



WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
Health emergencies biweekly bulletin

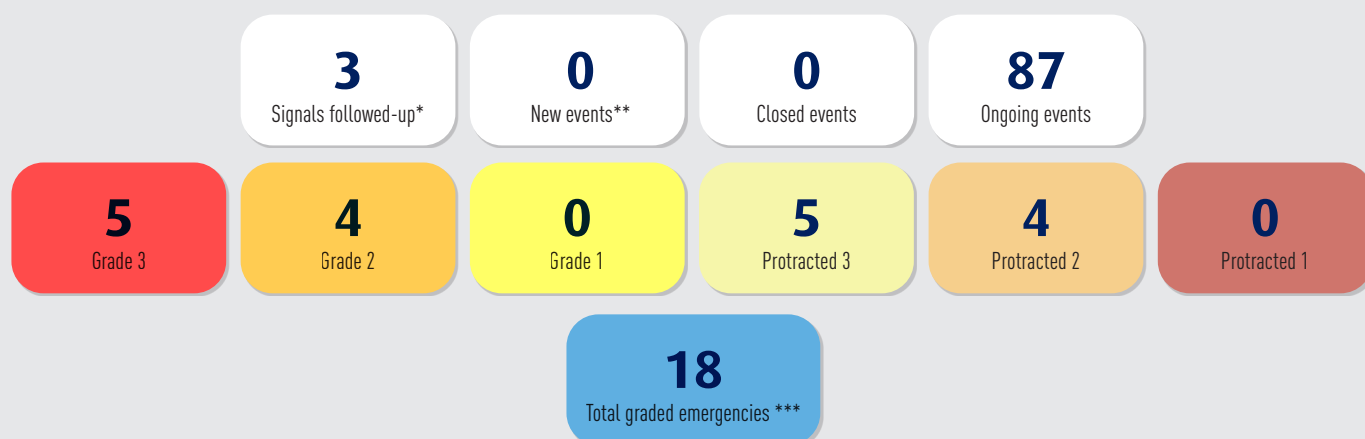
7–20 March 2024

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Public health events and emergencies dashboard

7–20 March 2024



*Signals followed-up: Signals are data and/or information detected that represent a potential acute risk to human health. Signals followed-up are signals for which confirmation is requested and/or for which official government websites and reports are continuously monitored for further information.

**Events: An event is defined by article 1 of the International Health Regulations (2005) as "a manifestation of disease or an occurrence that creates a potential for disease". This can include events that are infectious, zoonotic, food safety-related, chemical, radiological or nuclear in origin and which are transmitted by people, vectors, animals, goods/food or the environment.

***Grading: Grading is an internal WHO process that triggers WHO emergency procedures and activities for the management of the response.

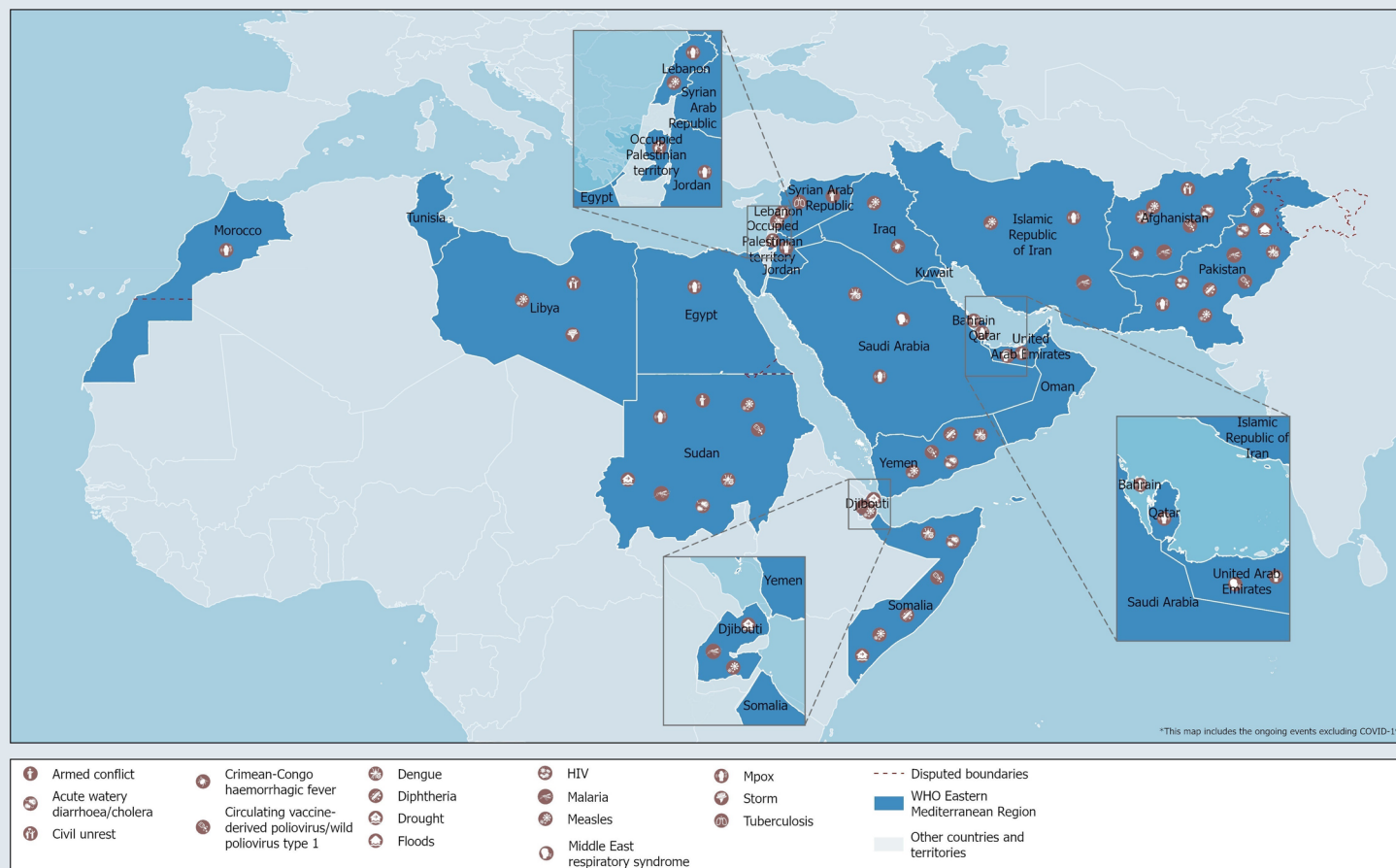
[More information on WHO grading, according to the Emergency Response Framework](#)

