

## Current major events

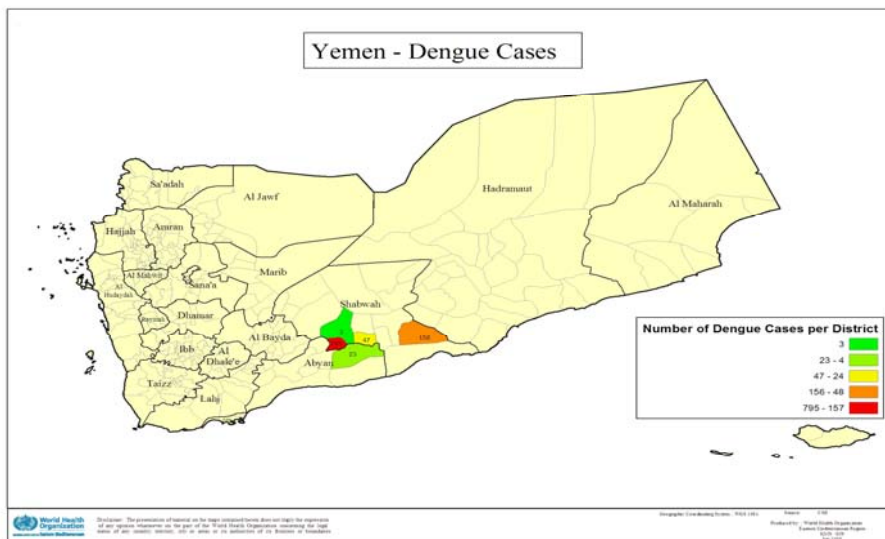
### Dengue outbreak in Yemen

As of 5th of June 2008, a total of 1,001 cases of Dengue fever (DF) were reported from two governorates (Shabwa and Abyan) of Yemen. The first few sporadic cases of Dengue fever were reported from Mayfah district of Shabwa governorate on 5th of March 2008. At the beginning of May this year, more cases of DF were reported from the same district as well as from other adjoining districts and thereby the outbreak evolved in increasing pace and intensity.

The outbreak has now spread to four out of seventeen districts of Shabwa governorate as well as in one district (Almahfed) of Abyan governorate. Majority of cases were reported from Hateeb (795 cases), Mayfah (156 cases) and Alssaid (47 cases) districts of Shabwa governorate. Additional information are being sought to identify possible cases of Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever (DHF) and the circulating virus serotypes associated with this outbreak.

### Editorial note

The Republic of Yemen has been experiencing repeated outbreaks of dengue fever every year since 2000. Dengue fever is rapidly emerging as one of the major public health problems in the countries of Eastern Mediterranean Region. Outbreaks of Dengue fever has been reported from a number of EMR countries in recent past including from Djibouti, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and Sudan. Rapid spread of dengue is attributed to expanding geographic distribution of dengue viruses and of their mosquito vectors. A rapid rise in urban populations is bringing ever greater numbers of people into contact with this vector specially in areas that are favourable for mosquito breeding, e.g. where household water storage is common and where solid waste disposal services are inadequate. Globalization and unplanned



#### Outbreaks of DF in EMR (1994-2006)

- Pakistan in 1994-1995 and 2006;
- Yemen in 1994 (Den-3), 2000-2006 (Den-2)
- Somalia in 1982 and 1993 (Den-2)
- Djibouti in 1991-1992 (Den-2)
- Saudi Arabia in 1994- 2006 (Den-2)
- Sudan in 2005-2006

urban development are only aggravating this existing health problem.

Dengue is a mosquito-borne infection that causes severe flu-like illness and affects infants, young children and adults but seldom causes death. It is mostly found in tropical and sub-tropical regions around the world. There are four distinct, but closely related, viruses that cause Dengue. Dengue haemorrhagic fever is a potentially lethal complication and there is good evidence that sequential infection caused by any one of these four dengue viruses can increase the risk of developing DHF.

Prevention of dengue is the key to its effective control. The principal strategy for prevention and control of Dengue/ DHF outbreaks is vector control through community participation. Since Dengue doesn't respect international boundaries, the control efforts need to be coordinated as a regional effort.

### Update on outbreaks

*in the Eastern Mediterranean Region*

**Dengue:** in Yemen. No update; **Myiasis:** in Djibouti. No update; **Cholera:** reported from four counties in southern Sudan;

### Current public health events of international concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

#### Avian influenza

Egypt	[50 (22), 44%]
Indonesia	[133 (108), 81.2%]

#### Cholera

Sudan (South)	[1139 (57), 5.0%]
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#### Dengue fever

Yemen	[1001 (?), ?%]
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#### Myiasis

Djibouti	[932(0), 0%]
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#### Poliomyelitis

Nigeria (North)	[1(0), 0%]*
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#### Hand, foot & mouth disease

China	[7823(23), 0.3%]
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(\* = Unofficial figures)  
CFR = Case-Fatality Rate