Cholera in the WHO African Region

Weekly Regional Cholera Bulletin: 23 October 2023

Data reported: as of 22 October 2023

Situation update

Overview

The cholera outbreak in the WHO African Region has affected 16 countries over the last two years. The trend across the region is being closely monitored and on the decline with some countries no longer having 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 42, nine countries Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe reported a total of 1 187 new cases. Transmission is currently active in 13 countries out of 16 affected countries with no recent report of new cases from Eswatini (last case reported April 18), Republic of the Congo (last case reported 26 July) and South Sudan (last case reported May 16).

Since 1 January 2022, a cumulative total of 250 204 cholera cases has been reported to the WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO), including 4 542 deaths with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 1.8% as of 22 October 2023 (Table 1). Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, and Nigeria account for 82.5% (206 368) of the cumulative cases and 79.6% (3 617) of all cumulative deaths reported.
Figure 1: Distribution of cholera cases and deaths in WHO African Region, 1 January 2022—15 October 2023

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.

Legend
Cholera cases and deaths
- Cases (alive)
- Deaths

Proportion of the total
- 0.001% - 0.996%
- 0.996% - 4.911%
- 4.912% - 10.578%
- 10.579% - 14.166%
- 14.166% - 23.925%

Boundaries
- Non-affected countries
- Not applicable

Map production date: 12/06/2023
Data source: Modis in WHO-AFRO
Health Information and Risk Assessment Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Office for Africa
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<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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>59 771</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Jan-22</td>
<td>15-Oct-23</td>
</tr>
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<td>Malawi</td>
<td>59 055</td>
<td>1 769</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Mar-22</td>
<td>22-Oct-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>35 161</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Sep-22</td>
<td>22-Oct-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>26 304</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Jan-22</td>
<td>15-Oct-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>26 077</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Aug-22</td>
<td>22-Oct-23</td>
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<td>Cameroon</td>
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<td>471</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Jan-22</td>
<td>22-Oct-23</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
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<td>16-Oct-23</td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>Feb-23</td>
<td>22-Oct-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Sudan</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>Feb-23</td>
<td>16-May-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>47</td>
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<td>Feb-23</td>
<td>31-Aug-23</td>
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<td>Burundi</td>
<td>1 218</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Jan-23</td>
<td>22-Oct-23</td>
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<td>Zambia</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>18-Oct-23</td>
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<td>Feb-23</td>
<td>22-Oct-23</td>
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<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>1-Sep-23</td>
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<td>Republic of the Congo</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>Jul-23</td>
<td>26-Jul-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Kingdom of Eswatini</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Mar-23</td>
<td>23-Jul-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>250 204</strong></td>
<td><strong>4 542</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.8</strong></td>
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</table>
Country Specific updates

As of 15 October 2023, a cumulative total of 1,218 cases and nine deaths (CFR 0.7%) were reported from Burundi. In week 42, new cases decreased by 52% from 48 new cases in week 41 to 23 new cases. 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 Mparambo I (DS Cibitoke) with 144, 108, 84, 83 and 65 confirmed cases respectively.

Burundi has reported cholera cases since 8 December 2022, and the outbreak was officially declared on 1 January 2023.
In week 42 there was a 25% decrease in new cases reported with 52 new cases compared to 69 cases in week 41. There were three new deaths in week 42. The last reported death was in week 39. Cumulatively, from 1 January 2022 to 22 October 2023, Cameroon has reported 20,364 cases with 471 deaths (CFR = 2.3%).

Figure 5: Epicurve of cholera cases in Cameroon from October 2021 to 22 October 2023.
Figure 6: Map of cholera cases in Cameroon from October 2021 to 22 October 2023

**Public Health Actions**
- Prepositioned 2,900 cholera rapid diagnostic test kits (RDTs) to the Far North region for pre-positioning in the districts bordering Nigeria.
- Implemented case area targeted intervention (CATI) Tombel district which also had 75 persons vaccinated.
- Vaccinated 7,900 people at the Minawao transit camp with all new arrivals systematically vaccinated.
- Conducted webinar on the national cholera development and vaccination plan.
- Conducted cholera community awareness in health districts in Wouri, Nylon, Deido, Bonasama, Boko, Newbell and Logbaba with 8,675 people educated on water purification and hygiene measures.

**Challenges/Gaps**
- Low risk perception among the public.
- Inadequate resources for the response
As of 22 October 2023, Ethiopia reported a cumulative case total of 26,077 with 356 deaths (CFR = 1.4%). The outbreak is currently active in nine regions and 106 Woredas across the country. As of week 42, reported new cases increased by 1% to 418 new cases from 414 new cases. There was one death reported in week 41. The outbreak is controlled in 148 woredas in Amhara (19), Afar (2), CER (17), Dire Dawa (1), Harari (1), Oromia (71), Ser (22), Sidama (11) and Somali (6) regions.

Figure 7: Epicurve of Cholera outbreak in Ethiopia from October 2022 to 22 October 2023

As of 16 October 2023, a cumulative total of 12,121 cases have been reported since the onset of the outbreak with 202 deaths (CFR=1.7%). The first wave that began in Oct of 2022 was controlled with last case reported on 19 September 2023 (epi week 38). New case with date of onset of index case on 6 October 2023 (epi week 40) was detected with four new cases reported, and no death have been reported from Hagadera refugee camp located within the Dadaab refugee complex in Garissa County.