Multiple occurrences of the same graded emergency across different countries and territories are considered a single emergency. For instance, COVID-19 is a graded emergency in all 22 countries and territories of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, but it counts as just one emergency when calculating the total number of graded emergencies in the Region.

Public health events and emergencies map

Geographical distribution of ongoing public health events and emergencies in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

As at 20 March 2024



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Iraq: Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever

BACKGROUND

Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) is the most widespread tick-borne viral disease affecting humans. CCHF is transmitted mainly by ticks and livestock animals. Human-to-human transmission can occur, usually in health care settings, as a result of close contact with the organs, blood, secretions or other bodily fluids of an infected person. The disease begins with a sudden onset of influenza-like symptoms, which may progress to severe bleeding and can be fatal if not treated.

Iraq is one of the Eastern Mediterranean Region countries where CCHF is endemic. CCHF has been reported in Iraq since 1979, when the disease was first diagnosed in 10 patients. Following this, six cases were reported from 1989 to 2009; 11 cases in 2010; three fatal cases in 2018; and 33 confirmed cases, including 13 deaths (case fatality ratio [CFR]: 39%), in 2021.

Iraq then witnessed a large CCHF outbreak in 2022 and 2023. In 2022, Iraq reported 380 laboratory-confirmed CCHF cases, including 74 deaths (CFR: 19%). In 2023, a total of 587 laboratory-confirmed cases, including 83 deaths (CFR: 14%), were reported.

Sheep and cattle husbandry are very common in Iraq. Studies have shown that these animals are regularly infested with ticks, mainly *Hyalomma* species, the principal vector of CCHF. WHO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture in Iraq, has been scaling up surveillance, laboratory capabilities, case management, risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) and tick control for the containment of the current outbreak. These efforts are part of a One Health approach, addressing the human, animal and environment health issues.



WHO team finalized a five-year strategic CCHF response plan with relevant government ministries in Iraq.

Photo credit: WHO/WHO Iraq

SITUATION UPDATE

By the end of week 11 of 2024, Iraq had recorded 83 suspected CCHF cases, including four deaths, since the start of the year. All cases exhibited symptoms and underwent polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing.

From week 6 to week 10 of 2024, there were zero confirmed CCHF cases. This is likely attributable to the cold weather experienced during February and early March. This contrasts with the same period in 2023, during which four confirmed cases were reported.

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

- To prevent and control CCHF outbreaks in Iraq, the WHO Country Office officially submitted a cross-sectoral strategic response plan for the five-year period 2024–2028 to Iraq's Ministry of Health. The plan is based on analysis of CCHF data and other relevant health data in Iraq. The response plan is an outcome of a mission conducted by the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean in February 2024. During this mission, the WHO team collaborated with relevant government ministries in Iraq to finalize the plan. The team also conducted training to strengthen the molecular detection of CCHF in both humans and ticks. Eight laboratory professionals from the human and animal health sectors took part in the training.
- The WHO Country Office in Iraq conducted a workshop on tick sequencing and CCHF virus for eight participants from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture. The first day of the training was held at the Veterinary Central Laboratory, followed by five days at the Central Public Health Laboratory.



