

INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS SITUATION REPORT | Epidemiological week #01-2024

No. 01 (31 Dec 2023 - 06 Jan 2024)

Disease Outbreaks	ARI (Jan 23 - Jan 24)	COVID-19 (Feb 20 - Jan 24)	کچ ∉ AWD (Jan 23 - Jan 24)	Measles (Jan 23 - Jan 24)	CCHF (Jan 23 - Jan 24)	Dengue fever (Jan 23 - Jan 24)
Week 01-2024 Cases	37,776	203	1,980	472	3	50
Death 2024 (CFR %)	91 (0.2)	2 (1.0)	1 (0.05)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Cumulative Cases 2023	*1,384,646	*230,647	*222,249	*25,876	*1,243	1,496
Death 2023 (CFR %)	2,798 (0.2)	7,972 (3.5)	101 (0.05)	64 (0.2)	114 (9.2)	1 (0.07)

(Data from 607 (99.1%) out of 613 surveillance sentinel sites

*Delayed report was experienced during week 52-2023 in the number of cases and corrected.

Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) (01 Jan 2023-06 Jan 2024)



*Currently ARI related data (morbidity and mortality) are reported from 613 surveillance sentinel sites across 34 provinces in the country. **Currently, there are 10 functional influenza surveillance sentinel sites for both ILI and SARI in ten provinces of Afghanistan. At each site, there is one trained influenza surveillance assistant, collecting specimen and epidemiological data from 4 ILI and 6 SARI cases per week in ARI season and sending them to National Influenza Center (NIC) for testing.

Table 1: Summary of the ARI outbreak in the last eight weeks (12 Nov 2023-06 Jan 2024)

Indicators	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52	W1-24	Trend lines
Suspected cases	32,133	32,434	34,056	34,762	34,514	35,793	38,719 *	37,776	
Suspected deaths	56	51	77	59	65	75	79 *	91	
CFR (%)	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	

*Delayed reporting and data entry error were experienced in the number of ARI cases and associated deaths during week 52-2023 and were corrected from 37,139 to 38,719 and from 71 to 79 respectively.

- The epi curve shows an increase in ARI cases since the 3rd week of September 2023, which could be linked to the change of the season to cold weather across the country (Figure 1).
- During week 01-2024, a total of 37,776 cases of ARIpneumonia and 91 associated deaths were reported, which shows a slight decrease (2.4%) in the number of ARI cases and 15.2% increase in the number of deaths compared to the previous week.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,422,422 ARI-pneumonia cases and 2,889 associated deaths were reported from 34 provinces. Out of the total cases, 875,080 (61.5%) were underfive children and 703,777 (49.5%) were females. The cumulative incidence by province is shown in Figure 2.
- Out of total deaths, 2,379 (82.3%) were under-five children and 1,338 (46.3%) were females.
- The current number of cases is higher than the average number of cases reported during the three preceding years (2020-2022), the higher number in 2023-24 could be explained by the improvement in reporting due to the enhancement of the surveillance system and expansion of surveillance sentinel sites. (Figure 3).

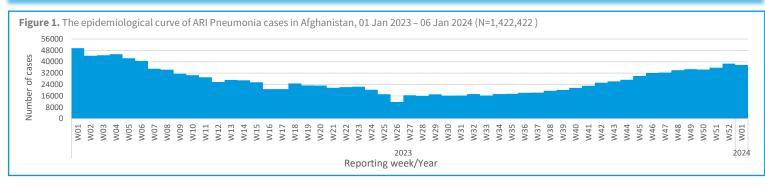
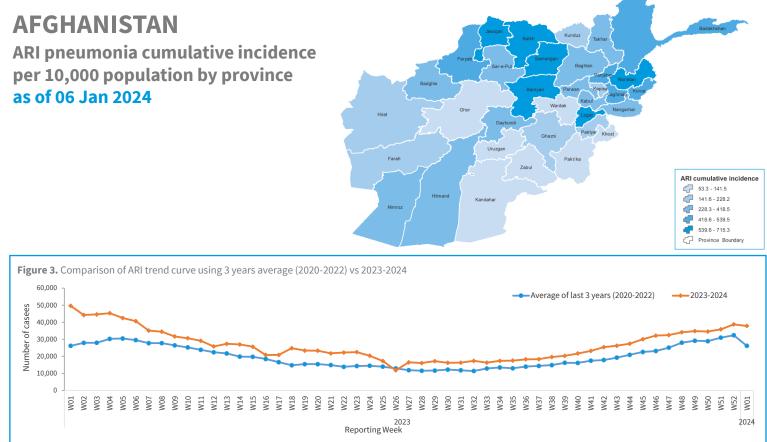