Figure 8: Epicurve of cholera cases in Kenya from October 2021 to 16 October 2023
A cumulative total of 59,055 cases have been reported since the onset of the outbreak from all the 29 districts of the country. In week 42 new cases decreased by 18% from 17 new cases in week 41 to 14 new cases. There was one death reported in week 42. Prior to this new death, the last reported death was in week 37. The cumulative number of deaths is now 1,769 with a case fatality ratio of 3.0%.

Figure 9: Epi Curve for cholera outbreak in Malawi, 3 March 2022 – 22 October 2023

Figure 10: Map for cholera outbreak in Malawi, 3 March 2022 – 22 October 2023
As of 22 October 2023, the country had reported a cumulative total of 35,161 cases, with 147 deaths (CFR 0.4%). New cases increased in week 42 by 45% to 206 cases from 142 new cases in the previous week. There was a 50% decrease in new deaths from two new deaths in week 41 to one death. As part of the response activities in the Nampula province, oral cholera vaccination campaign was conducted in five districts (Mutauanha, Murrapaniua, Muatala, Muavire, and Carrupeia) with 513,827 persons targeted.

Figure 11: Epicurve of cholera outbreak in Mozambique, September 2022 to 22 October 2023

Figure 12: Map of Mozambique showing cholera affected areas as of 22 October 2023
Cumulatively this year, as of 18 October 2023, there have been 961 reported cases and 20 deaths (CFR = 2.1%). In week 42, new cases increased by 300% from one case in week 41 to four new cases. One new death was reported in week 42. The last death was reported in week 37. Response actions are ongoing with national stakeholder engagement to supplement provincial efforts in addressing the situation in Nsama District.

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.

Figure 13: Epicurve of cholera cases and deaths in Zambia as of 18 October 2023

As of 22 October 2023, cumulative cholera cases reported from the ten provinces of the country were 5 387 with 151 deaths (CFR 2.8%). During week 42, there was a 69% increase in cases from 244 new cases in week 41 to 413 cases. Deaths however decreased by 76% from 17 deaths in week 41 to four deaths in week 42. The three provinces with the highest number of cumulative cases are Manicaland (2 547), Harare (1 657), and Masvingo (406) which account for 86% (4 610 cases). A five member team of experts will be deployed from the WHO AFRO regional office to support the response. The outbreak in Zimbabwe started on 12 February 2023 in Chegutu town, Mashonaland West Province.
The last update was as of 15 October 2023, the country had reported 59,771 cumulative cases, with 677 deaths (CFR = 1.1%) across 12 affected provinces. In week 41, there were 649 new cases with no death reported. WHO has provided more than 15 tonnes of cholera kits for the care of patients in Tanganyika province, South and North Kivu currently in outbreak.
The cumulative number of cases from the country since 22 January to 22 October 2023 are 780 and 13 deaths with a CFR = 1.7%. In week 42 cases decreased by 32% from 82 cases in week 41 to 56 new cases. There was no death in week 41 and 42. New cases were reported from Arusha, Mara and Kigoma regions. This new outbreak began after the last confirmed case on 25 July 2023. As part of the response activities, total of 420 Aqua tabs distributed to 12 households visited in Mara. In Arusha, 320 household supplied with aqua tablet in 10 wards. There has been inadequate multi sectorial meeting in Arusha region as a challenge in the response.
The cholera outbreak in the country has been ongoing since January 2022. As of 15 October 2023, there was a cumulative total of 26,304 cases with 668 deaths (CFR = 2.5%).

Nigeria

Grade 3

Cumulative Cases: 26,304
Cumulative Deaths: 668
CFR: 2.5%
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.

The last update was 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.

**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:

- 203 countries prioritized for cholera readiness.
- Collection of data using the updated web-based cholera readiness assessment tool is ongoing.
- Tracking tool for monitoring framework for the implementation of the global strategy for cholera prevention and control, 2018-2030 has been developed and rolled out across the countries.
- Training of 524 RRTs 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.
- The identification of Priority Areas for Multisectoral Interventions (PAMIs/Hotspots) in Malawi has been conducted.
- Development and mid-term review of National Cholera Plan for South Sudan and Zambia respectively is ongoing.
- Cholera readiness particularly in those countries approaching the cholera season in Southern Africa is ongoing.
- Comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Regional Framework for the implementation of the global strategy for cholera prevention and control, 2018-2030 has been conducted.

Response:

- Coordination and provision of technical guidance by the Cholera Incident Management Support Team of the WHO AFRO through tele-conference meetings with all AFRO countries in response is ongoing.
- Technical and financial support to countries for cholera response interventions is ongoing.
- Cross-border collaborations on cholera surveillance has been strengthened.
- Deployment of additional staff to countries as requested by countries is ongoing.
- Provision of essential medical supplies and cholera Kits to all countries in outbreak.
- Response and technical inputs on training across all response pillars has been strengthened.
- Technical support to countries on vaccination strategies for reactive OCV campaigns is ongoing. Capacity building of country teams including through webinars is ongoing.
For additional information, please contact

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Photo: Sensitization of school children to be influencers and agents of positive behavior change communication in Malawi 2023