A group photo of participants at the workshop in Iraq on tick sequencing and CCHF virus.

Photo credit: WHO/WHO Iraq

Tunisia: steps towards integrated disease surveillance

BACKGROUND

Tunisia has several siloed surveillance systems, including event-based surveillance, indicator-based surveillance and disease-specific surveillance systems.

The Primary Health Care (PHC) Directorate in Tunisia operates specific surveillance programmes, including immunization, influenza, hepatitis, tuberculosis, malaria, HIV, and sexually transmitted infections. This is in addition to surveillance for notifiable infectious and noncommunicable diseases.

Only the national Expanded Programme of Immunization and influenza programme have fully established locally developed electronic data systems.

The PHC Directorate is in the process of implementing the District Health Information System (DHIS2) for data management in primary health care facilities and in communities.

In contrast, the Observatory for New and Emerging Diseases, responsible for event-based surveillance in Tunisia, adopted the Surveillance Outbreak Response Management & Analysis System (SORMAS) platform. It began piloting this with an integrated COVID-19 module in one governorate.

The Strategic Health Operations Centre receives data from various sources by phone and email but lacks a digital system for easy and timely access to comprehensive data for action. The health information system is, however, progressing towards digitization, including electronic medical records in some settings and a laboratory information management system in university teaching hospitals. This could pave the way towards an integrated disease surveillance (IDS) system.

The existing surveillance systems used by the country produce information for decision-making, but their efficiency and effectiveness could be improved if they were integrated through an IDS system.



A group photo of the WHO team and Ministry of Health officials.

Photo credit: WHO/WHO Tunisia

Tunisia: steps towards integrated disease surveillance

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

To support the country and move towards a strong IDS system, a team from the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean visited Tunisia and carried out the following actions.

- WHO advocated for an IDS system in Tunisia. In a meeting with officials from the Ministry of Health – including the General Director of Health, Director of PHC, Director of the Observatory for New and Emerging Diseases, Director of Laboratory Services and the public health emergency operations centre team – it was agreed to establish an IDS system.
- WHO assessed the existing surveillance system in Tunisia and identified strengths and weaknesses. The weaknesses included a lack of governance mechanism, no clear plan for integrated disease surveillance and paper-based data management.
- WHO supported Tunisia in setting up a national governance mechanism for overseeing implementation of IDS, including a collaborative working group and written governance principles and terms of reference. The governing body will oversee all surveillance-related activities and make decisions towards integrating fragmented surveillance systems.
- In collaboration with all surveillance actors at the national level, WHO facilitated the drafting of the national action plan for IDS. The plan covers key actions in governance, guidance, information technology, financing, infrastructure, human resources, tools and forms, data analysis and dissemination, public health laboratory support, quality assurance, and monitoring and evaluation.
- WHO will evaluate existing digital platforms, including DHIS2 and SORMAS. The WHO team will guide the selection of a single/interoperable platform for the health information system and surveillance.
- WHO will continue to provide support by offering strategic guidance and assisting in the implementation of the national action plan for IDS.



A WHO team member with officials from the Ministry of Health.

