Weekly Regional Cholera Bulletin: 25 September 2023

Data reported: as of 24 September 2023
The cholera outbreak in the WHO African Region has affected 15 countries over the last two years. The trend across the region is being closely monitored and on the decline with some countries no longer have active outbreaks. As we are getting into the last months of the year, the seasonality of cholera outbreaks are issues for countries to consider and there is need to enhance preparedness and readiness, heighten surveillance and institute preventive and control measures in communities and around border crossings to prevent and mitigate cross border transmission.

In Epidemiologic week 38, eight countries Burundi, Cameroon, Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe reported a total of 688 new cases. Transmission is currently active in 13 countries with no recent report of new cases from Eswatini (last case reported April 18) and South Sudan (last case reported May 16).

Since 1 January 2022, a cumulative total of 241,606 cholera cases has been reported to the WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO), including 4,374 deaths with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 1.8% as of 24 September 2023 (Table 1). Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, and Nigeria account for 82.8% (199,976) of the cumulative cases and 80.0% (3,500) of all cumulative deaths reported.
Figure 1: Distribution of cholera cases and deaths in WHO African Region, 1 January 2022 — 24 September 2023
Table 1: Cholera Cases and Deaths in WHO African Region, 1 January 2022 to 24 September 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Cumulative cases</th>
<th>Cumulative deaths</th>
<th>CFR (%)</th>
<th>Date outbreak started</th>
<th>Last update</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>58 996</td>
<td>1 768</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Mar-22</td>
<td>17-Sep-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>55 715</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<td>17-Sep-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
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<td>Sep-22</td>
<td>24-Sep-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>26 104</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Jan-22</td>
<td>24-Sep-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
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<td>326</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Aug-22</td>
<td>21-Sep-23</td>
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<td>Cameroon</td>
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<td>465</td>
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<td>24-Sep-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
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<td>24-Sep-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
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<td>112</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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<td>24-Sep-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Sudan</td>
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<td>16-May-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>47</td>
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<td>31-Aug-23</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>Jan-23</td>
<td>24-Sep-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Jan-23</td>
<td>24-Sep-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Republic of Tanzania</td>
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<td>1.9</td>
<td>Feb-23</td>
<td>15-Sep-23</td>
</tr>
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<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>Jul-23</td>
<td>1-Sep-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Congo</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>22-Jul-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Kingdom of Eswatini</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Mar-23</td>
<td>23-Jul-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>241 606</strong></td>
<td><strong>4 374</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.8</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Country Specific updates

As of 24 September 2023, a cumulative total of 1,015 cases and nine deaths (CFR 0.9%) were reported from Burundi. The number of new cases has been on an increasing trend in the past five weeks. In week 38 new cases increased by 8% from 93 new cases in week 37 to 100 new cases. This is the first time Burundi is recording up to a hundred new cases in one week since the beginning of the outbreak. There has been no death reported since week 24. The administrative areas that have recorded the most cases since the start of the epidemic are Gatumba (DS Isare), Gihosha (DS Bujumbura Nord), Rukana II (DS Cibitoke), Buterere I (DS Bujumbura Nord) and Kinyinya II (DS Isare), with 144, 104, 80, 71 and 48 confirmed cases respectively.

Burundi has reported cholera cases since 8 December 2022, and the outbreak was officially declared on 1 January 2023.
Figure 3: Epicurve of cases and deaths in Burundi as of 24 September 2023

Figure 4: Map of Burundi showing cholera affected areas from October 2022 to 24 September 2023
Cameroon reported a 32% decrease in new cases in week 38 with 108 new cases compared to 158 cases in week 37. New deaths however increased by 400% with five deaths reported in week 38 compared to one death in the previous week. Cumulatively, from 1 January 2022 to 24 September 2023, Cameroon has reported 20,022 cases with 465 deaths (CFR = 2.3%). As part of the response, essential commodities were delivered to the cholera treatment centre (CTC) of Tiko and to the police academy.

