

Covid-19 and Resilience to Human Trafficking in African Communities

Freedom from Slavery Forum,
Africa Regional Forum
July 6-8, 2021

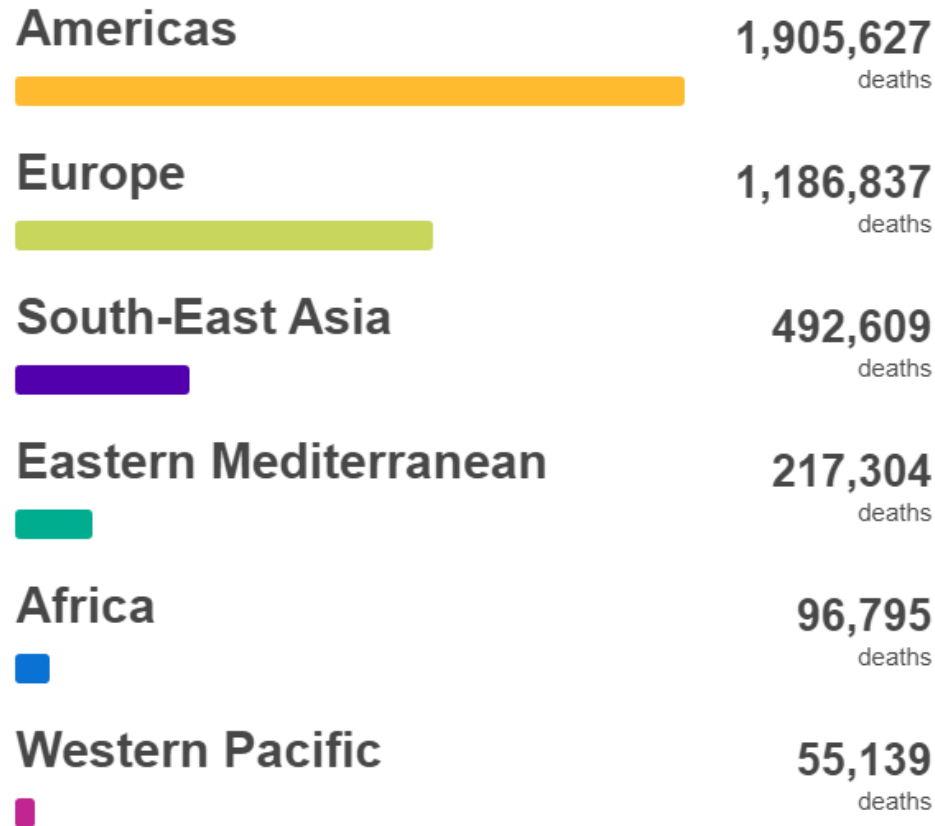
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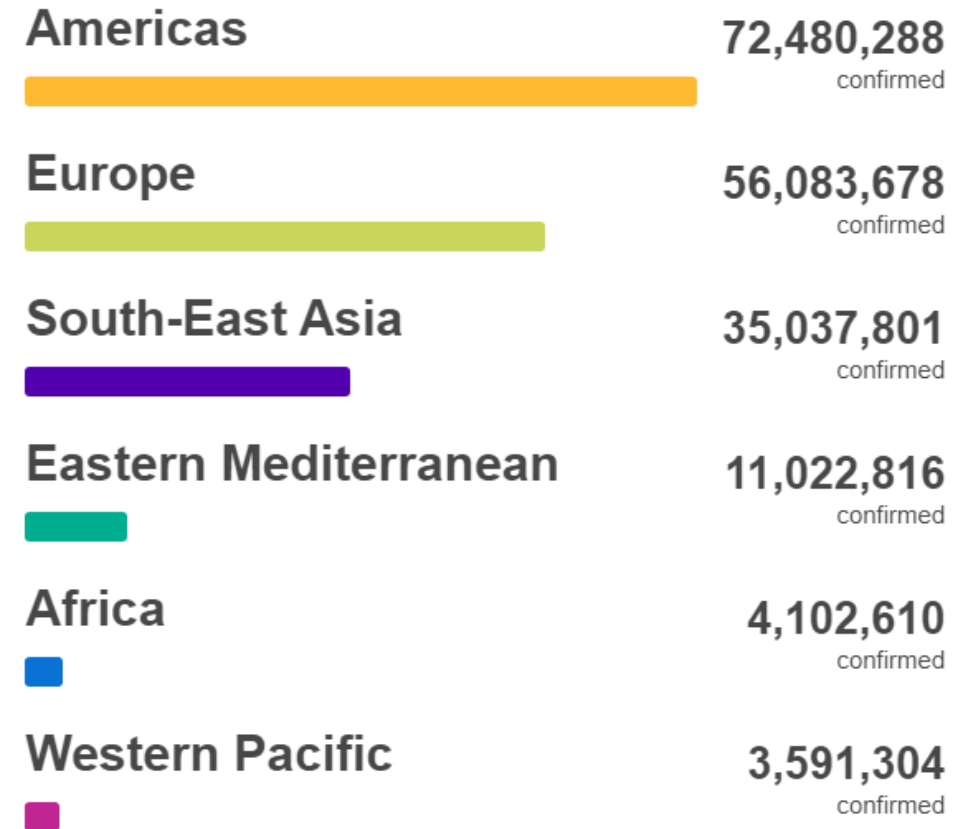
Confirmed Deaths by WHO Region