Photo credit: WHO/WHO Tunisia

Ongoing public health events and emergencies

As at 20 March 2024

Member State/territory	Hazard	Event	WHO grade ^a	Cases/injuries	Deaths	Date of start ^b
Afghanistan	Biological	Acute watery diarrhoea (AWD)	Afghanistan Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	17 350	12	22-Sep-21
In week 9 of 2024, 1784 cases of AWD with dehydration were reported from 117 districts, with two associated deaths. This represents a stabilization in the number of cases against the previous week. Since the start of 2024, a total of 17 350 AWD with dehydration cases and 12 associated deaths have been reported.						
Afghanistan	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	229 590	7965	24-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 229 590 cases and 7965 deaths had been reported. A total of 1 340 648 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Afghanistan	Biological	Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2)	Polio (cVDPV), Grade 2	0	0	1-Jan-23
No new cases of cVDPV2 were reported from 1 January 2022 to 6 February 2024. WHO and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative are focusing on reaching every last child in Afghanistan with vaccines and on strengthening surveillance and technical support at all levels.						
Afghanistan	Societal	Civil unrest	Afghanistan Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	NA	NA	30-Aug-21
In 2023, no major casualties or displacements were observed. Civil unrest events increased in the country in 2023.						
Afghanistan	Biological	Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever	Afghanistan Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	30	0	3-May-23
In week 9 of 2024, seven new suspected cases of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever were reported, with no associated deaths. This represents a stabilization in the number of cases against the previous week. Since the start of 2024, a total of 30 samples of suspected CCHF cases have been tested. Of these, one was confirmed in Balkh province.						
Afghanistan	Biological	Dengue	Afghanistan Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	456	0	14-Aug-22
In week 9 of 2024, 57 suspected cases of dengue were reported from Nangarhar province. Since 1 January 2024, 456 suspected dengue cases have been reported, with no deaths. Out of these, 277 cases (60.7%) were females, and three cases (0.7%) were children aged under 5 years.						
Afghanistan	Biological	Malaria	Afghanistan Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	1609	0	25-Sep-23
No new malaria cases have been reported since week 44 of 2023. From 4 July to 28 October 2023, 1609 confirmed malaria cases were reported: 1303 were confirmed by a laboratory and 306 were confirmed by rapid diagnostic tests. Cases were reported from 22 districts in 11 provinces: Badakhshan, Faryab, Ghazni, Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Kunar, Laghman, Paktika, Parwan and Takhar.						
Afghanistan	Biological	Measles	Afghanistan Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	8411	37	19-Apr-21
During week 9 of 2024, a total of 1232 suspected measles cases and eight associated deaths were reported. This is the highest number of suspected measles cases reported weekly since week 26 of 2022. The eight deaths were reported from five provinces: Herat (three), Balkh (two), Baghlan (one), Jawzjan (one), and Kandahar (one). All deaths were for children aged under 5 years and four of those who died were girls. Since the start of 2024, a total of 8411 suspected measles cases and 37 deaths (case fatality ratio: 0.4%) have been reported. Of this total, 6789 cases (80.7%) were children aged under 5 years; and 3847 cases (45.7%) were females.						
Afghanistan	Biological	Wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1)	Afghanistan Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	6	0	16-Mar-23
Wild poliovirus is endemic in Afghanistan. From 1 January 2023 to 6 February 2024, six cases were reported. WHO and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative are focusing on reaching all children in Afghanistan with vaccines and on strengthening surveillance and technical support at all levels.						
Bahrain	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	696 614	1536	24-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 696 614 COVID-19 cases and 1536 deaths had been reported. A total of 10 578 766 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						

^a Grading is an internal WHO process that triggers WHO emergency procedures and activities for the management of the response.

[More information on WHO grading, according to the Emergency Response Framework](#)

Global graded emergencies: COVID-19 and mpox

Regional graded emergencies: circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus

Multiregional graded emergencies: dengue, cholera and the Greater Horn of Africa drought and food insecurity

^b Date of start: The date the health event is created in the Event Management System (EMS).

Ongoing public health events and emergencies

As at 20 March 2024

Member State/territory	Hazard	Event	WHO grade	Cases/injuries	Deaths	Date of start
Bahrain	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	2	0	18-Sep-22
As at 6 March 2024, two mpox cases had been reported, with no deaths.						
Djibouti	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	15 690	189	18-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 15 690 COVID-19 cases and 189 deaths had been reported. A total of 319 153 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Djibouti	Climatological	Drought	Greater Horn of Africa Drought and Food Insecurity, Grade 3	NA	NA	21-May-23
It is estimated that about 11% of the population of Djibouti is acutely food insecure.						
Djibouti	Biological	Malaria	Ungraded	254 776	0	13-Feb-19
From January 2019 to September 2023, 254 776 confirmed malaria cases were reported. The highest peaks in confirmed cases were reported for the years 2020 (73 535 cases) and 2021 (59 176), with a marked decrease in confirmed cases in 2022 (40 542). In total, 32 121 confirmed cases were reported from January to September 2023. Malaria reporting in Djibouti is under revision to consolidate various sources of data.						
Djibouti	Biological	Measles	Ungraded	12	NA	26-Jun-22
As at 15 February 2023, 12 suspected measles cases had been reported, two of which were confirmed. All confirmed cases originated from the Djibouti region, while most of the suspected cases were reported from Dikhil.						
Egypt	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	7 629 667	146 892	16-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 516 023 COVID-19 cases had been reported, with 24 830 deaths. A total of 12 645 544 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Egypt	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	3	0	27-Sep-22
As at 6 March 2024, three mpox cases had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 12 December 2022.						
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	7 629 667	146 892	19-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 7 629 667 COVID-19 cases had been reported, with 146 892 deaths.						
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Biological	Malaria	Ungraded	4425	1013	11-Dec-22
As of 2022, malaria cases have shown an increasing trend, with 4425 reported cases, of which 1013 were locally transmitted. The reported cases were primarily concentrated around the border area in the Sistan and Baluchestan province of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Balochistan province of Pakistan, an area currently facing a malaria outbreak. The surge in cases may be attributed to increased cross-border movement.						
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Biological	Measles	Ungraded	32	3	8-Jun-21
In 2022, a measles outbreak was reported in the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite the disease's elimination in the country in 2019. Since the outbreak began, 32 cases and three associated deaths have been reported. The outbreak, especially in the Sistan and Baluchestan province, is linked to the ongoing measles outbreak in neighbouring Pakistan.						
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	1	0	18-Aug-22
As at 6 March 2024, only one mpox case had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 18 August 2023.						
Iraq	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	7 629 667	146 892	24-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 2 465 545 COVID-19 cases had been reported, with 25 375 deaths. A total of 19 550 473 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Iraq	Biological	Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever	Iraq Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever, Grade 2	74	1	21-Apr-22
As at week 9 of 2024, 74 suspected Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever cases had been reported, with one death. Among the suspected cases four have been confirmed.						

