



Viet Nam COVID-19 Situation Report #13

15 October 2020

Report as of 15 October 2020, 18:00

Situation Summary

Highlights of Current Situation Report

- National situation:

- Viet Nam marks the 43rd day from the last COVID-19 case reported from community.
- The country continues to accelerate active measures to achieve dual objectives of economic development and disease control; and moving toward a “safe coexistence with COVID-19”.
- 24 Sep – Prime Minister sent urgent telegram No. 1300/CD-TTg¹ requesting ministries, sectors and local authorities to continue implementing COVID-19 preventive and control measures in order to sustain the country’s achievement so far on outbreak response, at the same time to accelerate economy recovery and development and to protect people’s health.
- 1 Oct 2020, the Minister of Health issued the Decree No. 21/CT-BYT on strengthening measures on prevention and control of COVID-19 in HCFs following the PM’s Telegram No. 1300/CD-TTg. A virtual meeting was conducted by VAMS connecting with all HCFs of 63 provinces/cities on COVID-19 case management.
- 15 Oct - The NSC issued an urgent telegram No. 1640/CD-BCD to Ministry of Defence and Provincial People’s Committees requesting strengthening management of inbound travellers to Viet Nam given the complex evolving outbreak situation globally with big resurgences of cases especially in Asia and Europe.
- From the last report (1 Oct), from 9 to 15 Oct, 24 new laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported, without any additional deaths. **All the 24 cases reported during past week were imported, including 6 Vietnamese, 16 Indian, 1 German and 1 Malaysian national.**
- As of 15 Oct 2020, a total of 1,124 laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported from 42 out of 63 cities/provinces, including 35 deaths (see *Figure 1*). Of the 1,124 reported cases, 473 cases (42%) are imported. Approximately 91.2% are Vietnamese (see *Figure 2*).
- The ages of cases range from 2 months to 100 years old. About 63.4% of all cases are in the 30-69 years old group, 5.1% above 70 years old, and the remaining 31.5% under 30 years old. The male to female ratio is 49.7% vs 50.3%. (See *Table 1*).
- Thirty-seven (37) health care workers (HCWs) have been infected, including four from the previous wave. No deaths have been reported so far. To date, at least 36 clusters have been recorded. No new cases among HCWs were detected during the past six weeks.
- As of 15 Oct, 1 030 cases (91.6%) have recovered; the remaining cases are under treatment in 11 HCFs across the country; all are with mild symptoms or asymptomatic, no more patients required ICU. The last patient was discharged from hospital in Da Nang on 22 Sep.
- A total of 13,386 people are under monitoring; 154 of whom are being quarantined in health care facilities; 12,029 are in centralized quarantine facilities; and 1,203 are under self-/home-quarantine.

- Da Nang-related community outbreak

- Starting from 25 Jul, a resurgence of cases was reported from the community after 99 consecutive days from the last community case (16 Apr). An index case was detected from the SVP surveillance in a central coastal tourist city of Da Nang.

¹ <http://baochinhphu.vn/Chi-dao-quyet-dinh-cua-Chinh-phu-Thu-tuong-Chinh-phu/Thu-tuong-ra-cong-dien-tiep-tuc-phong-chong-dich-benh-COVID19/408515.vgp>