Source: World Health Organization

 Data may be incomplete for the current day or week.

Confirmed Cases by WHO Region



Source: World Health Organization

 Data may be incomplete for the current day or week.

A Look at the Numbers

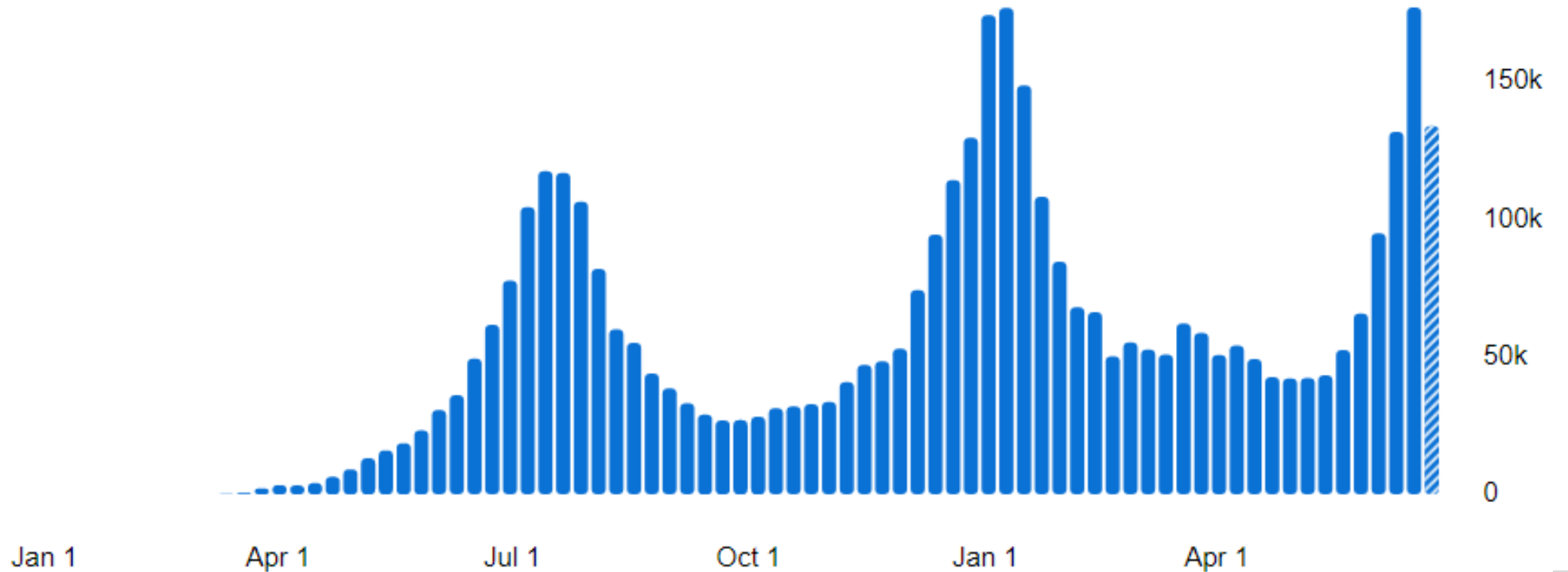
#	Country, Other	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Total Recovered	Tot Cases/ 1M pop	Deaths/ 1M pop	Total Tests	Tests/ 1M pop	Population
1	South Africa	2,062,896	61,840	1,808,082	34,347	1,030	13,450,014	223,944	60,059,815
2	Morocco	534,550	9,319	519,696	14,312	250	6,908,167	184,957	37,350,103
3	Tunisia	443,631	15,377	362,236	37,146	1,288	1,787,563	149,676	11,942,907
4	Egypt	282,082	16,264	214,087	2,705	156	2,869,589	27,521	104,269,989
5	Ethiopia	276,435	4,331	261,025	2,346	37	2,885,486	24,492	117,814,659
6	Libya	195,824	3,213	179,398	28,115	461	1,135,104	162,970	6,965,125
7	Kenya	185,868	3,675	127,625	3,382	67	1,981,951	36,063	54,958,049
8	Nigeria	167,859	2,121	164,382	795	10	2,300,266	10,889	211,254,877
9	Zambia	165,513	2,492	145,908	8,758	132	1,918,850	101,532	18,898,964
10	Algeria	141,471	3,755	98,387	3,169	84	230,861	5,171	44,645,295