Figure 2. ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province, Afghanistan 01 Jan 2023 – 06 Jan 2024



Response to acute respiratory infection outbreak

Surveillance

- Emergency Preparedness and Response Committees (EPR) are active at the provincial level.
- Surveillance support teams (SSTs) are actively participating in outbreak investigation and response activities in 34 provinces.
- Supervisory visits have been conducted in different provinces to strengthen early detection and timely response to ARI outbreaks.

Lab and supplies

Since Jan 2023:

- A total of 500 viral transport media (VTM) for collection of samples from SARI and ILI cases have been delivered to the 10 influenza sentinel sites.
- A total of 10 influenza assistants (1 per each sentinel site) have been trained on specimen collection, storage, and lab transportation for testing and confirmation.
- A total of 1,500 influenza A/B PCR kits and consumables have been supplied to the National Influenza Center (NIC).
- As a part of preparedness and response to the ARI out-

break, a total of 4,720 kits of COVID-19 RDTs were prepositioned in Kabul WHO warehouse and most of them are distributed to regional sub-offices for rapid differential diagnosis of ARI and COVID-19.

Case management

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,411 HCWs have been trained in ARI case management from all 8 regions.
- As a part of the winter preparedness and response plan to ARI outbreak in 2023-24, a total of 397 case management kits have been prepositioned in WHO main office and regional sub-offices.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- During November 2023, a 9-day RCCE campaign was conducted by WHO as part of the winterization plan in Badakhshan province, covering awareness of winter-related diseases including ARI. 35 social mobilizers, including 17 women, have been trained and deployed in their respective districts to implement the campaign activities.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 500,000 IEC materials have been distributed as part of this RCCE campaign among targeted communities in 34 provinces.

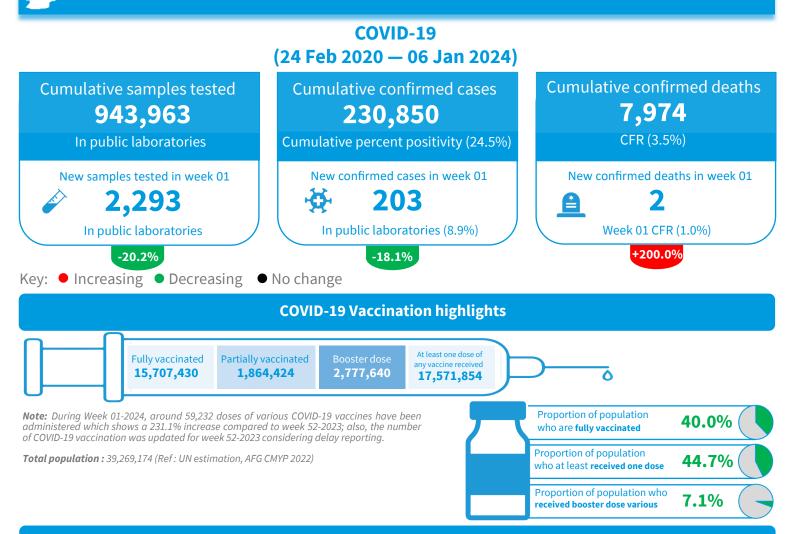


Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 indicators in the last 8 weeks in Afghanistan (12 Nov 2023-06 Jan 2024)