- Between 25 Jul to 2 Sep, 551 locally transmitted cases were reported from 15 cities/provinces across the country, with Da Nang and Quang Nam provinces being the most heavily affected (see Figure 3). The last case reported from Da Nang was on 27 Aug.
- Approximately 98% of cases were either related to major hospitals in Da Nang city or have a history of visiting Da Nang. Da Nang general hospital was the epicentre of the outbreak with at least 246 cases reported among inpatients, care givers and HCWs, mainly from Internal Nephrology dept, ICU, Internal Neurology dept., and others. Cases have also been reported in the community among close contacts of hospital-related cases, including those who had visited Da Nang in July. At least 28 family-related clusters have been reported to have two to six household members per cluster.
- 35 deaths (3.3%) have been reported. Of those, 31 were from Da Nang, 3 from Quang Nam and 1 from Quang Tri province. Their ages range from 28 to 93 years old. Most of them had long-term chronic diseases and comorbidities, such as end-stage renal failure, heart failure, hypertension, DM2, malignancy, etc.
- MOH and partners continue their efforts to enable capacity for widespread testing. As of the 13th of September, there were 137 laboratories capable of testing for COVID-19 by RT-PCR. The maximum daily capacity in the country remains 51,000 tests. Of these laboratories 62 are designated as screening and 75 as confirmatory laboratories. In addition, official guidelines for pooled testing have been issued by the Ministry of Health to further increase throughput. To help avoid future stockouts guidance for laboratory preparation and use of VTM is being drafted.
- Plans are underway to further expand laboratory testing to include use of GeneXpert machines within the lung hospital system. An operational plan is being developed; plans to use 14,000 GeneXpert COVID-19 cartridges across 42-46 lung hospitals.
- On 21st Sept the MOH issued a revised SARS-CoV-2 testing strategy for COVID-19 (Decision No.4042/QĐ-BYT) to replace of Decision No. 2245/QĐ-BYT dated April 22. The new testing strategy restates that the RT-PCR remains the test for confirmation of COVID-19, but that antigen tests may now additionally be considered for confirmation. However, the decision guides consideration that antigen tests display a lower sensitivity than RT-PCR. The strategy also clarifies that serological testing can be used for investigation of cases and for sero-prevalence studies, but not for standalone patient testing and clinical decision making.
- An interim guidance on supervision of people on entry into Viet Nam (Dispatch No. 4995/BYT-DP) was issued. The document outlines testing of people entering Viet Nam. On entry travellers may be tested by antigen RDT; positives are immediately brought to COVID-19 health facilities, whilst negatives are transportation to registered quarantine facilities and tested on day 6 by RT-PCR. Negatives may then return to their residence for continued self-quarantine until day 14. If antigen RDT's are not available at the POE, travellers are transported directly to the quarantine facility and specimens are collected immediately for testing. The specifics of the RDT to be used is still being discussed and will be carefully planned, following WHO and US-CDC guidance.
- Under the direction of the MOH the number RT-PCR kits, antibody and antigen RDT's that will be needed in coming months is being estimated, along with a financing and pricing plan.
- In the last week approximately 2,000 RT-PCR tests were conducted daily. Between 23 Jul and 14th Oct, more than 740,000 tests were conducted out of the total of more than 1.1 million RT-PCR tests conducted in country from the beginning of the outbreak.
- The outbreaks in Da Nang and its neighbouring provinces have been under control, though the source of infection is yet to be concluded.
- Lockdowns have been lifted for all hospitals (Da Nang general hospital being the last one that was opened on 25 Aug) and communities including in Hai Duong where the last outbreak spots were reported. Starting from 0:00 18 September, Da Nang lifted all social distancing except the following 5 types of activity: bar, pub, karaoke, discotheque and massage services. Both field hospitals have been dissolved as of early October 2020. See *NPI Table* and *Annex 1* for more details on key public health interventions along the outbreak timeline.



- Communications to the public have focused on providing updates on outbreak situation and government actions, including stories on the ground, promoting protective measures and countering rumours and misinformation. Messaging on protective measures has been repackaged as “5K”: (1) facemask; (2) hygiene; (3) safe distance; (4) gathering; (5) health declaration.
- The Ministry of Health, with support from WHO, has started communication activities supporting the “safe coexistence with COVID-19” initiative. To further support this, a long-term online campaign titled, “Normalize the new normal”, will be jointly launched by United Nations organizations and other international organizations in November. This is part of the activities of, UN+2 COVID-19 RCCE subgroup, the country’s INGO risk communication and community engagement working group. WHO serves as the technical lead and coordinator of this group.