**Figure 5: Epicurve of cholera cases in Cameroon from October 2021 to 24 September 2023**

![Epicurve of cholera cases in Cameroon](image)

**Figure 6: Map of cholera cases in Cameroon from October 2021 to 24 September 2023**

![Map of cholera cases in Cameroon](image)
The outbreak in Ethiopia is currently active in nine regions. As of week 38, reported new cases increased by 63%. As of 21 September 2023, Ethiopia reported a cumulative case total of 24,503 with 326 deaths (CFR = 1.3%). Report of cholera cases transmission from Ethiopia to the WHO African regional office is improving, however there are still significant gaps in reporting e.g., there are no reports from Amhara region due to ongoing conflict.

Figure 7: Epicurve of Cholera outbreak in Ethiopia from October 2022 to 08 September 2023

Public Health Actions
- As of 24 September 2023 a total of 4,427,125 persons from various regions in Oromia, SNNP, Sidama, Somali, and Amhara were successfully vaccinated against cholera, spread across 54 districts.
- Training was conducted for 99 persons in high-risk Arba Minch Zuriya Woreda to promote household focused interventions for cholera and other public health emergency prevention measures.

Challenges/Gaps
- Insecurity in Amhara and Oromia regions have affected field response operations.
- Low risk perception (risk susceptibility and severity) and adherence of preventive measures at individual and community.
As of 24 September 2023, a cumulative total of 12,117 cases have been reported since the onset of the outbreak with 202 deaths (CFR=1.7%). As part of the response activities, Integrated Case Management and surveillance training was conducted in three counties. There was also distribution of Interagency Health kit supplies to 17 counties and water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies to six counties. The country also developed a draft preparedness and response plan for El Nino.

Figure 8: Epicurve of cholera cases in Kenya from October 2021 to 24 September 2023

As of 17 September 2023, Malawi has reported a cumulative total of 58,996 cases since the onset of the outbreak from all the 29 affected districts of the country. The cumulative number of deaths remains at 1,768 with a case fatality ratio of 3.0%. An after action review is planned for 2 to 6 October 2023.

Figure 9: Epi Curve for cholera outbreak in Malawi, 3 March 2022 – 10 September 2023
As of 24 September 2023, the country had reported a cumulative total of 34,658 cases, with 144 deaths (CFR 0.4%). New cases decreased in week 38 by 26% to 94 cases. The last cholera fatality to date was reported during week 32. At present, there are two active provinces, namely Nampula and Cabo Delgado. As part of the response efforts, regular cross-border meetings with Malawi are being conducted.

**Figure 10: Epicurve of cholera outbreak in Mozambique, September 2022 to 24 September 2023**

**Figure 11: Map of Mozambique showing cholera affected areas as of 24 September 2023**
There have been no new cases reported since week 35. As of 1 September 2023, Uganda had reported a cumulative total of 81 suspected cases and 10 deaths (CFR=12.3%).

On 27 July 2023, the Ministry of Health had confirmed Cholera outbreak in Namayingo and Kayunga districts.

**Figure 12: Epicurve of cholera outbreak in Uganda as of 10 September 2023**

A new cholera outbreak was reported in Nsama district in the northern province on 10 August 2023. Before this, Nsama district had reported 73 cases during the previous outbreak which ended on 9 April 2023.

Cumulatively this year, as of 24 September 2023, there have been 939 reported cases and 19 deaths (CFR = 2.0%). In week 38, new cases decreased by 57% from 21 cases in week 37 to 9 new cases. No death was reported in both weeks 37 and 38. Response actions are ongoing with national stakeholder engagement to supplement provincial efforts in addressing the situation in Nsama District.
Figure 13: Epicurve of cholera cases and deaths in Zambia as of 24 September 2023

Figure 14: Map of Zambia showing cholera affected provinces as of 24 September 2023

Public Health Actions

- Enhanced water sanitation and hygiene interventions including distribution of domestic chlorine and water quality monitoring.
- Geo mapping of cases, water resources and ORPs in the district to inform a targeted response.
- Conducted oral Cholera vaccination intra campaign on 25 September 2023

Challenges/Gaps

- Inadequate laboratory supplies, risk communication information education materials and reagents for water quality monitoring.
As of 24 September 2023, cumulative cholera cases reported from the 10 provinces of the country were 4 106 with 112 deaths (CFR 2.7%). During week 38, there was a 164% increase in cases from 44 new cases in week 37 to 116 cases. Deaths increased by 450% from two deaths in week 37 to 11 deaths in week 38. The three provinces with the highest number of cumulative cases are Manicaland (1 656), Harare (1 616), and Mat South (351) which account for 88% (3 623 cases). The outbreak in Zimbabwe started on 12 February 2023 in Chegutu town, Mashonaland West Province.