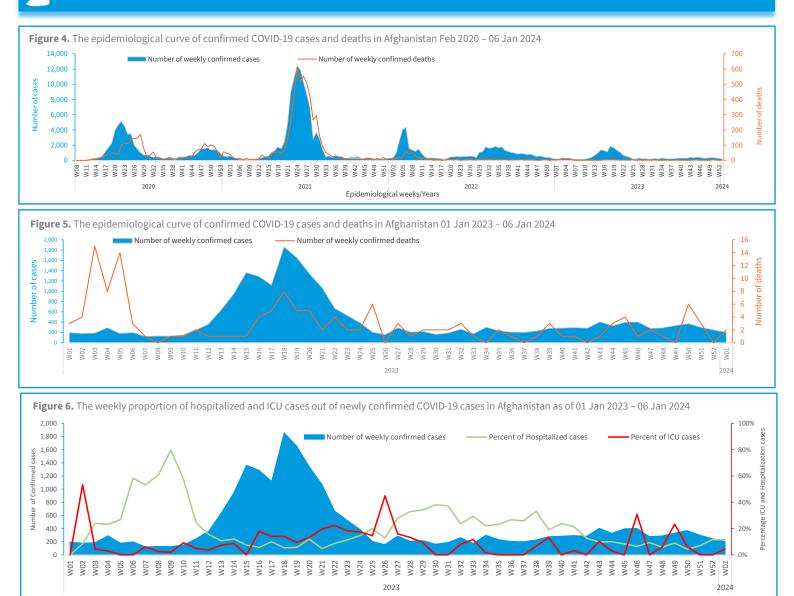
Indicators	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52	W01-24	Trend line
Samples tested (in public Labs)	3,532	3,020	2,720	3,508	3,227	3,372	2,872 *	2,293	
Confirmed cases	404	279	289	334	371	300	248 *	203	
Percent positivity (%)	11.4	9.2	10.6	9.5	11.5	8.9	8.6	8.9	$\searrow \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow$
Deaths	4	1	2	0	6	3	0	2	$\searrow \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark$
CFR (%)	1.0	0.4	0.7	0.0	1.6	1.0	0.0	1.0	\sim

*A delayed reporting was experienced during week 52-2023, the number of samples tested was modified from 2,686 to 2,872 and the number of confirmed cases was modified from 230 to 248.

- The epidemiological curve indicates a stabilization in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases since the 3rd week of June 2023, which could be attributed to a decrease in attendance of infected individuals at healthcare facilities and an improvement in vaccination coverage among eligible populations across the country (44.7%).
- In week 1-2024, a total of 2,293 samples were tested in public labs, of which 203 samples were positive for COVID-19 (positivity rate 8.9%) and two associated deaths were reported. The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases shows a 20.2% decrease compared to week 52-2023 while the number of deaths increased from 0 to 2 (Figures 4-5).
- Since the beginning of the pandemic in Feb 2020, a total of 943,963 samples have been tested for COVID-19 through public laboratories.
- During week 01-2024, among 203 confirmed cases 11.3% (23 cases) were hospitalized, whereas one of the 23 hospitalized cases (4.3%) were admitted to ICU (Figure 6).

Response:

- During week 01-2024, a total of 80 kits of VTM (50 VTM/kit) were delivered to Central East region NDSR office.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 31,300 COVID-19 RDT tests have been distributed to all 34 provincial NDSR offices.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 3 ID NOW instruments have been installed and 2,000 tests of COVID-19 ID NOW have been delivered to the CPHL-Kabul for rapid diagnosis of COVID-19. Also, on-the-job training related to ID NOW instrument utilization and maintenance has been provided to the staff of 8 labs across the country.



Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) with Dehydration Outbreak (01 Jan 2023 - 06 Jan 2024)

Table 3: Summary of the AWD with Dehydration outbreak in the last eight weeks (12 Nov 2023-06 Jan 2024)

Indicators	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52	W01-24	Trend line
Suspected cases	3,272	2,969	2,676	2,382	2,395	2,281	2,363 *	1,980	****
Suspected deaths	0	0	2	4	1	0	1	1	
CFR (%)	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.17	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.05	

*Delayed reporting was experienced in the number of AWD with dehydration cases during week 52-2023 and was corrected from 2,344 to 2,363.

