

INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS SITUATION REPORT | Epidemiological week #49-2023



Disease Outbreaks	ARI (Jan - Dec 23)	COVID-19 (Feb 20 - Dec 23)	AWD (Jan - Dec 23)	Measles (Jan - Dec 23)	CCHF (Jan - Dec 23)	Dengue fever (Jan - Dec 23)
Cumulative Cases (Data from 610 (99.5%) out of 613 surveillance sentinel sites	1,275,441	229,714	215,227	24,591	1,234	1,358
Death (CFR %)	2,578 (0.2)	*7,963 (3.5)	99 (0.05)	64 (0.3)	114 (9.2)	1 (0.1)

^{*}A typo error occurred during week 48-2023 in the number of COVID-19 associated deaths and was corrected from 7,964 to 7,963.

Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) (1 Jan-09 Dec 2023)



Total ARI Cases





Samples tested for influenza



Lab confirmed influenza cases



Influenza test positivity ratio

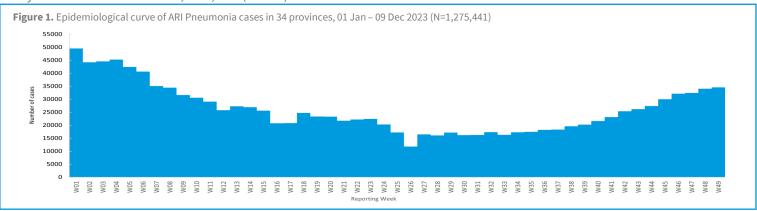
Table 1: Summary of the ARI outbreak in the last eight weeks (15 Oct - 09 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	Trend line
Suspected cases	25,349	26,204	27,383	30,007	32,133	32,434	34,056 *	34,583	
Suspected deaths	59	45	48	57	56	51	77 *	58	\
CFR (%)	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	\-\-\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\

^{*}Delayed reporting was experienced in the number of ARI cases of and ARI associated deaths during week 48 and were modified from 30,980 to 34,056 and from 70 to 77, respectively.

- The epi curve shows an increase of ARI cases since 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 49-2023, 34,583 cases of ARI-pneumonia and 58 ARI pneumonia associated deaths were reported, which shows a slight stabilization in the number of ARI cases and 24.7% decrease in the number of ARI associated deaths compared to week 48-2023.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,275,441 ARI cases and 2,578 deaths were reported from 34 provinces across the country. Out of the total cases, 784,820 (61.5%) were under-

- five children and 630,704 (49.4%) were females (Figure 2).
- Out of total deaths, 2,127 (82.5%) were under-five children and 1,179 (45.7%) were females reported from 34 provinces.
- 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 could be explained by the improvement in reporting due to improved surveillance system (Figure 3).



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.

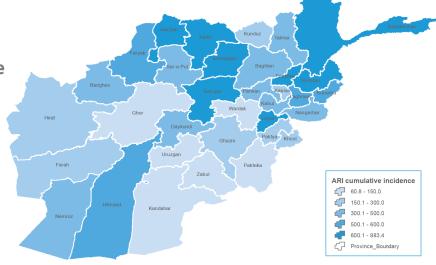


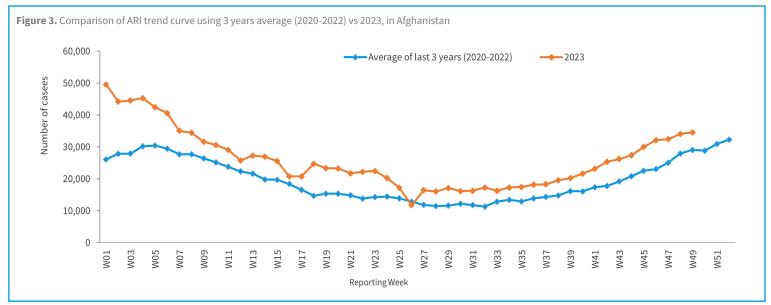
Figure 2. ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province, Afghanistan 01 Jan – 09 Dec 2023

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(N=1,275,441)

ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 09 Dec 2023





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 influenzas' samples have been delivered to the 10 influenza sentinel sites.
- A total of 10 influenza assistants have been trained (1 per each sentinel site) 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 ARI outbreak, a total of 4,720 kits of COVID-19 RDTs were prepositioned in

Kabul WHO warehouse and will be distributed to regional offices for quick differential diagnosis of ARI.