Ongoing public health events and emergencies

As at 20 March 2024

Member State/territory	Hazard	Event	WHO grade	Cases/injuries	Deaths	Date of start
Iraq	Biological	Measles	Iraq Complex Emergencies, Protracted 2	3655	2	19-Apr-23
From 1 January to 6 February 2024, 3655 measles cases were reported, with an incidence rate of 84 cases per 1 000 000 population, and two deaths. Iraq's health ministry will conduct a measles, mumps and rubella vaccination campaign for children aged under 5 years in schools in high-risk areas and populations. It will also enhance measles surveillance and conduct awareness and community engagement campaigns on measles.						
Jordan	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	1 746 997	14 122	2-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 1 746 997 COVID-19 cases had been reported, with 14 122 deaths. A total of 17 201 885 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Jordan	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	1	0	11-Sep-22
As at 6 March 2024, only one mpox case had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 8 September 2022.						
Kuwait	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	667 177	2570	24-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 667 177 COVID-19 cases had been reported, with 2570 deaths. A total of 8 455 743 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Lebanon	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	1 239 904	10 947	22-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 1 239 904 COVID-19 cases had been reported, with 10 947 deaths. A total of 10 696 009 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Lebanon	Biological	Measles	Ungraded	14	0	4-Jul-23
From 4 January to 6 March 2024, 14 suspected measles cases, with two confirmed cases, were reported.						
Lebanon	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	27	0	20-Jun-22
As at 6 March 2024, 27 mpox cases had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 9 March 2023.						
Libya	Societal	Armed conflict	Libya Complex Emergencies, Protracted 2	NA	NA	2-Sep-18
A state of emergency was announced by the government on 2 September 2018 and there have been on-and-off conflicts since then, and into 2024. Since August 2023, however, no major armed conflicts have been reported.						
Libya	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	507 269	6437	25-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 507 269 confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported, with 6437 deaths (case fatality ratio: 1.3%).						
Libya	Meteorological	Cataclysmic storm	Libya Tropical Storm, Grade 2	NA	5898	12-Sep-23
On 11 September 2023, heavy rains and flooding hit Libya, which caused extensive damage, especially in Derna city, displacing more than 44 800 residents and leading to 5898 fatalities. Emergency response teams used 182 sentinel sites for daily data sharing from the flood-hit areas, which reported 11 226 suspected cases of infectious diseases/medical conditions, including two associated deaths. More than 96% of the cases were either respiratory infections or diarrhoea. On 1 February 2024, the Libyan government declared a state of emergency in the city of Zliten, following a rise in groundwater levels, which, if not addressed, would worsen the damage caused by Tropical Storm Daniel.						
Libya	Biological	Measles	Libya Complex Emergencies, Protracted 2	1962	1	16-Mar-23
A measles outbreak has been spreading in Libya since early 2023, affecting six districts. Sabha has been the most affected district. As at week 49 of 2023, 1962 suspected measles and rubella cases had been reported, among which 251 measles cases and 196 rubella cases were confirmed, with one associated death. Since then and as at 7 February 2024, reporting of data has been intermittent.						
Morocco	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	1 277 956	16 298	3-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 1 277 956 COVID-19 cases and 16 298 deaths had been reported. A total of 13 068 242 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Morocco	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	3	0	2-Jun-22
As at 6 March 2024, three mpox cases had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 20 August 2022.						

