

Current major events

Acute Haemorrhagic Fever remained a public health threat in EMR

During this year (upto the end of November 2008), several countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen) reported outbreaks or cases/death of acute haemorrhagic fevers resulting in large number of mortality and morbidity. While Afghanistan and Iran were the only EMR countries reporting Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) in 2008, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen ported Dengue Fever with the possibilities that the disease might have also manifested as Dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF). During the later part of November, an outbreak of acute haemorrhagic fever was also reported from Sudan.

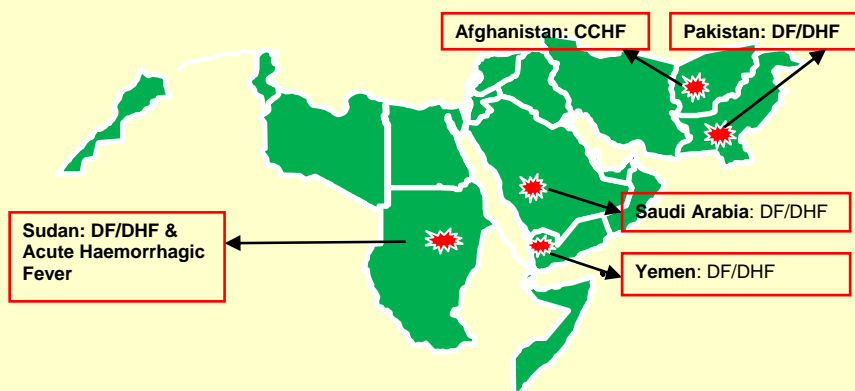
Editorial note

Acute Haemorrhagic Fevers (HFs) remained a persistent threat to public health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) in 2008. At least six countries in the Region reported outbreaks or routine cases/deaths of either Dengue or Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever to WHO during the year.

In the last decade, new emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases have been witnessed globally. Most of these diseases are caused by viruses that are frequently zoonotic. Haemorrhagic fevers in general and viral haemorrhagic fevers (VHF) in particular are among these emerging and re-emerging diseases. The Countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region have not been spared from these.

From 1994 to 2008, acute haemorrhagic fever outbreaks caused by CCHF, DF/DHF, Ebola haemorrhagic fever (EHF), Rift Valley fever (RVF) and Yellow fever (YF) were reported from nine out of the twenty two countries in the Region. EHF and YF were reported mainly from Sudan, CCHF has been reported from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan; DF/DHF has been reported from Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan

Reported Outbreaks of HFs in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 2008



HFs Reported in EMR, 2008

Country	Cases	Deaths	CFR (%)
Afghanistan	24	4	16.6
Iran*	211	11	5.21
Pakistan	10	8 (?)	?
Saudi Arabia	533	?	?
Sudan **	325	37	11.38
Yemen	1024	?	?

* Cases include probable and laboratory confirmed cases. ? Unknown. ** Cases of acute HFs and Dengue have been added up

and Yemen; and RVF has been reported from Egypt, Somalia, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

The threats of HFs are by no means limited to these countries alone. The potentials and threats of spread of these disease to other countries in the region remains a reality. Public health control measures to prevent such regional and global spread is made more difficult by the rapid changes in the global weather pattern, increase in global and regional travels, weak surveillance system, lack of transparency and poor cross border information sharing.

Countries in the Region needs to develop programs for forecasting and Early warning system for HFs in Human and animals and to promote inter-country and cross borders collaboration and information sharing during outbreaks of acute haemorrhagic fevers. WHO can assist in promoting transparency in the Region as part of IHR 2005 implementation requirements.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Acute Haemorrhagic Fever: in Sudan
Dengue: in Pakistan, Sudan. **Cholera:** in Iraq; Iran, Somalia and Afghanistan.

Current public health events of international concern

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

Acute Haemorrhagic Fever syndrome

Sudan	[33 (14), 42.4%]
Mali	[41 (?), ? %]

AWD/Cholera

Somalia	[532 (8), 1.5%]
Iran	[216 (5), 2.3%]
Afghanistan	[5403* (24), 0.4%]
Iraq	[771 (8), 1 %]
Zimbabwe	[13,960 (589), 4.2%

Dengue fever

Sudan	[68(?), ?%]
Pakistan	[10 (8 ?)]#

Arenavirus (New Virus)

Zambia	[5 (4), 80%]
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Yellow fever

Cote d' Ivoire	[6 (0), 0%]
Guinea	[2 (0), 0%]
Burkina Faso	[2 (0), 0%]
Central African Republic	[1 (0), 0%]

(* = Suspected)

CFR = Case-Fatality Rate

? = No data

= Risk assessment ongoing. Of these suspected cases, 8 deaths were reported.