A Look at the Numbers

The Pandemic is Still Ongoing

Africa

4,102,610
confirmed cases





Innovative Methods
Keeping Africa Resilient

COVID-19 & Human Trafficking

Increased existing risk factors for trafficking

- Poverty
- Childhood trauma
- Weakened or diverted anti-trafficking infrastructure

Created new demand

- People confined to home
- Increase in online sexual exploitation
- Employers seeking cheap, unregulated labor

Increased supply of potential victims

- Targeting informal workers
- Fraudulent jobs marketed to unemployed
- Sexual exploitation in exchange for basic needs, including housing
- Targeting previous victims who were less financially secure

Impact on Trafficking in Africa

- Smuggling made more difficult and dangerous due to movement restrictions creating more danger and vulnerability to trafficking
- Continued demand for trafficking in known high-risk industries, such as gold mining

"The disease has exacerbated **human rights violations**, the **hunger pandemic**, **mass unemployment** and **economic deprivation**, including rural exclusion and ethnic disaffection." Amadasun, 2021

Impact on Services

- Law enforcement and court systems were vastly impacted and stalled throughout the pandemic making it less likely that traffickers would be arrested and prosecuted
- Donations and aid were diverted to pandemic-related causes creating funding gaps for support organizations and survivor healing
- Social distancing and contagion fears caused closure of some shelters
- Lockdowns made it harder to reach out for services
- COVID protective measures (such as wearing face masks, isolation) had potential to re-traumatize survivors
- For foreign survivors, returning to nation of origin was difficult due to travel restrictions



Impact on Research

The Freedom Fund

Child sex trafficking - Recife, Brazil

Yuki Lo (The Freedom Fund) & Dr. Celia Landmann
Szwarcwald (Oswaldo Cruz Foundation)

Stanford University

Forced labor in the agricultural sector –

Brazil

Dr. Grant Miller

Johns Hopkins University

Forced labor in brick kilns - Sindh, Pakistan

Dr. Courtland Robinson

John Jay College of Criminal Justice

*Forced labor in the fishing industry - Pacific Coast of
Costa Rica*

*Domestic servitude – Dar-es-Salaam, Iringa, and
Zanzibar, Tanzania*

Dr. Meredith Dank

NORC at the University of Chicago

Domestic servitude - Casablanca, Morocco

Dr. Clifford Zinnes & Kareem Kysia

University of Massachusetts Lowell

Domestic servitude - Tunis, Tunisia

Dr. Sheldon Zhang

A Look to the Future

- Acknowledging survivors' experience during the pandemic
- Re-establishing diverted funds
- Continued establishment of anti-trafficking efforts that are survivor-centered and trauma-informed
- Increased collaboration between organizations
- Incorporating anti-trafficking work into humanitarian aid responses
- Establishing social equity measures as anti-trafficking measures

Sources

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