Ongoing public health events and emergencies

As at 20 March 2024

Member State/territory	Hazard	Event	WHO grade	Cases/injuries	Deaths	Date of start
Occupied Palestinian territory	Societal	Armed conflict	Israel/occupied Palestinian territory Hostilities, Grade 3	71 920	30 534	7-Oct-23
From 7 October 2023 to 3 March 2024, the ongoing war in the occupied Palestinian territory had killed 30 534 people and injured 71 920 people in the Gaza Strip. About 1.7 million people had been internally displaced by the same date.						
Occupied Palestinian territory	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	703 228	5708	12-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 703 228 COVID-19 cases, with 5708 deaths had been reported. A total of 3 477 872 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Oman	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	399 449	4628	24-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 399 449 COVID-19 cases and 4628 deaths had been reported. A total of 3 737 036 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Pakistan	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	1 580 631	30 656	27-Feb-20
As at 6 March 2024, 1 580 631 COVID-19 cases and 30 656 deaths had been reported. A total of 31 656 354 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Pakistan	Biological	Cholera	Multi-region Cholera, Grade 3	106 895	0	17-Apr-22
According to the weekly Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response bulletin of the National Institute of Health of Pakistan, the country reported 106 895 suspected cholera cases, including nine confirmed cases (all from Sindh), with no deaths, from 1 January to 6 March 2024.						
Pakistan	Biological	Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2)	Polio (cVDPV), Grade 2	0	0	12-Nov-19
As at 6 March 2024, zero cVDPV2 cases or environmental samples had been reported in Pakistan since 2022.						
Pakistan	Biological	Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever	Ungraded	19	4	12-Nov-23
As at 6 March 2024, 19 positive Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever cases had been reported – of which 18 were health workers – including four deaths.						
Pakistan	Biological	Dengue	Multi-region Dengue, Grade 3	716	0	9-Apr-23
From 1 January to 6 March 2024, 716 suspected dengue cases were reported. Most of the cases were reported from Sindh province.						
Pakistan	Biological	Diphtheria	Ungraded	85	0	2-Nov-23
From 1 January to 2 March 2024, 85 suspected diphtheria cases were reported, with no deaths. This marks a continued decline in cases since week 46 of 2023. In response to the outbreak, more than 1.9 million people across Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh provinces have received a diphtheria-containing vaccine.						
Pakistan	Disaster	Flood	Ungraded	NA	NA	3-Jun-24
From 25 February to 4 March 2024, relentless rainfall and snowfall affected western Pakistan, especially Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. The severe weather resulted in significant displacements and damages: in Balochistan, 9000 people were displaced and 43 fatalities recorded. Additionally, 1675 houses were destroyed across these three affected provinces.						
Pakistan	Biological	HIV/AIDS	Ungraded	5234	590	1-Jan-19
As at 31 December 2023, 5234 cases of HIV/AIDS had been registered in three hospitals, with 590 deaths (case fatality ratio: 11%). In 2023, 1255 cases were registered. The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean is analysing 2023 data, and the WHO Country Office in Pakistan is closely following the HIV/AIDS situation.						
Pakistan	Biological	Malaria	Ungraded	158 616	0	23-Sep-22
In January and February 2024, 158 616 confirmed malaria cases were reported, with no associated deaths. This represents a decrease in the 1 836 605 cases reported in the same period of 2023. The number of cases began to rise sharply in May 2023, and reached its highest level in August, and then steadily declined for the remainder of the year.						
Pakistan	Biological	Measles	Ungraded	13 628	NA	26-Jan-21
From week 1 to week 43 of 2023, 13 628 measles cases were reported, with an incidence rate of 57.78 cases per 1 000 000 population. Children aged 9 to 24 months accounted for 4801 of the cases (35%), while 4182 cases (31%) were children aged 25 to 60 months.						
Pakistan	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	7	0	21-Apr-23
As at 6 March 2024, seven mpox cases had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 21 September 2023.						

