

Current major event

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

As of 15 August 2009, a total of 2,802 laboratory-confirmed cases of Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 were reported to WHO Regional Office by 20 out of 22 Member States of WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region. There are 8 reported deaths from five countries in the Region (Egypt-1; Iraq-1; Lebanon-1; Qatar-1; and Saudi Arabia-4).

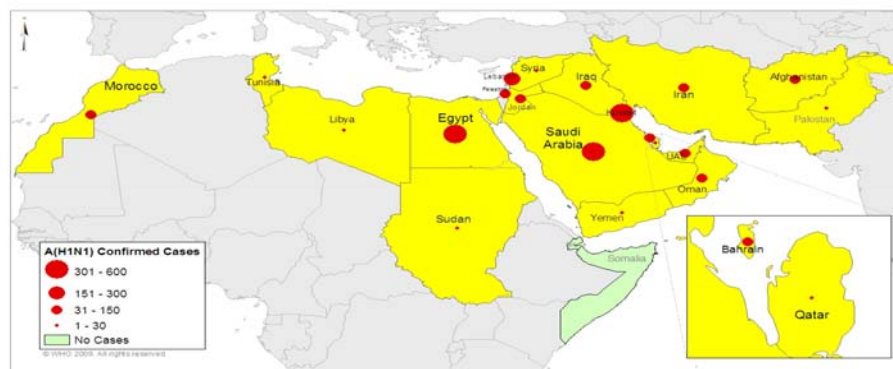
Editorial note

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 has now been reported from 20 out of 22 countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR). Local transmission of cases were reported from at-least 11 of these 20 countries. Although the case counts no longer reflect actual disease activity, the progress of the pandemic in the EMR needs to be actively monitored through regular analysis of epidemiological, clinical and virological data to the extent possible.

Our understanding of the disease continues to evolve as new countries become affected, as community-level spread extends in already affected countries and as information is shared regionally as well as globally. Many countries with widespread community transmission have moved to testing only selected laboratory samples and have shifted surveillance efforts to monitoring and reporting of trends.

Given the current situation in many of the EMR countries where local transmission of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 has either been of limited nature or wide spread, the countries may start preparing to shift its surveillance efforts to monitor influenza activity using some quantitative as well as qualitative indicators. This may be of particular relevance in view of the coming winter season where a new wave of pandemic influenza is expected owing to the co-circulation of both seasonal and pandemic (H1N1) 2009 virus.

EMR Countries with laboratory-confirmed cases of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 infection



Countries in the EMR reporting in-country transmission of Pandemic (H1N1) 2009

Country	Date of reporting	Total cases	Locally acquired cases
Lebanon	30/05/09	210	9
Egypt	02/06/09	314	5
Saudi Arabia	03/06/09	595	192
Palestine	10/06/09	80	48
Morocco	13/06/09	66	5
Jordan	16/06/09	99	29
Qatar	16/06/09	23	4
Bahrain	26/05/09	83	16
Oman	18/06/09	123	56
Iran	02/06/09	144	56
Libya	04/07/09	9	1

Quantitative data may be collected by countries from established sentinel sites for Influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infection. In addition, other information sources may also be explored-like information on absenteeism from school or work related to ILI, information from out-patient or emergency department visits for respiratory complaints, etc. A qualitative assessment of influenza activity is also feasible for all EMR countries. This will involve an assessment of the geographical spread, the trend of influenza activity, the intensity of transmission and impact of the epidemic on health care services. As the pandemic situation continually changes, these information are vital for periodic risk assessment as well as for understanding the evolving situation.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Avian influenza A/H5N1 in Egypt; Hepatitis E in Sudan (south Kordofan state); Pandemic H1N1 2009 in Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen.

Current public health events of international concern

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

Avian influenza A/H5N1

Egypt	[83 (27), 32.5%]
Indonesia	[141 (115), 81.6%]
China	[38 (25), 65.8%]
Vietnam	[111(56), 50.5%]
Global total	438 (262), 59.8%

Influenza A(H1N1)

Global	[173,489 (1495), 0.86%]
EMR	[2802(8), 0.28%]

Bubonic Plague

Libya	[5(1), 20%]
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Hepatitis E

Sudan	[54 (2), 3.7%]
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CFR=Case-Fatality Rate