- The epi-curve of AWD with dehydration cases shows a decreasing trend since the 4th week of August 2023. This decline could be explained by seasonal changes, the conclusion of the summer season in the country.
- During week 1-2024; 1,980 AWD with dehydration cases and one associated death were reported from 128 districts which shows a 16.2% decrease in the number of cases and stabilization in the number of deaths compared to the previous week (Figures 7 & 8).
- The deceased case was under-five male from Kabul province.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 224,229 AWD with dehydration cases were reported, out of which 127,881(57.0%) were under-five children and 111,725(49.8%) were females.
- During week 01-2024, no new district reported an alert of AWD with dehydration and the number of districts reported AWD with dehydration remained at 334 since the beginning of 2023.
- A total of 6,147 rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) were conducted among AWD with dehydration cases since the beginning of 2023 among them 1,348 samples came positive (21.9%).

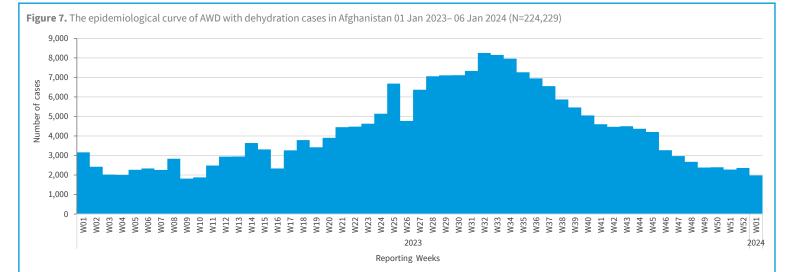


Figure 8. AWD with dehydration cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province in Afghanistan, 01 Jan 2023 – 06 Jan 2024

AWD with dehydration cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 06 Jan 2024



Preparedness and response to the AWD Outbreak

Leadership and Coordination

- Emergency Preparedness and Response Committees (EPR) are active at the provincial level.
- An integrated AWD preparedness plan has been developed jointly between Health and WASH clusters and endorsed by the Ministry of Public Health.

Surveillance

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 867 MDs and CHSs including 67 females have been trained on EBS procedures in 5 provinces: Nangarhar (total=240, 1 female), Kandahar (total=144, 22 females), Badakhshan (total=152, 4 females), Herat (total=205, 17 females) and Bamyan (total=126, 23 females).
- Surveillance support teams (SSTs) are actively participating in outbreak investigation and response activities in 34 provinces.
- Supervisory visits have been conducted in different provinces to strengthen early detection and timely response to AWD outbreaks.

Case Management

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 635 case management kits (different modules) for AWD with dehydration have been delivered to WHO sub-offices and infectious disease hospitals of 4 regions (South, East, North, and North-east) to respond to this outbreak.
- Since Jan 2023, 34 SST lab focal points have been trained on AWD sample collection, transportation, and proper use of RDT for the screening of AWD with dehydration cases in Kandahar and Nangarhar provinces.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 887 HCWs have been trained on AWD case management from 7 regions (Central, Central Highland, West, North, North-east, East, and South-east).
- Laboratory and Supplies
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 12,325 RDT kits of AWD with dehydration and 6,400 Cary Blairs media have been supplied to 34 provinces.
- Seven public health laboratories including CPHL, IDH, and 5 RRLs (Kandahar, Paktya, Nangarhar, Balkh, and Herat regional reference labs) have the testing/ confirmation capacity for AWD with dehydration and are supplied with diagnostic kits.

WASH

During the last two weeks of December (16-30 Dec 2023), the following activities were conducted as WASH response:

