



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

OTHER NEWS RELATING TO THE GLOBAL FUND PARTNERSHIP AND COVID-19

Modeling studies done in March had predicted that, in a worst-case scenario, the COVID-19 pandemic could cause more than double the number of malaria deaths reported in 2018 (405 000). However, a [recent article](#) by [Science](#) notes that the pandemic has not had the projected impact on the malaria response. Initially, African countries had suspended malaria bed net distribution campaigns, and there were fears that clinics would be overwhelmed by COVID-19 and unable to provide malaria treatment. However, countries have maintained, in large part, malaria control efforts, including bed net campaigns, testing, and treatment. It may still be too early to conclude that the pandemic has had a limited impact on malaria control, as the pandemic continues to grow in Africa. There is a risk that the lower number of malaria cases and deaths being reported by countries could be due to undercounting.

Read the full article [Scientists worried the pandemic would cause malaria deaths to soar. So far it hasn't happened.](#)

[Global Fund takes over the procurement of medical supplies in Kenya](#)

A national newspaper in Kenya, the [Daily Nation](#), has reported that the Global Fund is taking over the procurement of medical supplies for grants from the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA). KEMSA is the agency authorized to procure and distribute Global Fund-supported health commodities on behalf of the state Principal Recipient (PR), the National Treasury, which is currently implementing three grants, totaling more than \$270 million. Kenya is one of the few African countries, alongside Ethiopia, Rwanda, and South Africa, that do not use the Global Fund's [pooled procurement mechanism](#) (PPM).

The newspaper also reported that this change follows the outcomes of a special audit by the Global Fund,

which identified [financial and procurement irregularities](#) that put over \$1 billion of donor funds at risk. The special audit was conducted jointly with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) from October 2019. KEMSA has also been in the spotlight after a [recent investigation](#) by a national media station that uncovered alleged overinflation of prices for COVID-related medical supplies. The agency is allegedly seeking a [bailout](#) from the government after it has failed to sell the supplies bought at inflated prices.

Read the full article [Fund withholds Sh 40 billion over graft](#). Also, read [KEMSA scandal: USAID, Global Fund threaten to withdraw KSh 400B](#).

[Rwanda develops a quick and affordable way of testing for COVID-19](#)

Rwanda has recently developed a fast and efficient way of testing for COVID-19. A researcher has developed an algorithm to facilitate pooled testing. In pooled testing, multiple samples are tested at the same time, instead of conducting tests on individual samples. If a pooled test result is negative, then all samples are assumed to be negative with the single test. Under normal circumstances, if the test result is positive, then all the samples need to be retested individually. However, this algorithm can pinpoint specific positive samples, with a failure rate of 0.001%, meaning that all the individual samples do not have to be retested. This approach is most efficient where the prevalence is low, such as Rwanda, which had recorded only 2 889 cases and 11 deaths by 24 August 2020. Despite concerns about the complexity of this approach, it is quicker and takes around three hours. It reduces the amount of time required to test large numbers of samples, and lowers the cost of testing.

Read the full article [Limited COVID-19 testing? Researchers in Rwanda have an idea](#).

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