

Current major event

Cholera in Yemen

The Ministry of Public Health and Population in Yemen has announced the laboratory-confirmation of cholera in the country. A total of 270 suspected cases have been reported so far, of which 18 have tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae* in Al-Hudaydah, Aden, Al Bayda, Lahj, and Sana'a governorates. No deaths have been reported so far.

Editorial note

Diarrheal diseases are endemic in Yemen. It is the second leading cause of death especially among infants and children. Available data suggest that about 60-70% of the diarrheal cases acute watery in nature. The country has not reported any major outbreak of cholera or acute watery diarrhoea in the recent past. In 2010 and 2011, some sporadic cases of cholera were reported from Yemen (*Please see the table*) mostly from coastal governorates of the country.

This year, the country reported its first few cases of cholera in the backdrop of a protracted conflict situation. Since 2011, the country's political situation remains volatile and health systems has remained frail owing to damage to health infrastructure resulting from war and conflict.

Currently, more than 7.6 million people in the country are living in dire need of essential services like access to safe water and sanitation. More than 3 million internally displaced persons are especially vulnerable to the ongoing outbreak from cholera. These are all precipitating risk factors for propagation of cholera in the country.

The World Food Programme has also estimated that almost 14.4 million people in Yemen are food insecure. This includes more than seven million people in desperate need of food assistance; that is one in five of the country's population. Yemen has also one of the highest rates of child malnutrition in the world and now an estimated 1 in 5 people are "severely food insecure" and in urgent need of food assistance. Cholera thrives and propagates in such situation

Cholera cases reported from Yemen, 6-9 October 2016

Governorate	Affected districts	No of suspected cases reported so far	Number laboratory confirmed	Death
Sanna city	Shoub , Azal , Bri Hushish , Alsabeen , Alsafi	38	13	0
Taiz	Alwazeaia, Maghbana	84	-	0
Al-Hudaydah	Alhali& Almerna & Alhwak	55	0	0
Aden	AlMansura	26	1	0
Lahaj	Al Hawtah District Al Adani area	2	1	0
Albyda's	Alshary	65	3	0

Cholera in Yemen

Year	Affected governorate	Cases	Death	CFR (%)
2010	Hodeida	500	0	-
2010	Aden	405	5	29.7
2010	Lahj	127	0	-
2011	Abyan	343	0	-

of food insecurity and malnutrition and with the displacement and continued movement of population owing to volatile security situation, there is an heightened risk that cholera would spread to other areas.

As a result of the ongoing conflict, two thirds of Yemenis do not have access to clean water and sanitation services are limited, especially in cities, further increasing the risk of catching cholera. This is further aggravated by a decline in the national health system's capacity to respond to the cholera outbreak due to critical shortages in resources. As of October 2016, only 45% of all health facilities in Yemen remain functional due to shortages in health staff, medicines and medical supplies.

Given these challenging situation, it is imperative to save lives and avert deaths. Accordingly, case management, needs to be improved particularly early detection and treatment of all cases with rapid re-hydration should be the mainstay of current response given the fact that other control measures will be difficult to implement and sustain.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

MERS-CoV in Saudi Arabia; Cholera in Somalia; Cholera in Yemen

Current public health events of international concern

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

Avian Influenza : 2006-2016

Egypt (A/H5N1) [356 (121), 33.9%]
Egypt (A/H9N2) [3 (0)]

MERS-CoV: 2012-2016

Saudi Arabia [1414 (601), 42.5%]
Bahrain [1 (1), 100%]

Cholera : 2016

Somalia [13598 (497), 3.6%]
Yemen [270 (0),]

Yellow fever: 2015-2016

Angola [4347 (377), 8.7%]
DRC [2987 (16), 0.5%]

Lassa fever : 2015-2016

Nigeria [273(149), 54.5%]
Benin [54(28),51.8%

Avian Influenza A (H7N9) : 2013-2016

China [775 (307),36%]

Avian Influenza A (H5N6) : 2016

China [4 (0)]

Wild poliovirus: 2014-2016

Pakistan [371(0)]
Afghanistan [54(0)]

Zika Virus Infection: 2007-2016

73 countries and territories have reported transmission so far