Case management

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,376 HCWs have been trained on ARI case management from all 8 regions across the
- As a part of winter preparedness and response plan to ARI outbreak in 2023, a total of 397 different types of case management kits have been prepositioned in WHO main office and regional sub-offices.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- Since Jan 2023, a 9-day RCCE campaign has been conducted by WHO as a winterization plan in Badakhshan province, covering awareness on winter related diseases including ARI. Thirty-five social mobilizers, including 17 women, have been trained and deployed in their respective districts to implement campaign activities.
- Additionally, as part of this RCCE campaign, more than 10,000 information, education, and communication (IEC) materials have been distributed among targeted communities.



COVID-19 (24 Feb 2020 — 09 Dec 2023)

Cumulative samples tested 932,044

In public laboratories

New samples tested in week 49



3,205

In public laboratories

+17.8%

Cumulative confirmed cases 229,714

Cumulative percent positivity (24.6%)

New confirmed cases in week 49



320

In public laboratories (10.0%)

+10.7%

Cumulative confirmed deaths 7,963 CFR (3.5%) New confirmed deaths in week 49

-100.0%

Week 49 CFR (0.0%)

Key: ● Increasing ● Decreasing ● No change

Total population: 39,269,174 (Ref: UN estimation, AFG CMYP 2022)

COVID-19 Vaccination highlights

Fully vaccinated 15,574,358

Partially vaccinated 1,864,424

2,687,835

At least one dose of 17,438,782

Note: During Week 49-2023, around 110,807 doses of various COVID-19 vaccines have been administered which shows 16.2% increase compared to week 48-2023.

39.7% who are fully vaccinated Proportion of population who at least received one dose

44.4%

Proportion of population who received booster dose various

Proportion of population

6.8%

Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 indicators in the last 8 weeks in Afghanistan (15 Oct - 09 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	Trend line
Samples tested (in public Labs)	2,655	3,256	3,217	3,250	3,532	3,020	2,720 *	3,205	\rightarrow \right
Confirmed cases	265	406	330	397	404	279	289 *	320	M.
Percent positivity (%)	10.0	12.5	10.3	12.2	11.4	9.2	10.6	10.0	\wedge
Deaths	0	1	3	4	1	2	1	0	
CFR (%)	0.0	0.2	0.9	1.0	0.2	0.7	0.3	0.0	\angle

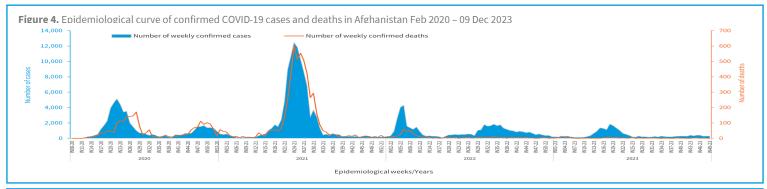
^{*}A delayed reporting was experienced during week 48-2023, the number of samples tested was modified from 2,586 to 2,720 and number of confirmed cases was modified from 267 to 289

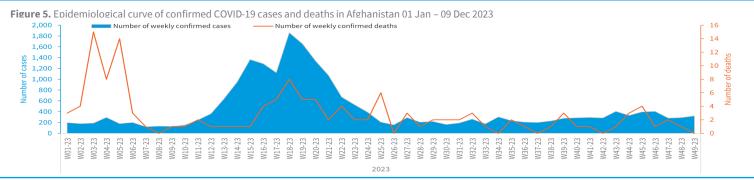
- The epidemiological curve indicates a stabilization in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases since the 3rd week of June 2023, which could be attributed to a decrease in reporting of infected individuals to healthcare facilities and an improvement in vaccination coverage among eligible populations across the country (44.4%).
- In week 49-2023, a total of 3,205 samples were tested in public labs, of which 320 samples were positive for COVID-19 (positivity rate 10.0%) with no associated deaths reported. The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases increased by 10.7% compared to week 48-2023 while the number of deaths dropped to zero from one in week 48-2023 (Figures 4-5).
- Since the beginning of the pandemic in Feb 2020, a total of 932,044 samples have been tested for COVID-19 through public laboratories.
- During week 49-2023, 7.2% (23/320 confirmed cases) were hospitalized, whereas 30.4% (7/23 hospitalized cases) were admitted to ICU (Figure 6).