- Chlorination of wells in 3 provinces (Badghis, Ghazni, and Wardak) reached 2,700 individuals.
- Distribution of aqua-tabs and soaps in Urozgan province supported 2,000 beneficiaries.
- Installation of handwashing facilities in 2 provinces (Ghazni and Paktya) reached 11,600 individuals.
- Hygiene Kits distributions in 12 provinces (Badghis, Ghazni, Kabul, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktya and Urozgan) reached almost 40,000 people.
- Household water treatment promotion in 2 provinces (Kabul and Khost) supported almost 700 individuals.
- Hygiene Promotion in 13 provinces (Badghis, Ghazni, Helmand, Herat, Kabul, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Wardak, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktya and Urozgan) reached 22,000 individuals.
- Water supply systems or rehabilitation in 8 provinces (Badghis, Ghazni, Kabul, Khost, Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, and Paktya) reached 7,000 individuals.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- In Oct 2023, a 7-day RCCE campaign was conducted by WHO and MoPH in Herat province to raise awareness of the earthquake-affected communities regarding the prevention and control of infectious diseases including AWD with dehydration in seven districts. A total of 80 social mobilizers, including 40 women, have been trained and deployed to the respective districts for the implementation of campaign activities.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 357 (including 117 females) MoPH staff have been trained on RCCE strategies and outbreak response.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 380,000 information, education and communication (IEC) materials (200,000 posters and 180,000 brochures) on AWD were printed and distributed among targeted communities in 34 provinces.

Measles Outbreak

(01 Jan 2023 to 06 Jan 2024)

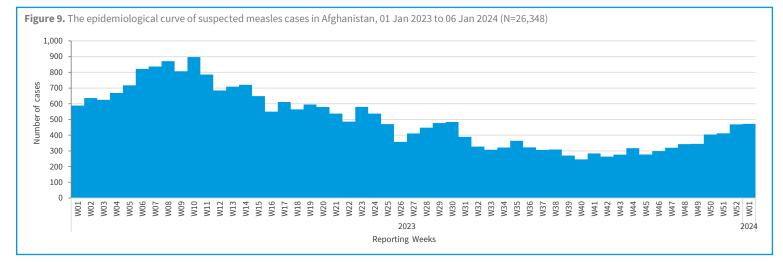


Table 4: Summary of the suspected measles outbreak in the last eight weeks (12 Nov 2023-06 Jan 2024)

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Indicators	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52	W01-24	Trend line
Suspected cases	299	320	343	345	404	412	469 *	472	
Suspected deaths	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
CFR (%)	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	\

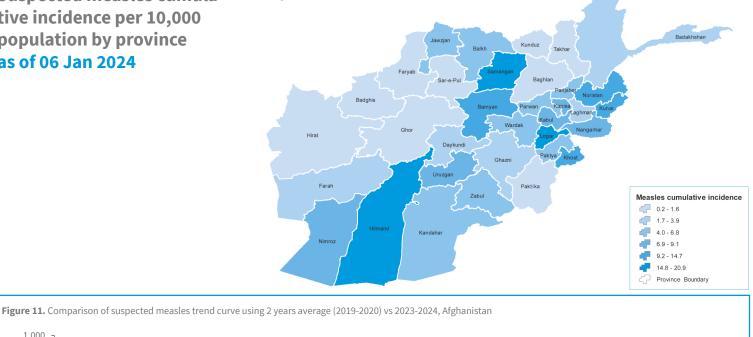
*Delayed reporting was experienced in the number of suspected measles cases during week 52-2023 and was corrected from 449 to 469.

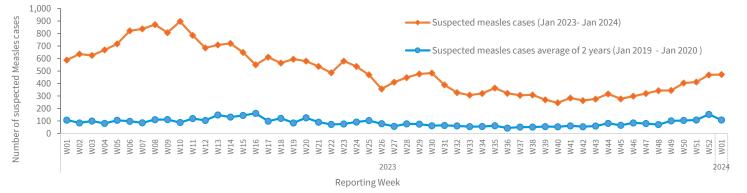
- The epidemiological curve of suspected measles cases demonstrates a rising trend since the third week of November 2023, which could be explained by increased community transmission exacerbated by the winter season and low immunization coverage (Figure 9).
- During week 01-2024, a total of 472 suspected cases with no measles-associated deaths were reported which shows stabilization in the number of suspected measles cases compared to the previous week.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 26,348 suspected measles cases and 64 deaths (CFR=0.2%) were reported. Among suspected measles cases 18,894 (71.7%) were under-five children and 12,410 (47.1%) were females.
- Out of 64 measles-related deaths, 59 deaths (92.2%) were among under 5 children and 28 deaths (43.8%) were among females.
- All deaths were reported from 15 provinces across the country, more than three-quarters (49, 76.6%) of the deaths were reported from 5 provinces (Helmand, Samangan, Kandahar, Kunar, and Nangarhar). The cumulative incidence by province is shown in Figure 10.