Ongoing public health events and emergencies

As at 20 March 2024

Member State/territory	Hazard	Event	WHO grade	Cases/injuries	Deaths	Date of start
Pakistan	Biological	Wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1)	Ungraded	6	0	16-Mar-23
Wild poliovirus is endemic in Pakistan, and instances are reported retrospectively. From 1 January 2023 to 6 February 2024, six confirmed cases were reported. WHO and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative are focusing on reaching every last child in Pakistan with vaccines, and strengthening surveillance and technical support at all levels.						
Qatar	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	514 524	690	1-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 514 524 COVID-19 cases and 690 deaths had been reported. A total of 31 656 354 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Qatar	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	5	0	25-Jul-22
As at 6 March 2024, five mpox cases had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 20 September 2022.						
Saudi Arabia	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	841 469	9646	3-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 841 469 COVID-19 cases, with 9646 deaths, had been reported. A total of 45 484 848 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Saudi Arabia	Biological	Dengue	Multi-region, Dengue Grade 3	2304	0	2-May-23
As at 1 January 2024, 2304 suspected dengue cases had been reported, of which 1470 were confirmed, with no reported deaths.						
Saudi Arabia	Biological	Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS)	Ungraded	2200	858	5-Nov-12
Since the first report of MERS in Saudi Arabia in 2012, the country has reported 2200 MERS cases in total, including 858 deaths. These figures are correct as at 6 March 2024.						
Saudi Arabia	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	8	0	17-Jul-22
As at 6 March 2024, eight mpox cases had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 30 August 2022.						
Somalia	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	27 334	1361	16-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 27 334 confirmed COVID-19 cases had been reported, with 1361 deaths, giving a case fatality ratio of 5%.						
Somalia	Biological	Cholera	Multi-region Cholera, Grade 3	2567	23	2-Aug-18
As at 11 February 2024, 2567 cholera cases had been reported, with 23 associated deaths. A total of 312 cases had been confirmed as <i>Vibrio cholerae</i> 01 Ogawa by culture. Banaadir region has seen a noticeable increase in the number of reported cases over the past two weeks.						
Somalia	Biological	Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2)	Polio (cVDPV), Grade 2	0	NA	18-Aug-20
From 1 January to 4 February 2024, no new cVDPV2 cases were reported.						
Somalia	Biological	Dengue	Multi-region Dengue, Grade 3	1863	NA	5-Oct-23
As at 30 November 2023, 1863 suspected dengue cases had been reported, of which 668 cases tested positive. The WHO Country Office in Somalia drafted a detailed work plan for dengue and other arbovirus infections. The activities will be implemented in an integrated approach since Somalia has adopted integrated disease surveillance and response.						
Somalia	Biological	Diphtheria	Somalia Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	385	62	29-Jan-24
As at 6 March 2024, 385 suspected diphtheria cases and 62 deaths had been reported.						
Somalia	Climatological	Drought	Greater Horn of Africa Drought and Food Insecurity, Grade 3	NA	118	2-Jun-22
The drought situation in Somalia is extremely serious. The country marked its fifth consecutive failed rainy season at the start of 2023. This has led to an acutely food-insecure population and the worsening of food security and nutrition outcomes, affecting more than 7.8 million people. Later in 2023, in October, Somalia finally experienced rain; however, this took the form of El Niño floods that hit the country. The flooding caused serious damage instead of improving the drought impacts. According to the Somali Disaster Management Agency, as at 10 December 2023, 2.48 million people had been affected by the drought, with 899 000 people displaced and 118 people killed across the country.						

Ongoing public health events and emergencies

As at 20 March 2024

Member State/territory	Hazard	Event	WHO grade	Cases/injuries	Deaths	Date of start
Somalia	Biological	Measles	Somalia Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	3795	NA	3-Sep-22
As at 6 March 2024, a total of 3795 suspected cases of measles were reported through the surveillance system in drought-affected districts.						
Sudan	Societal	Armed conflict	Sudan Conflict and Complex Emergency, Grade 3	NA	NA	22-Jan-21
Since the outbreak of the current conflict in Sudan in mid-April 2023 until 26 January 2024, at least 2510 people were killed and 27 661 injured, according to the Ministry of Health in Sudan. However, open-source media reported more than 14 600 deaths. Establishing the exact numbers of civilian casualties and injuries has been challenging.						
Sudan	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	63 993	5046	15-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 63 993 COVID-19 cases and 5046 deaths had been reported. A total of 479 278 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Sudan	Biological	Cholera	Multi-region Cholera, Grade 3	10 640	295	10-May-23
From 28 June 2023 to 7 February 2024, 10 640 cholera cases, including 295 deaths (case fatality ratio: 2.8%), were reported across nine states and 48 localities, with an attack rate of 47.5 per 100 000 population. Suspected cholera cases have shown a decreasing trend since the start of December 2023.						
Sudan	Biological	Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2)	Polio (cVDPV), Grade 2	0	0	8-Oct-20
As at December 2023, zero cVDPV2 cases had been reported in Sudan, compared with one case in 2022. There were also zero cVDPV2 positive environmental samples in 2023, compared with one such sample in 2022.						
Sudan	Biological	Dengue	Multi-region Dengue, Grade 3	5525	55	20-Oct-21
Since week 44 of 2023, 5525 dengue cases have been reported, with 55 deaths (case fatality ratio: 0.99%; attack rate: 3.9 cases per 10 000 population). Forty-four localities in 10 states have reported dengue cases. Gedaref state reported the highest share of cases (58%), followed by North Darfur (17%), North Kordofan (13%) and Kassala (7%).						
Sudan	Climatological	Drought	Greater Horn of Africa Drought and Food Insecurity, Grade 3	NA	NA	21-May-23
Prolonged dry spells and crop failures across 14 states in Sudan are affecting more than 5.6 million people. Over 22 million people – half of the Sudanese population – live in the 115 affected areas, and 3.1 million people need short- to long-term assistance. The ongoing war has triggered population displacement, which has led to acute food insecurity at levels higher than usual.						
Sudan	Biological	Malaria	Sudan Conflict and Complex Emergency, Grade 3	1 467 006	215	10-Sep-22
As at 10 November 2023, 1 467 006 malaria cases had been reported, with 215 deaths. Of the reported malaria deaths, 96% were in Gezira and North Darfur states.						
Sudan	Biological	Measles	Sudan Conflict and Complex Emergency, Grade 3	4039	107	1-Aug-21
Measles cases are reported from 12 states in Sudan, reaching 4039 cases and 107 deaths by 11 December 2023, giving a case fatality ratio of 2.65%.						
Sudan	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	19	1	31-Jul-22
As at 6 March 2024, 19 mpox cases and one death had been reported. The most recent case was reported on 5 April 2023.						
Syrian Arab Republic	Societal	Armed conflict	Syrian Arab Republic Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	NA	NA	27-Jun-18
The security situation within the Syrian Arab Republic remains unstable.						
Syrian Arab Republic	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	57 423	3163	23-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 57 423 COVID-19 cases and 3163 deaths had been reported. A total of 202 513 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						