Figure 15: Epicurve of Cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe as of 24 September 2023

Figure 16: Map of Zimbabwe showing cholera affected provinces as of 24 September 2023
As of 17 September 2023, the country had reported 55,715 cumulative cases, with 603 deaths (CFR = 1.1%) across 12 affected provinces. In week 37, there were 891 new cases with 11 deaths reported. The Congolese government scheduled the launch of the National Cholera Plan 2023-2027 (PMSEC 2023-2027) for October 14, 2023. WHO has provided more than 15 tonnes of cholera kits for the care of patients in Tanganyika province, South and North Kivu currently in epidemic.

Figure 17: Epicurve of cases and deaths in Democratic Republic of the Congo as of 17 September 2023

As of 31 August 2023, South Africa reported a total of 1,388 suspected cases, with 47 deaths (CFR=3.4%) from six provinces – Gauteng, Free State, North-West, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. KwaZulu-Natal province recorded the third imported case of cholera as notified by the Ministry of Health on 25 July 2023.

Cholera readiness training workshops have been conducted in all nine provinces. An After-Action Review Meeting was also conducted for the Kanana cholera treatment unit.

The cholera outbreak in the country has been ongoing since January 2022. As of 24 September 2023, there was a cumulative total of 26,104 with 65 deaths (CFR = 2.5%).
Figure 18: Epicurve of cases and deaths in Nigeria as of 24 September 2023

The cumulative number of cases from the country since 22 January to 15 September 2023 are 426 and eight deaths with a CFR= 1.9%. New cases were reported from Arusha, Mara and Kigoma regions. This followed the last confirmed case on 25 July 2023.

Conclusion

The cholera outbreaks in the African Region have occurred in the context of natural disasters such as flooding (Mozambique, Malawi), drought (Kenya and Ethiopia), conflict (Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Ethiopia) and multiple disease outbreaks including Mpox, wild polio, measles, COVID-19, etc. Many countries have limited and strained resources, shortage of medical commodities, including cholera kits and Oral Cholera Vaccine (OCV). Poor sanitation and unreliable water supplies with increased cross-border movements continue to serve as driving factors for the outbreak across the region.

WHO ACTIVITIES

Readiness:

• 23 countries have been prioritized for cholera readiness
• Ongoing collection of data using the updated web-based cholera readiness assessment tool
• Developed and rolled out a tracking tool for monitoring framework for the implementation of the global strategy for cholera prevention and control, 2018-2030 across the countries.
total of 524 RRTs trained across all the nine provinces of South Africa to build capacity for preparedness and readiness and to develop a national cholera plan for the country.

- Supported Malawi to Conduct the identification of Priority Areas for Multisectoral Interventions (PAMIs/Hotspots).
- Support ongoing development and mid-term review of National Cholera Plan for South Sudan and Zambia respectively.
- Ongoing support to countries on cholera readiness particularly those approaching the cholera season in Southern Africa.
- Conducted comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Regional Framework for the implementation of the global strategy for cholera prevention and control, 2018-2030.

Response:

- The AFRO Cholera Incident Management Support Team maintains tele-conference meetings with all AFRO countries in response for coordination and provision of technical guidance.
- Ongoing technical and financial support to countries for cholera response interventions.
- Strengthening cross-border collaborations on cholera surveillance.
- Ongoing deployments to countries as requested by countries.
- Provision of essential medical supplies and cholera Kits to all countries in outbreak.
- Strengthening of response and technical inputs on training across all response pillars.
- Technical support to countries on vaccination strategies for reactive OCV campaigns.
- Capacity building of country teams including through webinars.

For additional information, please contact

Incident Manager Regional Cholera IMST:

RAMADAN Otim Patrick
e-mail: ramadano@who.int