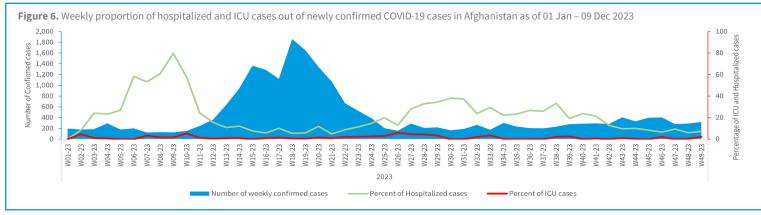
Response:

- During week 49-2923, a total of 32 COVID-19 RDT kits (25 tests/kit) were delivered to Paktya provincial NDSR office. This brings the total number of COVID-19 RDT tests distributed to all 34 provinces across the country to 31,300 tests.
- 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 to 09 Dec 2023)

Table 3: Summary of the AWD with Dehydration outbreak in the last eight weeks (15 Oct - 09 Dec 2023)

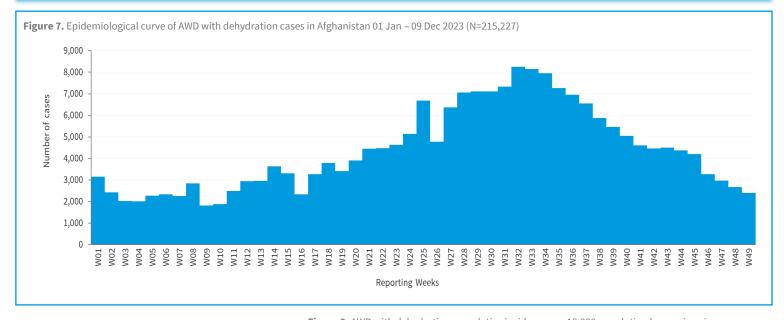
Indicators	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	Trend line
Suspected cases	4,470	4,503	4,372	4,207	3,272	2,969	2,676 *	2,339	
Suspected deaths	3	3	0	1	0	0	2	4	
CFR (%)	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	-

^{*}Delayed reporting was experienced in the number of suspected AWD with dehydration cases in week 48 and was modified from 2,653 to 2,676.

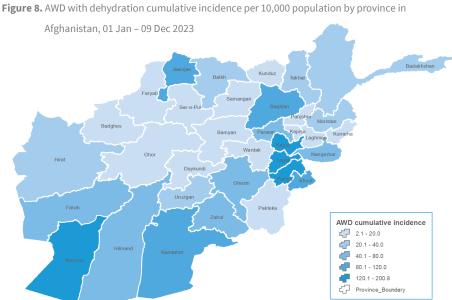
- The epi-curve of AWD with dehydration cases shows a decreasing trend since the 4th week of August 2023. This decline could be explained by seasonal changes, conclusion of the summer season in the country.
- During week 49-2023; 2,399 AWD with dehydration suspected cases and 4 AWD with dehydration associated deaths were reported from 140 districts which shows a 10.4% decrease in the number of suspected cases and 100.0% increase in the number AWD associated deaths compared to last week (Figure 7).
- The new AWD with dehydration associated deaths were reported from 3 provinces: Jawzjan (2), Kabul (1) and

- Urozgan (1). Out of total deaths, 3 (75.0%) were under 5 children and 2 (50.0%) were females.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 215,227 AWD with dehydration cases were reported, out of which 122,850 (57.1%) were under-five children and 107,150 (49.8%) were females (Figure 8).
- During week 49-2023, no new district reported alert of AWD with dehydration and the number of districts reported AWD with dehydration remained at 334.
- A total of 5,817 rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) were conducted among AWD with dehydration cases since the beginning of 2023.





AWD with dehydration cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 09 Dec 2023



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

- 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).
- Electronic surveillance reporting has been expanded from provincial to health facility level in 254 sentinel sites across all regions since the beginning of 2023.
- Surveillance support teams (SSTs) are actively participating in outbreak investigation and response activities in 34 provinces.
- Supervisory visits have been conducted in different prov-

inces to strengthen early detection and timely response to AWD outbreaks.

Case Management

- 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 621 different case management kits for AWD with dehydration have been delivered to WHO sub-offices of Paktya, Bamyan, Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar and Nangarhar provinces for responding to this outbreak.
- 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 64,00 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 supplied with diagnostic kits.