Recent/ Upcoming Events and Priorities

- WHO continues dialogues with the Government of Viet Nam and provides support for making balanced decisions in view of the country’s re-opening of international flights and lifting social distancing measures, while paying due attention to other routine and priority activities, including responses to the recent botulism event (due to consumption of vegan paté) and other ongoing and potential outbreaks, such as diphtheria, dengue, HFMD, etc.
- 25 Sep – WHO was invited to a consultation meeting to obtain comments on the drafted Risk Assessment Framework Indicators for Infectious Diseases (including COVID-19) which is led by VIHEMA in collaboration with GDPM. WHO has been supporting this activity upon the request from the Government and MOH. The objective of this RA framework indicators is to support active RA to be conducted at commune and district levels to ensure effective development of disease outbreak preparedness and response plan at the local level to inform better response. Specific RA framework will be developed for 10 to 15 selected infectious diseases including COVID-19 as next steps.
- 14 Aug 2020 - WHO team was invited to the Expert Consultation meeting organized by the Viet Nam Association of Preventive Medicine (VAPM) and the Office of the Government to provide updated information on COVID-19 and to discuss pandemic trends, phylogenetics, drug and vaccine development. Attendants were national and international partners including MoH, NIHE, VAPM, WHO, US CDC, Japan Tropical Medicine Institute, OUCRU.
- 6 Aug: Laboratory TWG meeting was held by VAMS to draft guidelines for pooled laboratory testing for COVID-19.
- WHO continues to work closely with MOH to provide TA in strengthening COVID-19 preparedness and response capacity. This includes strengthening surveillance system via incorporating multisource surveillance; training and implementing Go.Data to support outbreak investigation and contact tracing; conducting after-action reviews and intra-action reviews; strengthening case management and IPC in HCFs; updating national technical guidelines; procuring necessary equipment and reagents; working with other development partners to ensure better capacity and strategy for laboratory testing; supporting ongoing discussion on COVID-19 vaccine development, effective communication in response to the current situation and in preparation for a possible wider community transmission.



National Transmission Assessment

Stage 1 – Imported cases: The most recent community outbreak has reported a total of 551 locally transmitted cases in 15 cities/ provinces between 25 Jul and 2 Sep. **It has been 43 days since the last case was reported from community.** Thirty-seven (37) HCWs have been infected in this outbreak; no additional cases reported in the past more than five weeks. **All the outbreak spots have been brought under control.** The country is now **back to a new normal with all the lockdowns having been lifted.** However, given that there have been previously reported cases without clear epi links, also some cases that were detected upon arrival in other countries, the risk of community transmission is still possible, albeit limited and under control. There might also be sporadic cases from community as resulted from illegal immigrants and/or poor adherence to testing/ quarantine requirements among inbound travellers. During past weeks, imported cases continued to be reported among repatriated and inbound travellers. As Viet Nam had resumed international flights with seven countries/ territories since 19 Sep although with great cautions, it is anticipated that additional imported cases will be detected in coming days.

Epidemiology

Epi Update COVID-19

Tests	Cases	Deaths	ICU Admissions
8,469	24	0	0
NAT Tests past 7days (-43% 7-day)	New cases past 7days (4.8 times 7-day)	Deaths past 7days (-% 7-day)	ICU Admissions past 7days (-% 7-day)
1,150,521	1,124	35	57 (TBC)
Cumulative NAT Tests	Cumulative Cases	Cumulative Deaths	Cumulative ICU Admissions
100%	19 (at least)	0	0
Imported Cases in past 28 days (58)	Cases in past 28 days with no link (19)	Active Clusters	Active clusters with >3 generations

Health Service Provision COVID-19

Most of national hospital staff	0	24	251	900
Health care workers trained in COVID19 Case Management	Healthcare worker cases reported past week	Hospitals admitting COVID-19 patients past week	ICU beds for COVID-19 patients (out of approx. 3,500 beds nationwide)	Non-ICU Hospital beds for COVID-19 patients (estimated from 2 field hospitals: Hoa Vang 200; Da Nang: 500)

