

Current major events

Zoonosis: Need for joint actions

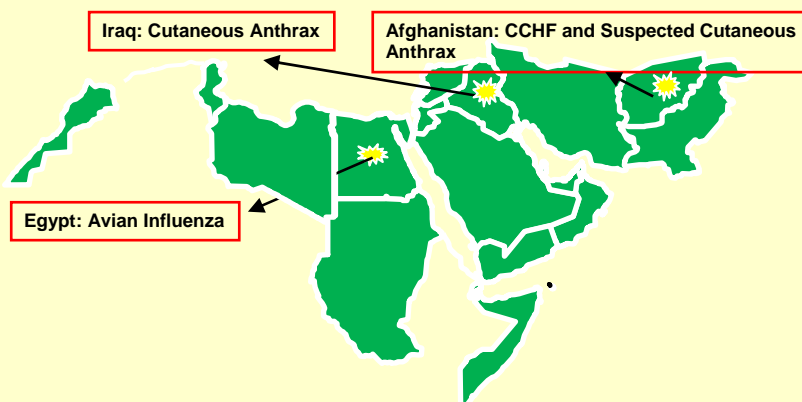
During the year 2008, several countries (Afghanistan, Egypt and Iraq) reported outbreaks from zoonosis that caused large scale mortality and morbidity. These included avian influenza (AI) in Egypt during the early part of the year, cutaneous anthrax in Iraq in October 2008 and Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) and some suspected cases of cutaneous anthrax in Afghanistan during August-September 2008.

Editorial note

Outbreaks of zoonotic diseases continue to be a big burden in the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region. Zoonotic diseases like CCHF, Rift Valley fever have been reported from several countries in the Region in the recent past. In addition a number of well known and preventable animal diseases that can be transmitted to humans (i.e. zoonoses) such as rabies, brucellosis, leishmaniasis and echinococcosis continue to occur in many countries of the Region. These diseases mostly affect the poorest segment of the population. They cause a serious amount of deaths and thousands of affected people every year.

WHO estimate that about 75% of the newly emerging diseases that have affected humans over the past 10 years have been caused by pathogens originating from an animal or from products of animal origin. Many of these diseases have the potential to spread through various means over long distances and to become global problems. According to WHO, Human health is inextricably linked to animal health and production. This link between human and animal populations, and with the surrounding environment, is particularly close in developing regions where animals provide transportation, draught power, fuel and clothing as well as proteins (meat, eggs and milk). In both developing and industrialized countries, outbreaks of Zoonotic diseases can lead to a serious risk to

Reported Outbreaks from Zoonosis in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 2008



Zoonosis reported in EMR, 2008

Country	Disease	Cases	Deaths	CFR (%)
Afghanistan	CCHF	24	4	16.6
Afghanistan	Anthrax*	42	0	5.21
Iraq	Anthrax	37	0	0
Iran	CCHF	211	11	5.21
Egypt	AI	7	3	42.8

public health with severe economic consequences.

Zoonoses in the Region demands some immediate attention that require a concerted effort from the countries and the World Health Organization Regional Office (WHO/EMRO). To address this the Regional Office and the countries need to strengthen the field of veterinary public health (VPH). The core domains of VPH include the diagnosis, surveillance, epidemiology, control, prevention and elimination of zoonoses; food safety; management of health aspects of laboratory animal facilities and diagnostic laboratories; biomedical research; health education and extension; and production and control of biological products and medical devices. This will require close partnership and coordination with the veterinary and animal production sector. The appearance of epizootics in animals should serve as an early warning for the human public health sector. This only can happen if there are close working relations between the surveillance systems two sectors.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Acute Haemorrhagic Fever: in Sudan
Dengue: in Pakistan, Sudan. **Cholera:** in Iraq; Iran, 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	[43 (?), ? %]

AWD/Cholera

South Africa	[532 (8), 1.5%]
Mozambique	[1406 (8), 2.0%]
Afghanistan	[5403* (24), 0.4%]
Iraq	[918 (11), 1.2 %]
Zimbabwe	[16,141 (774), 4.8%]

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.