first dose more than 8 weeks ago. As of 25 June 2021, 25,382 had been given their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine in Timor-Leste, representing 3.4% of the eligible population of people aged 18 years and above.

People are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 two weeks after they receive their second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. People who are fully vaccinated with two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine are at reduced risk COVID-19 infection. If someone who is fully vaccinated gets COVID-19 they are likely to have asymptomatic or mild infection only, even if they are old or have other comorbidities.

6. Recommendations and public health actions

While case numbers have decreased, there continues to be transmission of COVID-19 within the community. There is a risk that case numbers could increase in a second wave, especially if protection is not achieved through vaccination of the whole adult population in coming weeks.

In Timor-Leste, there are two COVID-19 vaccines available: the AstraZeneca vaccine and the Sinovac vaccine. Both are effective, and have low rates of adverse effects. The risk of complications from severe COVID-19 are much higher in Timor-Leste right now, than the risk of any severe adverse effects of either vaccine, for any age group. Those who have not had a vaccine yet, should get whichever vaccine is available to them, as soon as they can. Those who have had one dose of a vaccine, should get a second dose of the same type of vaccine when they are due for this. The COVID-19 vaccine is safe to give to people with hypertension, diabetes and heart disease. It can also be offered to women who are breastfeeding and to those who are pregnant if they are at high risk of COVID-19 disease. People who have had COVID-19 can also get vaccinated so to provide additional boost to their immunity.

Transmission rate can be reduced by effective public health and social measures, including the use of masks, hand washing and physical distancing. Sanitary fences are effective in

reducing the risk of people who are infected with COVID-19 travelling to other municipalities and transmitting COVID-19 to people in other municipalities. These public health measures remain important, even while vaccination numbers increase. Home confinement has been lifted for Dili, but it is very important that people continue to take care to reduce the risk of transmission, by isolating immediately and getting tested if sick, and by avoiding close physical contact, wearing masks, and washing hands.

Even in settings with good public health measures and good vaccination coverage, it is possible to see increased COVID-19 transmission, especially with introduction of newer variants of the virus. There should be ongoing vigilance in Timor-Leste, monitoring, quarantining and testing incoming visitors from countries with ongoing transmission of Covid-19, especially those with circulation of variants of concerns (VOC) as listed by WHO including Alpha (originating from UK), Beta (originating from South Africa), Gamma (originating from Brazil) and Delta (originating from India). Among these VOCs, Delta variant has now been detected in 85 countries around the globe, including our two closest neighbouring countries: Indonesia and Australia. The Delta variant is thought to be the most transmissible strain of COVID-19 detected to date. It has not been identified in Timor-Leste yet.

Two doses of vaccination provide significantly higher protection against the Delta variant, compared to one dose of vaccine. Two doses of AstraZeneca vaccine have been found to be highly effective in preventing hospitalization with the Delta variant (vaccine efficacy 92%). With circulation of variants such as Delta in the countries in the region, it is very important that all eligible adults in Timor-Leste receive two doses of vaccine as soon as possible.

In municipalities outside of Dili, the number of tests of tests is still low compared to the size of their population. It is therefore recommended to increase the number of tests in order to reliably monitor the trends in those municipalities. If people are sick with symptoms of COVID-19, they should isolate and seek testing, even if they are vaccinated.

It is important that people who are unwell with respiratory symptoms or fever seek medical care early, especially if they have comorbidities. Do not wait to seek healthcare. Good treatment can be provided in Ministry of Health COVID-19 treatment facilities, and the majority of people with COVID-19 infection will recover. If people with symptoms of COVID-19 infection stay at home and avoid medical care, there is a risk of poor outcomes including death at home, and a risk of transmission of COVID-19 to others in the community, including those who are most at risk.

People diagnosed with COVID-19 should comply with public health orders to isolate to protect against the spread of COVID-19 to others.

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