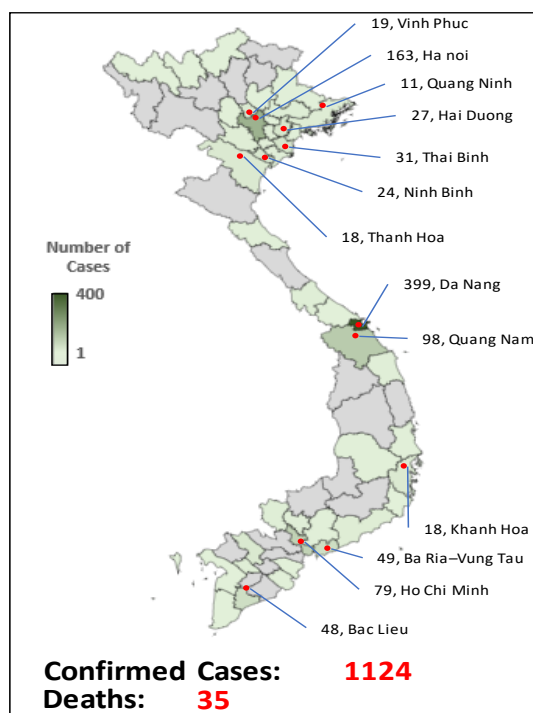


Figure 1. Distribution of cumulative COVID-19 laboratory confirmed cases by place of detection, Viet Nam

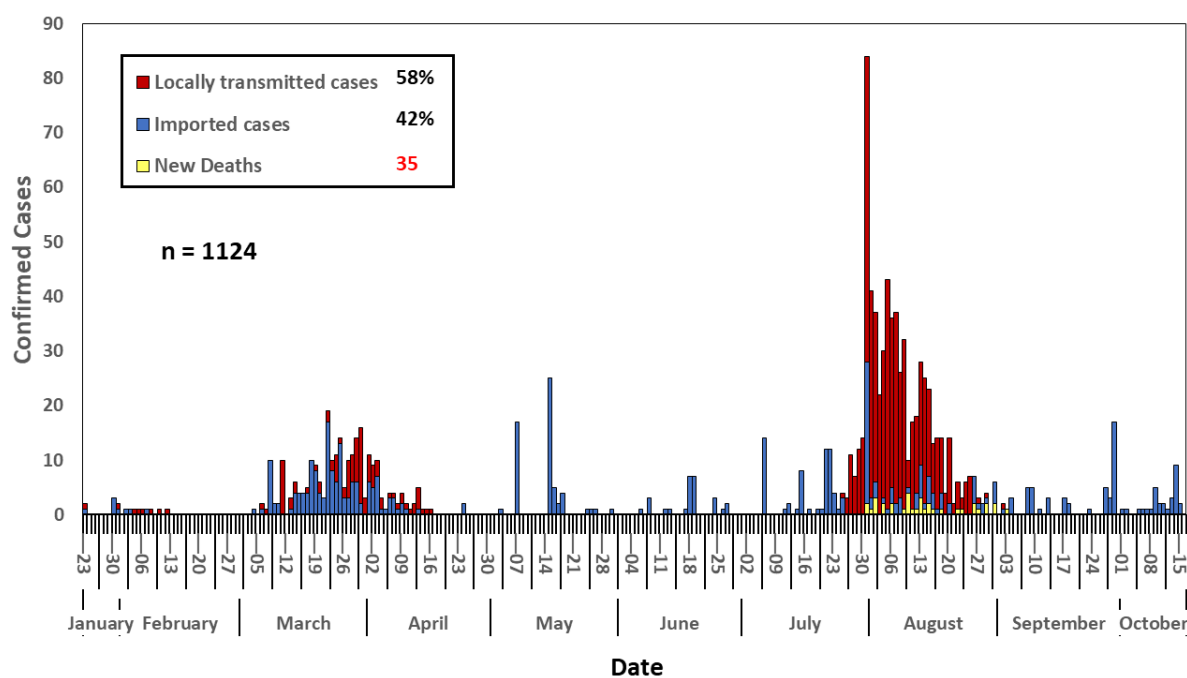


Figure 2. Epidemic curve of COVID-19 laboratory confirmed cases, Viet Nam, by date of reporting

Age Group	Female		Male	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
0-9	16 (0)	0 (0)	18 (0)	0 (0)
10-19	27 (0)	0 (0)	33 (0)	0 (0)
20-29	122 (2)	2 (0)	138 (3)	0 (0)
30-39	107 (2)	1 (0)	151 (10)	1 (0)
40-49	91 (0)	1 (0)	81 (3)	0 (0)
50-59	83 (0)	5 (0)	79 (2)	3 (0)
60-69	73 (1)	6 (0)	48 (1)	6 (0)
70-79	21 (0)	2 (0)	15 (0)	1 (0)
80-89	10 (0)	5 (0)	6 (0)	1 (0)
90+	1 (0)	0 (0)	4 (0)	1 (0)
Total	551 (5)	22 (0)	573 (19)	13 (0)

