

Current major event

Infectious disease outbreaks in the Region during 2022

Twenty out of the twenty-two Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) member states have experienced at least one of the emerging infectious disease outbreaks which occurred in the year 2022 in addition to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic (See map).

Editorial note

In 2022, more than seven million cases and a total of 1403 associated deaths resulted from emerging infectious disease outbreaks in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region excluding covid-19. Totally, Sixty outbreaks (by 18 pathogens) have been reported from 20 countries in the EMR in 2022.

AWD/Cholera: Between weeks 1 and 52, 2022, Pakistan reported the highest number of cholera cases, with the total of 762 312 suspected cases and 43 related deaths (CFR: 0.01%), while Afghanistan showed a dramatic increase in the number of AWD cases with 242 562 reported cases and 87 associated deaths (CFR: 0.04%) compared to 4915 cases in 2021 and eight associated deaths (CFR: 0.16%). In Somalia, 13 637 cases have been reported, with 73 related deaths (CFR: 0.54%), with an increasing trend from week 36 to 49. New cholera outbreaks have been reported in Syria and Lebanon this year, with a total of 61 671 and 5411 suspected cases. In addition to, 98 and 23 related deaths, at a CFR of 0.16% and 0.43%, respectively.

Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF): CCHF was reported from two EMR countries in 2022. Afghanistan, where it is endemic, reported a total of 389 suspected cases and 15 deaths (CFR: 3.86%) and Iraq reported 1355 total suspected cases and 113 related deaths (CFR: 8.34%).

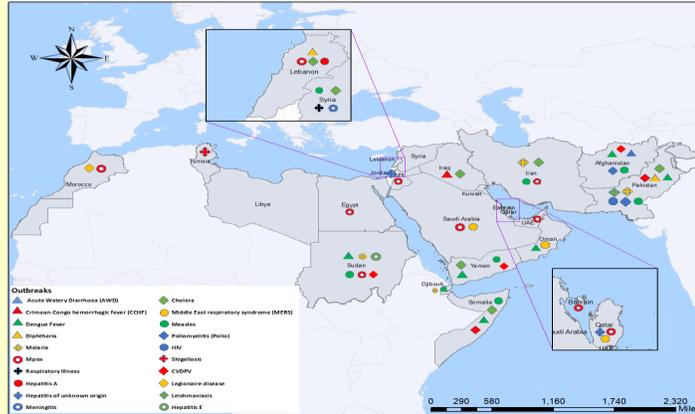
Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV): A total of 164 cVDPV2 cases were reported in 2022 from 3 EMR countries, namely Somalia (4 cases), Sudan (1 case) and Yemen (159 cases), with no reported cVDPV1 cases.

Dengue fever: Five EMR countries reported dengue fever cases in 2022. Out of those, Pakistan reported the highest number of cases (62995) with no related deaths.

Diphtheria and HIV: The two outbreaks were exclusively reported by Pakistan. Between weeks one and 43, 2022, Pakistan reported 342 suspected Diphtheria cases with 39 Diphtheria associated deaths (CFR: 11.4%). While between weeks one and 27, 2022, the country reported 192 lab-confirmed HIV cases, including two HIV-associated deaths (CFR:1.04%).

Malaria: Pakistan reported over 3.4 million suspected cases of malaria compared with the 2.6 million reported over the course of 2021, while Sudan reported 2 624 002 suspected malaria cases with 196 related deaths. Sudan is a Malaria endemic country. However, there was a significant increase in the number of malaria cases in weeks 41 to 49, 2022, as compared to the same period in 2020 and 2021.

Countries of the Region reporting infectious disease outbreaks in 2022



Infectious Disease outbreaks in the region during 2022

Disease	Cases	Deaths	CFR%
CCHF	1,744	128	7.34%
Cholera/AWD	1,116,857	375	0.03%
cVDPV	164	-	-
Dengue Fever	99,829	94	0.09%
Diphtheria	342	39	11.40%
HIV	192	2	1.04%
Malaria	6,030,868	196	0.000%
Measles	130,356	540	0.41%
MERS	5	-	-
Mpox	80	1	1.25%
Poliovirus	22	-	-
Respiratory Illness	-	27	-
Shigellosis	100	1	1%

*Six other infectious disease outbreaks have been reported during 2022 but their related data is not available. Those include: hepatitis A, hepatitis E, hepatitis of unknown origin, legionnaire disease, leishmaniasis, & meningitis.

Measles: Afghanistan reported the highest number of measles cases amongst the six measles-reporting countries in 2022, with more than double increase in the number of cases compared to 2021 (77 210 Vs 30 199) and a triple increase in the number of deaths (388 Vs 108). However, this has been accompanied by a reduction in CFR (0.50% Vs 3.6%). In Sudan, seventeen out of the eighteen states have reported measles cases throughout the year, with 3310 total suspected cases and 35 deaths (CFR: 1.29%).

Monkeypox (Mpox): Between weeks 20 and 52, 2022, cumulatively 80 lab-confirmed mpox cases were reported from 10 Member States in the Region along with one Mpox-associated death from Sudan.

Shigellosis: Between weeks 28 and 48, 2022, a total of 100 cases, including one death (eight years old female), were reported from 16 affected regions in Tunisia.

The WHO regional office has started the implementation of a holistic strategy to minimize the impact of emerging infectious disease outbreaks, which is focusing on strengthening early warning surveillance systems, improving capacities for investigation and enhancing rapid response capacities for early outbreak control.

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): 2019-2023

Afghanistan	[207 810 (7852), 3.8%]
Bahrain	[696 614 (1536), 0.2%]
Djibouti	[15 690 (189), 1.2%]
Egypt	[515 556 (24 803), 4.8%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[7 561 808 (144 706) 1.9%]
Iraq	[2 465 545 (25 375), 1%]
Jordan	[1 746 997 (14 122), 0.8%]
Kuwait	[662 858 (2570), 0.4%]
Lebanon	[1 223 715 (10 753), 0.9%]
Libya	[507 154 (6437), 1.3%]
Morocco	[1 271 868 (16 295), 1.3%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[703 228 (5708), 0.8%]
Oman	[399 154 (4628), 1.2%]
Pakistan	[1 575 952 (30 638), 1.9%]
Qatar	[490 493 (685), 0.1%]
Saudi Arabia	[827 190 (9529) 1.2%]
Somalia	[27 310 (1361), 5%]
Sudan	[63 702 (4995), 7.8%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[57 423 (3163), 5.5%]
Tunisia	[1 147 729 (29 288), 2.6%]
United Arab Emirates	[1 047 464 (2348), 0.2%]
Yemen	[11 945 (2159), 18.1%]