

15 January 2017 – The Ministry of Public Health and Population in Yemen has published the latest figures on cases and deaths in the ongoing cholera outbreak in the country. Since the last update on 28 December 2016, 3335 new suspected cases of cholera and two additional deaths have been reported.

As of 10 January, a total of 15 468 suspected cases of cholera, including 99 associated deaths have been reported, with a case–fatality rate of 0.64%. Of these cases, 180 cases were laboratory-confirmed for *Vibrio cholerae* 01.

The government together with United Nations agencies and other partners are still combating the control of a major cholera outbreak which has so far affected 15 of the 21 governorates in the country. The affected governorates include Abyan, Aden, Amran, Al Hudaydah, Al-Bayda'a, Al-Dhale'a, Dhamar, Ibb, Hajjah, Lahij, Raymah, Sana'a, Ta'izz, Al Jawf and Sana'a City. More than 80% of the cases were reported from 28 districts in five governorates, namely; Al Hudaydah, Lahaj, Aldala'a, Hajjah, and Taizz. The current outbreak is unusual because of its vast geographical spread within a short period of time. The outbreak has disproportionately affected young children below five years of age as compared to other age groups.

The cholera taskforce led by WHO, in partnership with the Ministry, UNICEF, OCHA and other partner organizations, continues to coordinate and strengthen cholera response activities at the national and governorate levels. The taskforce continues to maintain two national health emergency control rooms in Aden and Sana'a.

WHO has supported the deployment of rapid response teams to analyse and chlorinate water sources in Arhab district in Sana'a, including wells and water tanks. Medical supplies have been distributed to the treatment centres in Al Sabeen Hospital in Sana'a and four of the 26 diarrhoea treatment centres in Ibb and Hajjah governorates. The prevention and control efforts implemented so far have proven to be effective in reducing the number of cases in some governorates, while new cases continue to be reported in other governorates. WHO has also strengthened supervision and mentoring of health workers in the newly affected districts to ensure timely investigation, adherence to standard case definition, timely laboratory confirmation of suspected cases, proper case management, effective infection control practice, and proper solid waste disposal and drainage network management. Essential supplies such as rapid diagnostic test kits, IV fluids, oral rehydration solutions and water chlorination tablets have been provided to affected communities.

WHO, in collaboration with the Ministry, UNICEF and other partners continues to support social mobilization and health education campaigns among vulnerable communities and caregivers to raise their awareness on prevention of cholera and other diarrhoeal diseases. Acute watery diarrhoeal diseases are endemic in Yemen, however the ongoing conflict has stretched the capacity of the national health systems. More than 7.6 million people, and more than 3 million internally displaced persons currently live in areas affected by the outbreak.

Related link

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