

Current major events

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Virus Infection in Afghanistan

In recent weeks, Afghanistan reported a surge in cases from pandemic (H1N1) 2009 virus infection. The outbreak first started in Afghanistan on 3 July 2009 when the first laboratory-confirmed case was reported in the multi-national forces. However, the first case amongst the civilian population was reported on 28 October 2009 and till 07 November 2009, the outbreak spread to 7 out of 34 provinces in the country with 772 laboratory-confirmed cases and 11 deaths. Of these, 69 cases have been reported in the civilian population, 313 cases in the foreign military personnel and 390 cases were reported in the Afghan national armed forces personnel. Of the 11 deaths reported so far, 3 deaths were reported in the Afghan military personnel and the remaining 8 deaths were reported in the civilian population.

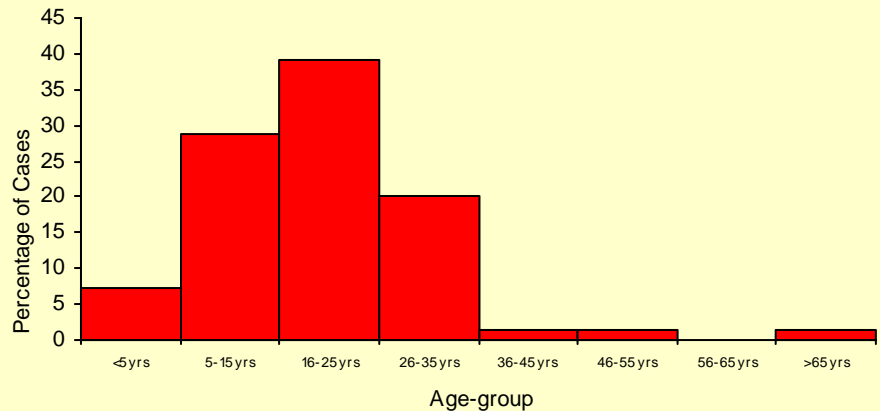
Editorial note

The Ministry of Public Health in Afghanistan reported the first cases of pandemic H1N1 2009 in the country's civil population on 28 October 2009. Within the last ten days, the number of cases among the civil population in Afghanistan has reached 69 including 8 civilian deaths. The pandemic has, now been, reported from 7 out of 34 provinces of the Country.

The MOPH requested WHO's assistance for antiviral drugs and vaccines. In the beginning of this pandemic, WHO has supplied Afghanistan with some 30,000 doses of antiviral drugs and is planning to send some 10,000 doses more. Afghanistan is also targeted to benefit from the vaccine donations that will be distributed through WHO.

The sudden upsurge in the number of cases of pandemic H1N1 2009 in Afghanistan, and the report of the first laboratory confirmed cases of pandemic H1N1 2009 in Somalia, brings to the fore the challenges facing us in controlling pandemic influenza in a complex emergency situation. In Afghanistan, the government has reacted by closing

Age distribution of laboratory-confirmed cases of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 reported from Afghanistan (n=69)



Geographic distribution of H1N1 cases in Afghanistan

Province	Total	Male	Female
Kabul	446	435	11
Balkh	1	0	1
Parwan	272	272	0
Herat	15	9	6
Bamyan	1	1	0
Kandahar	32	32	0
Jalalabad	5	5	0
Total	772	754	18

all educational institutions in the country as a mitigation measure to slow down the spread of the pandemic in the country.

The situation in Afghanistan should be a cause for concern. The winter season has just started and it is predicted to be severe this year. This will have a direct impact on the dynamics of the pandemic and will compound the poor accessibility to health services in the country.

Early treatment with standardized care and protocolized treatment for severe cases of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 infection in Afghanistan will be very challenging but will remain the corner stone for reducing avoidable deaths from severe infection. The country has no functional intensive care unit or respirators. Emphasis for control should focus on community mitigation measures, early treatment with antiviral drugs for those at risk of complication and vaccination, which Afghanistan cannot afford alone.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 in 22 out of 22 countries in EMR.

Cholera in Afghanistan

Current public health events of international concern

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

Avian influenza

Egypt	[87 (27), 31%]
Indonesia	[141 (115), 81.6%]
China	[38 (25), 65.8%]
Vietnam	[111(56), 50.5%]
Global total	442 (262), 59.2%

AWD/Cholera

Afghanistan	[662 (11), 1.6%]
Nigeria	[99 (18), 18.1%]

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009

AFRO	[14 109 (76), 0.5%]
AMRO	[185 067 (4399), 2.3%]
EMRO	[25 531 (151), 0.6%]
EURO	[78 000 (300), 0.3%]
SEARO	[44 147 (661); 1.4%]
WPRO	[138 288 (498) 0.3%]
GLOBAL Total	[485,142 (6085), 1.2%]

CFR=Case-Fatality Rate