Ongoing public health events and emergencies

As at 20 March 2024

Member State/territory	Hazard	Event	WHO grade	Cases/injuries	Deaths	Date of start
Syrian Arab Republic	Biological	Tuberculosis	Syrian Arab Republic Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	10	0	5-Dec-23
On 10 September 2023, a cluster of 10 tuberculosis cases, with 20 contacts, was reported from Al-Hasakah governorate. Of the 10 cases, six were confirmed and four were suspected. Confirmed cases received treatment, while the suspected cases and contacts received preventive treatment. As at 10 December 2023, no new tuberculosis cases had since been reported.						
Tunisia	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	1 153 361	29 423	2-Mar-20
As at 6 March 2024, 1 153 361 COVID-19 cases and 29 423 deaths had been reported. A total of 5 013 383 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
United Arab Emirates	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	1 067 030	2349	29-Jan-20
As at 6 March 2024, 1 067 030 COVID-19 cases and 2349 deaths had been reported. A total of 200 761 593 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
United Arab Emirates	Biological	Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS)	Ungraded	1	0	10-Jul-23
On 10 July 2023, a 28-year-old male MERS-CoV case was reported in the United Arab Emirates. Investigation revealed no camel or sick person contact. Immediate actions included contact tracing, incident reporting and notifying relevant authorities.						
United Arab Emirates	Biological	Mpox	Mpox, Protracted 2	16	0	25-May-22
As at 6 March 2024, 16 mpox cases had been reported, with no deaths. The most recent case was reported on 24 July 2022.						
Yemen	Biological	COVID-19	COVID-19, Protracted 3	11 945	2159	10-Apr-20
As at 6 March 2024, 11945 COVID-19 cases and 2159 deaths had been reported. A total of 329 592 PCR tests had been conducted by the same date.						
Yemen	Biological	Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1 (cVDPV1)	Polio (cVDPV), Grade 2	0	0	29-May-20
As at 6 March 2024, there was no evidence of cVDPV1 in the country. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative and partners are supporting the local public health authorities in field investigation and field monitoring.						
Yemen	Biological	Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2)	Polio (cVDPV), Grade 2	5	0	30-Nov-21
From 1 January to 3 March 2024, five cVDPV2 cases were reported.						
Yemen	Biological	Dengue	Multi-region Dengue, Grade 3	3131	2	25-Jan-24
From week 1 to week 8 of 2024, 3131 dengue cases and two deaths were reported (case fatality ratio: 0.06%). Of the cases, 62% were males, with most cases in the age group 15–29 (30.6%). A total of 3080 rapid diagnostic tests were performed. Of which, 433 were positive (14% positivity rate). The most affected areas are Al Hudaydah (43.6%), Taiz (14.1%), Abyan (9.7%), Shabwa (9.4%), and Hajjah (6.9%). The outbreak in Sa'adah Governorate has been resolved.						
Yemen	Biological	Diphtheria	Ungraded	318	9	25-Jan-24
By week 8 of 2024, 318 suspected diphtheria cases, including nine deaths, had been reported from the northern and southern governorates. This marks a significant increase on the 265 cases reported in the same period of 2023. Most of these cases (70%) in 2024 were reported from northern Yemen: particularly Abyan, Al Hudaydah, Dhamar, Hajjah and Taiz, with Al Hudaydah alone accounting for 16.4% of all cases. About 75% of the total cases have been clinically diagnosed, yet a concerning 77.6% of affected individuals have not been vaccinated.						
Yemen	Biological	Measles	Yemen Complex Emergencies, Protracted 3	7514	7	29-Mar-21
By week 8 of 2024, 7514 suspected measles cases and seven deaths had been reported. This shows a slight year-on-year decrease from the 7905 cases reported in the same period of 2023. The case fatality ratio stands at 0.09%, with an attack rate of 24.4 cases per 100 000 population. Northern Yemen remains the most affected region, accounting for 69.2% of the reported cases, with the highest incidences in Al Hudaydah, Amran, Lahj, Sa'ada and Taiz.						



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Data and information are provided by Member States through WHO country offices. Situations are evolving and dynamic, therefore the figures stated herein are subject to change.

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