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African airlines' performance updates by AFRAA – August 2021

In the month of August 2021, air passenger traffic reached 46.8% compared to same month in 2019 while capacity was at 54.6%.

Domestic markets across Africa recorded a slight reduction in passenger demand although still outperforming intra-Africa and intercontinental traffic. Domestic traffic for the month under review was 58.9% compared to 22.7% for intra-Africa and 18.4% for intercontinental. On passenger capacity (seats offered), domestic, intra-Africa and intercontinental accounted for 46.5%, 26.8% and 26.7% respectively.

Globally, the COVID 19 cases continue to rise despite the fact that 24.6% of the world's population has been vaccinated. In Africa, just about 1.85% of the population has been fully vaccinated according to data available on the Africa CDC website. The Delta variant which is the source of recent infections is not sparing younger people either. The result is an increase in the number of younger people and children infected by the COV2 virus. In Africa, the number of deaths continues to rise while vaccination is progressing at a snail pace, thus causing concerns among the travel, tourism and hospitality sectors on recovery. Worldwide, the numbers of infected cases reached 200 million of which 7 million are in Africa. The global recovery rate stands at 97.7% compared to 97.3% in Africa.

Re-start of operations on intercontinental routes by African airlines reached 77.8% in August 2021, though frequency and capacity remained constrained. This represents a month-on-month increase in intercontinental operations of 3.1%. Airlines which added new intercontinental routes to their operations in August include: Ethiopian Airlines, Royal Air Maroc and Kenya Airways. It is worth noting that, EgyptAir, Ethiopian Airlines, Royal air Maroc and RwandAir now operate to about 90% of their pre-COVID intercontinental destinations.

As previously reported, Mauritius remains the most impacted intra-Africa air travel destination in spite of the resumption of international flights in July. Abidjan and Dakar airports slightly exceeded their pre-COVID level of flights connectivity with other cities. Passenger arrivals and departures however remain depressed for both airports.

General passenger traffic continues to be low across Africa due to the ravaging impact of COVID-19, inconsistencies in the messaging regarding border closures and failure to align health protocols in some countries and across regions.



Better Skies for Africa

Full year revenue loss for African airlines in 2021 according to AFRAA is forecast at US\$8.2b, approximately 47.2% of the full year 2019 airlines' revenue. In 2020, African airlines made a cumulative loss of \$10.21b, representing 58.8% of 2019 revenues. The poor revenue performance coupled with slow response to calls for support to African aviation and tourism sectors by governments and DFIs is a major threat to the survival of the African aviation industry. Governments should heed the calls by the African Union, AFCAC, AFRAA and other organizations to provide financial relief and support to the industry players most impacted by Covid-19 to avoid the collapse of the aviation industry.

Other related industry developments:

- Victoria Falls and Kazungula (linking Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and to a lesser extent Namibia) border posts were opened for fully vaccinated tourists in a move aimed at reviving the tourism sector.
- The United Arab Emirates National Emergency and Crisis Management Authority (NCEMA) announced lifting of the transit flight ban imposed by UAE in some countries including India, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Uganda, effective 05 August 2021.
- On 28 July, the UK Government announced latest policy review of its "traffic light" system stating that effective 02 August 2021, arrivals to the UK with a DCC (EU digital COVID certificate) or a US Vaccine Certificate (paper) can enter the United Kingdom without quarantine.

About AFRAA

The African Airlines Association, also known by its acronym AFRAA, is a trade association of airlines from the member states of the African Union (AU). Founded in Accra, Ghana, in April 1968, and headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, AFRAA's mission is to promote, serve African Airlines and champion Africa's aviation industry. The Association envisions a sustainable, interconnected and affordable Air Transport industry in Africa where African Airlines become key players and drivers to African economic development.

AFRAA membership of 46 airlines cuts across the entire continent and includes all the major intercontinental African operators. The Association members represent over 85% of total international traffic carried by African airlines. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).