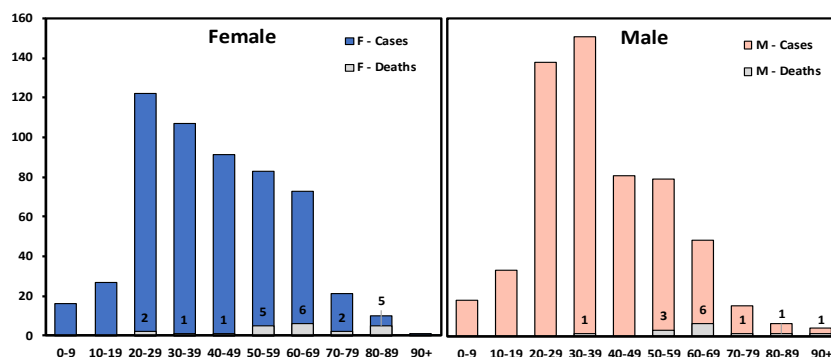


Table 1. Cumulative and new (past 7 days) cases and deaths by age and sex

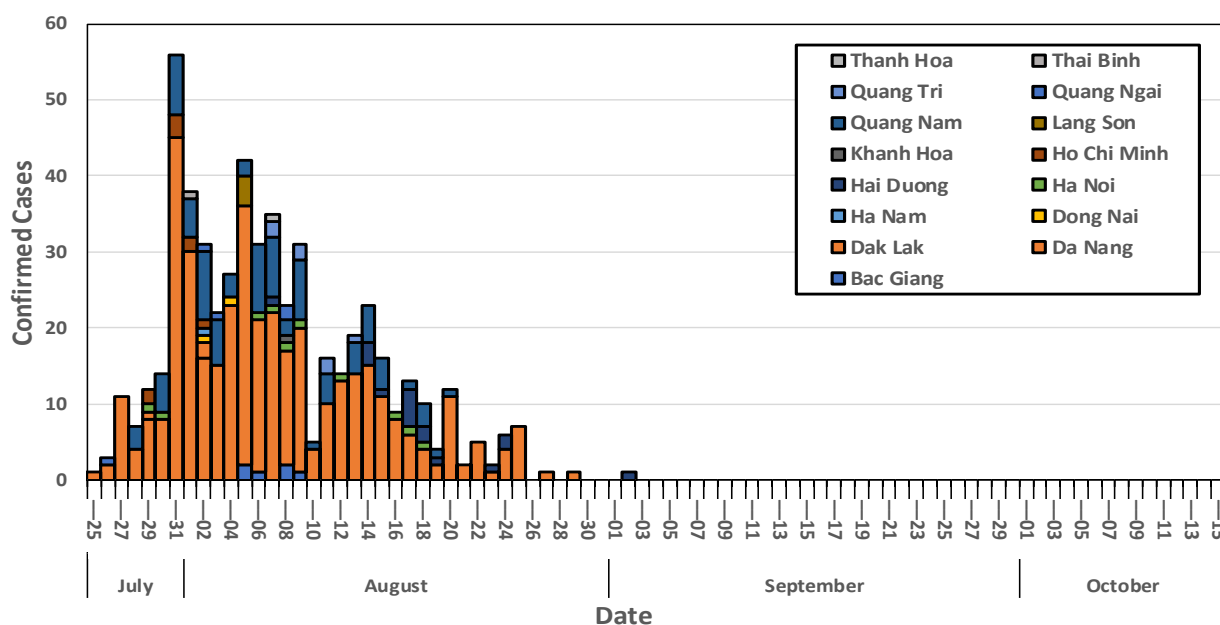


Figure 3. Distribution of locally transmitted COVID-19 laboratory confirmed cases in Viet Nam, by province, 25 July – 15 October 2020