Suspected measles cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 06 Jan 2024

Figure 10. Suspected measles cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province in Afghanistan 01 Jan 2023 - 06 Jan 2024





Comparing the 2023-24 trend with the trend for the average number of suspected cases reported during 2019-2020; reveals that despite efforts to control the outbreak, measles cases are still occurring at a higher rate during years 2023-24 as compared to the endemic level during 2019-2020 (Figure 11).

Preparedness and response to the Measles Outbreak

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 13,884 children aged 9-59 months were vaccinated against measles were vaccinated as part of the measles outbreak response activities by the implementing NGOs in different provinces across the country.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 200,000 information, education and communication (IEC) materials on measles have been printed and distributed among targeted communities in the country.

Outbreak of Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) (01 Jan 2023 to 06 Jan 2024)

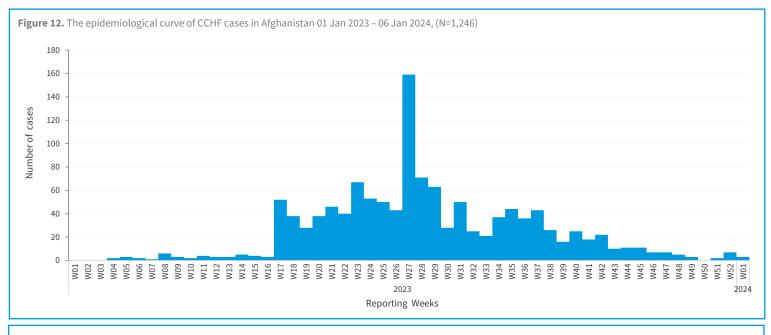
Table 5: Summary of the CCHF outbreak in the last eight weeks (12 Nov 2023-06 Jan 2024)

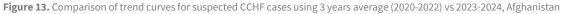
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Indicators	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52	W01-24	Trend line
Suspected cases	7	7	5	3	0	2	7 *	3	
Suspected deaths	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	• • • • • • • • •
CFR (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	• • • • • • • •

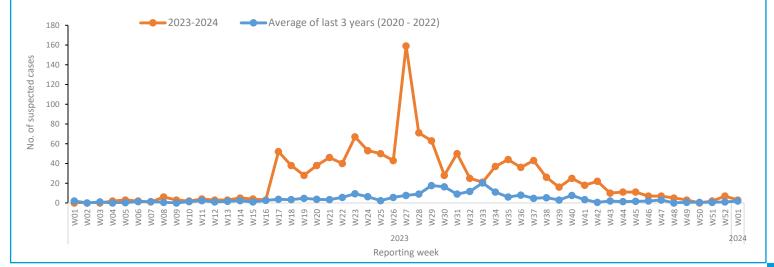
* Delayed reporting was experienced in the number of suspected CCHF cases during week 52-2023 and was corrected from 0 to 7.

- The epi-curve for Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) indicates a decreasing trend in the number of suspected CCHF cases since 3rd week of September 2023. This decline could be attributed to seasonal changes towards winter and response activities. (Figures 12 & 13).
- During week 01-2024, 3 new suspected CCHF cases with no associated deaths were reported which shows 57.1% decrease compared to cases reported in the previous week (Table 5).
- Since the beginning of 2023, the total numbers of suspected CCHF cases and associated deaths are 1,246 and

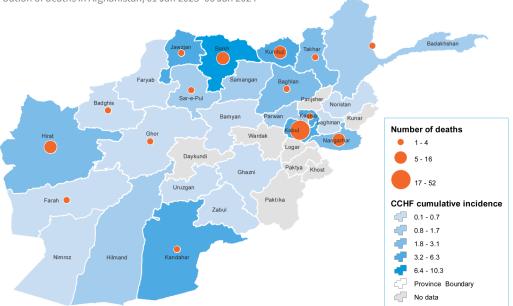
- 114, respectively (CFR 9.1%).
- The CCHF-associated deaths were reported from 15 provinces, more than half of which were reported from 2 provinces: Kabul (52, 45.6%) and Balkh (16, 14.0%) (Figure 14).
- Out of the total cases, 1,243 (99.8%) were above 5 years of age and 389 (31.2%) were females.
- In total, 1,098 samples of suspected CCHF cases were tested since the beginning of 2023, of which 383 samples were positive (positivity rate = 34.9%).







Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases cumulative incidence per 100,000 population by province and provincial distribution of deaths as of 06 Jan 2024 **Figure 14.** Cumulative incidence of Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases per 100,000 population by province and provincial distribution of deaths in Afghanistan, 01 Jan 2023–06 Jan 2024



Response to CCHF outbreak during 2023

Coordination and leadership

• A 2-day national workshop was conducted in Kabul-Afghanistan focused on implementing the One Health approach and involved various stakeholders, including experts from organizations like WHO, FAO, MoPH, NEPA, MAIL, Dairy Form Union, and Kabul University's veterinary department. The workshop covered six key areas: leadership and governance, multisectoral coordination, environmental health, zoonotic disease, food safety, and antimicrobial resistance, highlighting existing structures, gaps, and challenges. The main recommendations from the workshop included securing government support and creating a strategic national plan, along with establishing a national-level Technical Working Group (TWG).

Surveillance

- During week 01-2024, a total of 280 veterinarians were trained on the case definition of CCHF, collection, storage, and transportation of the of blood and tick samples to Central Veterinary Diagnostic and Research Laboratory (CVDRL) for confirmation and vector control activities. This brings the total number of veterinarians trained on CCHF surveillance to 350.
- During week 01-2024, blood samples were collected from cattle to determine the CCHF seroprevalence, and tick samples were collected for vector surveillance activities in Kabul province.
- Surveillance support teams (SSTs) are actively participating in outbreak investigation and response activities in 34 provinces.

Laboratory and supplies

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 455 printed copies of the updated CCHF treatment algorithm were supplied to 8 provinces (Nangarhar, Kandahar, Herat, Balkh, Bamyan, Badakhshan, Paktya and Kunduz).
- A total of 14 CCHF PCR kits have been distributed to CPHL, IDH and 5 RRLs across the country since the beginning of 2023.
- On-the-job training has been conducted for the staff in 6 regional reference laboratories; the capacities have been built to utilize the PCR and ELISA technologies for laboratory confirmation of CCHF.

Case management

- A 3-day training on CCHF revised case management treatment algorithm was provided to 46 HCWs (including 17 females) in Kandahar province.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 319 HCWs (including 10 females) have been trained on case management of CCHF from Southeast, East and West regions.
- A total of 150 oral ribavirin (antiviral medicine) courses (each course containing 84 tablets), and 200 personal protective equipment for infection prevention and control have been supplied to the North region since the beginning of 2023.
- A total of 5,000 double bags were donated by WHO to Balkh, Herat, Kandahar, Kabul IDH, and Nangarhar provinces to support CCHF case management.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- During week 01-2024, 700 butchers received training on preventive measures against CCHF and safe handling of animals through Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) under the UN-to-UN agreement.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 350,000 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on CCHF have been printed and distributed to affected communities in the country.

Dengue Fever Outbreak (01 Jan 2023 to 06 Jan 2024)

943













Test positivity ratio

Table 6: Summary of the Dengue fever outbreak in the last eight weeks (12 Nov 2023-06 Jan 2024)

Indicators	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	W51	W52	W01-24	Trend line
Suspected cases	56	34	50	77	33	61	44	50	$\checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \bullet \bullet$
Deaths	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	• • • • • • • •
CFR (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	• • • • • • • •

Overall, the epidemiological curve depicts a rising trend in suspected dengue fever cases starting from the last week of Aug 2023; this could be linked to increased vector activity and enhanced surveillance in vector-borne disease detection and reporting (Figures 15 & 16).

During week 01-2024, 50 suspected cases of dengue fever were reported from Nangarhar province, which shows a 13.6% increase in the number of suspected dengue fever cases compared to week 52-2023.

Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,546 suspected cases of dengue fever and one death were reported (Figure 17), out of which, 746 (48.3%) were females and 1,512 (97.8%) were over 5 years of age.

Since Jan 2023, a total of 943 samples have been collected, out of which 373 were confirmed (positivity= 39.6%).

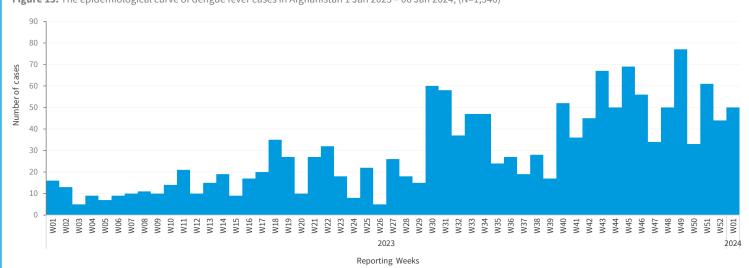
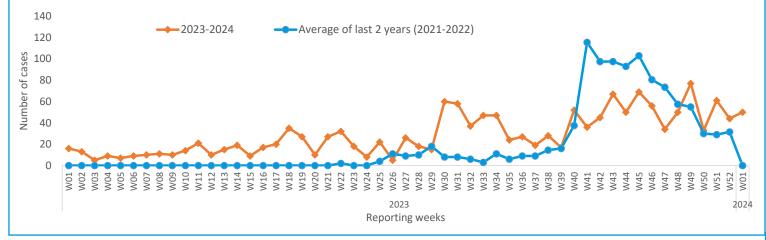
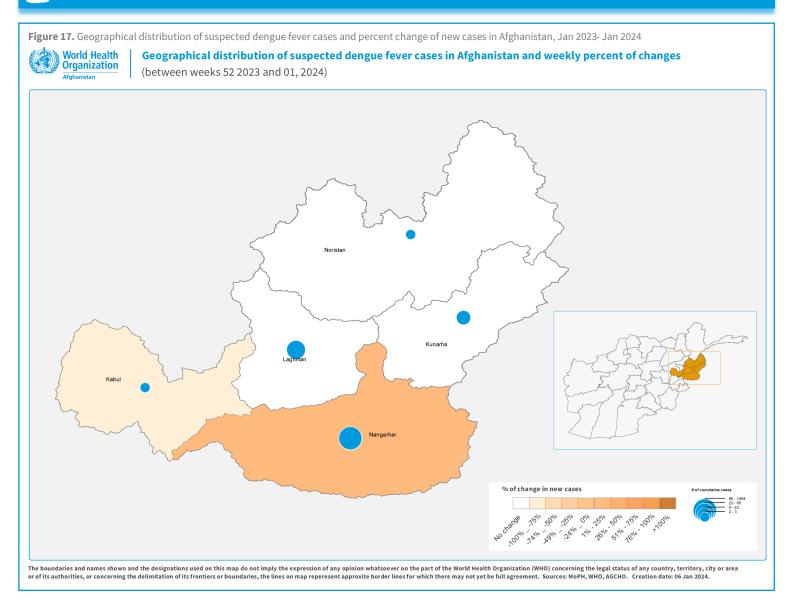


Figure 15. The epidemiological curve of dengue fever cases in Afghanistan 1 Jan 2023 – 06 Jan 2024, (N=1,546)

Figure 16. Comparison of trend curves for suspected dengue fever cases using 3 years average (2020-2022) vs 2023-2024, Afghanistan





Response to the dengue fever outbreak

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 283 Kits (10 tests/kit) of dengue fever were delivered to 5 provinces (Nangarhar 273 kits, Laghman 3 kits, Kunar 3 kits, Nuristan 2 kits, and Kabul 2 kits).
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 450 printed copies of the dengue fever treatment algorithm have been delivered to 8 provinces (Nangarhar, Kandahar, Herat, Balkh, Bamyan, Badakhshan, Paktya and Kunduz) provinces.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 10 PCR kits have been distributed to Nangarhar RRL.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 320 HCWs have been trained on dengue case management in the East region.

Note: MOPH is the source of epidemiological data Case definition & alert/outbreak thresholds

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