

Current major events

Oman reports a new death from pandemic (H1N1) 2009

On 13 July 2010, the IHR National Focal Point of the Sultanate of Oman reported a new death from pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus. The deceased was a 52 year old male and was also suffering from Diabetes Mellitus and other heart ailments. This brings the total number of deaths, in the Sultanate of Oman, from pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus to 34.

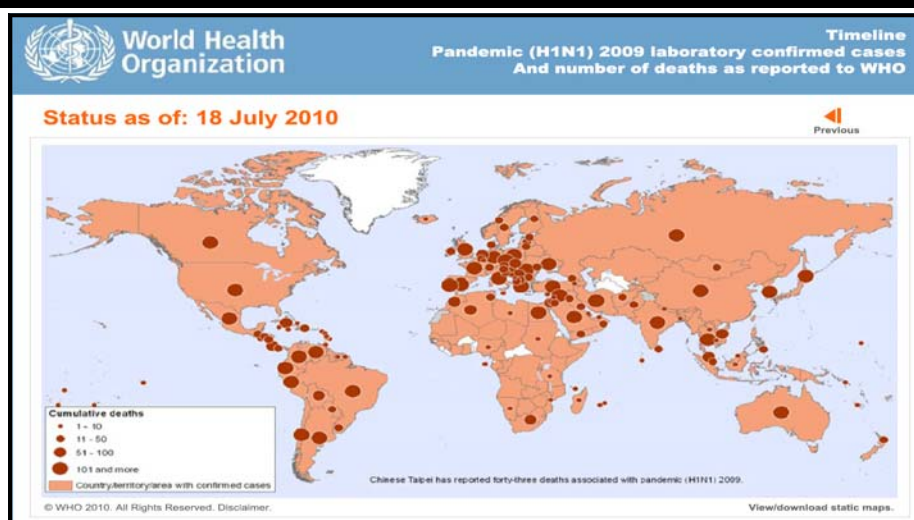
Editorial note

As of 18 July 2010, worldwide more than 214 countries and overseas territories or communities have reported laboratory confirmed cases of pandemic (H1N1) 2009, including over 18,366 deaths. Globally, the activities of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 have generally declined in countries of the northern hemisphere except India where the virus is active in the southern part of the country. In the Eastern Mediterranean Region, pandemic (H1N1) 2009 has declined from all the countries except for 5 confirmed cases including one death reported from Oman last week.

In the southern hemisphere countries (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina and Chile) which have good surveillance systems, increasing influenza activities are still being reported with pandemic (H1N1) 2009 being the predominant circulating virus.

WHO is actively monitoring the progress of the pandemic through frequent consultations with the WHO Regional Offices and member states and through monitoring of multiple sources of information. Based on the current situation, it might be too early for WHO to announce the end of this pandemic while countries in the southern hemisphere are still observing increase in viral activities while some of the countries in the northern hemisphere have seen a recent resurgence of influenza activities.

The current situation, particularly in Oman of the EMR is a stark reminder that lowering the guard or vigilance can



Monitoring patterns and levels of influenza activity worldwide (as of 23 July)

Regions	Influenza activity
Tropical zones (West Africa, Central America, the Caribbean, South and South-East Asia)	High
Temperate zone of southern hemisphere	Increased activity in recent time
Temperate zone of northern hemisphere	Sporadic activities

undermine all efforts geared to save lives from pandemic influenza. It is of paramount importance that the countries in the EMR continue its surveillance efforts in order to provide virological and epidemiological data that are needed for timely detection of localized or increased pandemic activities. Such early detection can only trigger appropriate public health responses and provide information that will assist health policy makers to improve/modify strategies to manage influenza.

The EMR countries need to seriously consider adapting its routine disease surveillance system to include severe acute respiratory infections (SARI), pneumonia, and influenza-like illness (ILI). Surveillance data for ILI and SARI would be critical in defining and detecting unusual events and a shift from expected baseline rates of disease including a shift in the severity or pattern of disease associated with influenza, or emergence of a new influenza strain. Taking example from Oman, it is high time that the Member States of the EMR thinks it as a priority now than never.

Update on outbreaks in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Cholera in Yemen and Djibouti; **Dengue** in Yemen and Sudan

Current public health events of international concern

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

Avian influenza

Egypt	[109 (34), 31.1%]
Indonesia	[167 (138), 82.6 %]
China	[39 (26), 66.6%]
Global total	[501(297), 59.2%]

Dengue fever

Sudan	[3679 (12), 0.3%]
Yemen	[8109 (10), 0.1%]

AWD (Cholera)

Yemen	[300 (4), 1.3 %]
Benin	[278(2), 0.72%]

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009

AFRO	No of deaths: 168
AMRO	No of deaths: At least 8525
EMRO	No of deaths: 1019
EURO	No of deaths: At least 4879
SEARO	No of deaths: 1923
WPRO	No of deaths: 1852
GLOBAL Total	No of deaths: 18,366

CFR=Case-Fatality Rate