Strategic Approach

National and Provincial Public Health Response

In January 2020, the Government of Viet Nam rapidly issued the first national response plan and assembled the National Steering Committee to implement this plan. The National Steering Committee is central to the command and control governance of the COVID-19 response. The Committee is chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Vu Duc Dam with high-level representation from 14 Ministries and sectors, the National Assembly, media, and information technology companies, and oversees four sub-committees in technical and logistic areas. The plan outlines clear roles and responsibilities of each sector and levels of authority – central, provincial, district, and commune. The rapid mobilization of financial and human resources allowed the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister to lead a whole-of-society approach, based on the Prime Minister's Directive No. 05/CT-TTg, toward combating COVID-19, with the principle of “protecting people's health first.” The Government's commitment has remained the same in the response to the ongoing outbreak, considering a more complex nature of community transmission this time. Active mobilization of human resources from central and regional levels (leaders, professional experts), supply and equipment (testing machines, lab testing reagents and consumables, ventilators, masks, disinfectants, etc.) and logistic support to Da Nang.

Strategic Approach to COVID-19 Prevention, Detection and Control

Viet Nam has successfully and rapidly implemented necessary COVID-19 prevention, detection, and control activities under the strong leadership of the Government and effective multi-sectoral coordination and collaboration. There have been persistent and strict applications of key outbreak response measures: early detection – testing and treatment – contact tracing – isolation/quarantine, along with strategic risk communications. This was evident during the first phase of the outbreak response and continues to be demonstrated in the ongoing response to the resurgence of cases in the community. For years, WHO has been supporting Viet Nam in building and strengthening the capacities for managing disease outbreaks and public health emergencies, as required by the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005). Guided by the APSED III, Viet Nam has made significant progress in enhancing capacity in the required technical areas and all the years of investment are reflected in the country's response to COVID-19.

Best Practice/Lessons Learned

The Response Enabling Factors and Adjustments to the Response

- Strong government leadership with effective multi-sectoral collaboration and coordination and successful mobilization of national resources using a whole-of-society approach
- Early activation of a strong response system, including surveillance and risk assessment, laboratory, clinical management and IPC, and risk communication, which enabled Viet Nam's successful control of COVID-19.
- WHO supports long-term country investment to strengthen the health emergency response after previous epidemics, and is providing technical support in necessary areas, including the continuation of essential public health services.

Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPI)

Narrative Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions

Viet Nam instituted a gradual roll-out of comprehensive non-pharmaceutical public health interventions based on the evolving context/evidence, thus they did not come as a “shock” to the public. Such interventions were implemented along with strong economic relief efforts, thereby minimizing the economic impact to businesses and households, especially vulnerable populations, during these uncertain times. As the global situation of COVID-19 has continued to evolve with complexity, the country borders have remained close except for specific circumstances.



On 31 August 2020, MOH issued official letter #4674 on guidance for prevention of COVID-19 for foreigners coming to Viet Nam to work for less than 14 days. The letter states that centralized quarantine for those entering Viet Nam to work for less than 14 days is no longer required. However, they need to comply with measures, such as having SARS-CoV-2 RT-PCR negative test results from a recognized laboratory 3-5 days prior to entry to Viet Nam, staying in designated hotels/residences, having samples taken for testing upon arrival in designated hotel/residences, and ensuring that their health insurance will cover treatment costs in case they need treatment in Viet Nam.

On 5 Sep, complete social distancing in Da Nang was lifted. On 7 Sep, all means of transportation to/from Da Nang such as aviation, rails way, ships, and buses were resumed. All road blocks and checkpoints have also been lifted in Hue as of 23 Sep.

As per the government's direction to achieve the *dual objectives of disease containment and economic development*, and provided that no further locally transmitted cases have been reported at least in the last 14 days, as of 17 Sep, most of provinces have reopened nonessential and entertainment services. Da Nang being the last one where NPIs were lifted as of 0:00 18 Sep; Hai Duong and Da Nang (the latest affected cities) reopened sport and entertainment services on 23 Sep and 25 Sep, respectively.

From 1 Sep, all travelers to Viet Nam were required to pay quarantine fees which include options at government designated quarantine facilities (at about USD 7 per day) or hotels (fees to be decided by hotel owners). SARS-CoV-2 testing fees are also be charged.

