

Current major event

Cholera outbreak in Pakistan

On 29 April 2022, the health authorities in Sindh announced a cholera outbreak in Karachi, Sind province. A total of 151 confirmed cases were reported mainly from South, Central and East districts. WHO is supporting health authorities in implementing multisectoral preventive and control measures.

Editorial note

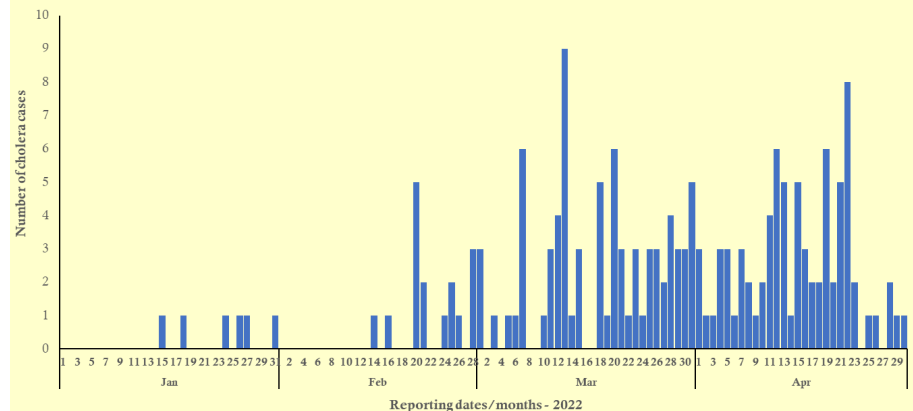
Cholera is an extremely virulent disease that can cause severe acute watery diarrhoea. Cholera affects both children and adults and can kill within hours if left untreated. Due to the short incubation period of cholera, outbreaks can develop rapidly. Cholera transmission is closely linked to the inadequate access to clean water and sanitation facilities.

In 2010, the Ministry of Health in Pakistan confirmed a cholera outbreak in the country following disastrous flooding. Cases were reported sporadically from a wide geographical area in the flood-affected provinces of Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Since then, sporadic cases continued to be reported annually.

On 29 April 2022, health authorities in Sindh province confirmed the reporting of a cholera outbreak in Karachi. Since 1 January till 28 April, a total of 151 confirmed cases were reported. Of these cases, 56% were reported among females and 48% were children aged 0 to 9 years. South, Central and East districts of Karachi division were the most affected districts, reporting 64% of the cases (see table). The most affected towns are Saddar, Lyari, North Nazimabad, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Jamshed and Liaquatabad. In these towns the most affected union councils (UCs) are UC-1 and UC-8 in Lyari and Saddar town; UC-10 in North Nazimabad; UC-1 in North Karachi; UC-11 in Jamshed town; and UC-5 in Gulshan-e-Iqbal. Suspected cholera cases were reported from public and private hospitals (45% and 55% respectively), and 67% of these cases were hospitalized.

To identify the source of infection, water samples were collected from different sites, with 63% of the tested samples showing faecal contamination. These samples will be tested for different pathogens, including *Vibrio cholerae*.

Trend of reported cholera cases in Sindh Province, Pakistan, 2022



Geographical distribution of cholera cases reported from Sindh Province, Pakistan, 2022

District	Town	UC	Cases
South	Lyari	UC-1	3
	Saddar	UC-8	9
Central	North Nazimabad	UC-1	4
	North Karachi	UC-10	5
East	Jamshed	UC-11	6
	Gulshan-e-Iqbal	UC-5	2

In response to the outbreak, Sindh health authority had issued high alert notification to the district health offices. The provincial department had also officially declared an outbreak in the affected districts. WHO continued to support the Government of Sindh in managing the outbreak response. A diarrheal control cell was established at the Directorate of Health for robust response. Surveillance was enhanced through the establishment of sentinel sites in 13 reporting health facilities to ensure timely detection and daily reporting.

Laboratory and diagnostic capacities were strengthened by identifying two referral laboratories and availing transport media and diagnostic reagent and supplies. Case management was improved after 17 training sessions were conducted to train 368 health care workers on cholera case management. Six isolation wards were established with the capacity of 60 beds in Karachi. Risk communication and community engagement activities were implemented with increased communication regarding potential risks, symptoms of cholera; precautions to take to avoid cholera; when and where to report cases; and the importance of seeking immediate treatment when symptoms appear.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

COVID-19 in 22 EMR countries

Current public health events of concern

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

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019–2022

Afghanistan	[178 899 (7683), 4.3%]
Bahrain	[568 706 (1457), 0.3%]
Djibouti	[15 631 (189), 1.2%]
Egypt	[513 790 (24 641), 4.8%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[7 221 653 (141 083), 2%]
Iraq	[2 325 092 (25 211), 1.1%]
Jordan	[1 695 970 (14 066), 0.8%]
Kuwait	[631 728 (2555), 0.4%]
Lebanon	[1 096 955 (10 387), 0.9%]
Libya	[501 916 (6430), 1.3%]
Morocco	[1 164 953 (16 069), 1.4%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[657 060 (5657), 0.9%]
Oman	[389 126 (4625), 1.2%]
Pakistan	[1 527 956 (30 369), 2%]
Qatar	[364 602 (677), 0.2%]
Saudi Arabia	[754 011 (9088), 1.2%]
Somalia	[26 485 (1361), 5.1%]
Sudan	[62 135 (4933), 7.9%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[55 816 (3150), 5.6%]
Tunisia	[1 040 712 (28 566), 2.7%]
United Arab Emirates	[898 571 (2302), 0.3%]
Yemen	[11 819 (2149), 18.2%]