Viet Nam resumed international commercial flights from 15 Sep but still only for priority groups (i.e. diplomats, highly-skilled officials, students, laborers), to be started with the following countries: China (Guangzhou), Japan (Tokyo), Korea (Seoul), Taiwan (Taipei), China, Cambodia (Phnom Penh), Lao PDR (Vientiane) and Thailand. On 19 Sep, the first commercial flight from Ha Noi to Tokyo had resumed; and on 25 Sep, the first commercial flight from Seoul to Ha Noi had resumed, after six months of suspension. Meanwhile, number of international commercial flights is still limited as the government is reviewing and further strengthening various SOPs for PoE screening and quarantine.

All travellers from the above-mentioned countries are required to present certificate of SARS-CoV-2 negative by certified local health authorities/ laboratories within 3 to 5 days prior to the arrival in Viet Nam. A 14-day quarantine duration is still required. A detailed guidance on testing and quarantine procedures upon arrival in PoE were provided in the **MOH decision No.4995/BYT-DP – Interim guidance on surveillance of inbound travellers to Viet Nam**, issued on 20 Sep 2020.

Given the increase in number of imported COVID-19 cases reported in country during past week and the highest number of cases reported so far in a single week globally, on 15 Oct, the NSC issued an urgent telegram No. 1640/CD-BCD to Ministry of Defence and all Provincial People's Committees asking for strengthening of management of all inbound travellers to Viet Nam. These include (1) Strictly complying the direction of the Prime Minister, NSC and MOH technical guidance for management of people entry to Viet Nam; (2) Closely checking certificates of SARS-CoV-2 free among inbound travellers at PoEs and strictly implementing samples collection and testing for SARS-CoV-2 during quarantine periods; and (3) Strictly monitoring the centralized quarantine activities to prevent COVID-19 transmission within the quarantine facilities; not allowing unauthorized persons to enter the quarantine areas, and upon completion of centralized quarantine period, continue to strictly monitor health status for 14 days and refrain from getting into contact with other people.

The NSC led by DPM has orders agencies and authorities at all levels to continue sustaining vigilance against the COVID-19 pandemic as the Government is pursuing the dual goals of combating disease and developing the economy.



NPI	Monitoring status					
	Date first implemented	Date last modified	Implementation		Partial lift	Lifted
			Geographical (national or sub-national)	Recommended or Required	Lifted for some area	Lifted for all areas
Wearing Face Masks, Hand Hygiene, Respiratory Etiquette	31 Jan		National	Recommended Required: 16 Mar-7 May	No	No
School Closure	22 Jan		-	-	4 May	11 May
	28 Jul	14 Sep		Required	Lifted in Da Nang	
Workplace Closure	1 Apr	1 June	Sub-national	Required	15 Apr	23 Apr
	28 Jul	5 Sep		Required		5 Sep
Mass Gatherings	31 Jan	None	National	Required		7 May
	27 Jul	10 Sep	Sub-national: Da Nang,	Required		
Stay at Home	1 Apr	None	National	Required	15 Apr	21 Apr
	28 Jul	5 Sep	Da Nang	Recommended		
Restrictions on Internal Movement (within country)	1 Apr	None	National	Required	15 Apr	23 Apr
	28 Jul	7 Sep	Health declaration applied in HCMC for visitors from Da Nang.			7 Sep
Restrictions on International Travel	China: 25 Jan; all countries: 22 Mar	22 March	National	Required	No	No
Communities/hospital lock down	28 Jul	2 Sep	Da Nang, HCMC, Ha Noi, Ha Nam, Khanh Hoa, and Hai Duong	Required	17 Aug: Dak Lak and Dong Nai; 20 Aug: Thai Binh province; 21 Aug: Hoan My Hospital in Da Nang; 25 Aug: Da Nang General Hospital; and Quang Ngai province; 26 Aug: Lang Son province and Phu Ly Dist., Ha Nam province; 29 Aug: Bac Giang and Quang Tri provinces; 1 Sep: Quang Nam province; 2 Sep: Thanh Hoa province.	17 Sep
Others; specify in narrative: Centralized Quarantine entry people	Hubei China: 7 Feb. All countries: 21 Mar	None	-	Required	No	No

Annexes

Annex 1 – Key public health interventions on COVID-19, January – 8 October 2020 (to be updated)