WASH

Between (16-30 Nov 2023), the following activities were conducted as WASH response:

- Provision of clean drinking water to around 33,000 individuals by chlorination of wells in 8 provinces (Balkh, Ghazni, Herat, Khost, Logar, Wardak, Paktya and Takhar).
- Provision of clean drinking water to 3,000 individuals by emergency water trucking in Herat province.
- Provision of safe drinking water to 11,500 individuals by installation and/or rehabilitation of water supply system in 11 provinces (Balkh, Ghazni, Herat, Kabul, Khost, Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktya and Takhar).
- Distribution of aqua tabs and hand washing soap to around 10,000 individuals in 4 provinces (Helmand, Kandahar, Nimroz & Zabul).
- Distribution of hygiene kits to around 65,000 individuals in 13 provinces (Badakhshan, Balkh, Helmand, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, Kunduz, Nangarhar, Nimroz, Paktika, Takhar and Zabul).
- Installation and/or rehabilitation of hand washing facili-

- ties to around 15,000 individuals in Ghazni, Kabul and Paktya provinces.
- Provision of sanitation facilities by installation and/or rehabilitation of latrines in 9 provinces (Balkh, Herat, Kabul, Khost, Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, Paktika and Paktya).
- Conducting of household water treatment promotion session to around 2,000 individuals in 5 provinces (Badakhshan, Balkh, Herat, Kunduz and Nangarhar).
- Conducting hygiene promotion sessions to around 50,000 individuals in 16 provinces (Badakhshan, Balkh, Ghazni, Helmand, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, Nimroz, Paktika, Paktya, Takhar and Zabul).

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- Since Jan 2023, a 7-day RCCE campaign has been 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.
- In addition, as part of this campaign more than 10,000 information, education, and communication (IEC) materials have been distributed among the communities.

Measles Outbreak

(01 Jan to 09 Dec 2023)



Total Cases



Total Deaths



Sample tested



Lab confirmed cases



48.0%

Test positivity ratio

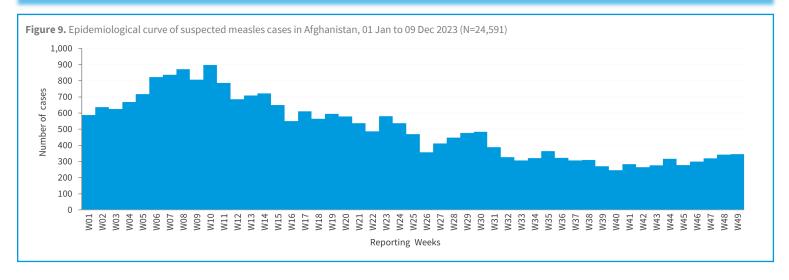
Table 4: Summary of the suspected measles outbreak in the last eight weeks (15 Oct - 09 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	Trend line
Suspected cases	264	276	317	277	299	320	343 *	345	-
Suspected deaths	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	
CFR (%)	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	

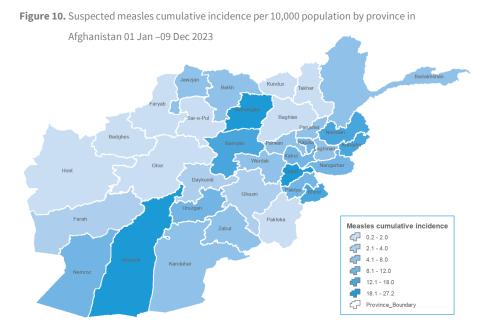
^{*}Delayed data reporting was experienced during week 48-2023 in the number of suspected measles and was modified from 295 to 343.

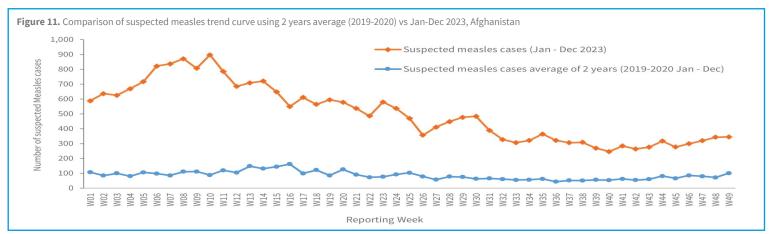
- The epidemiological curve of suspected measles cases demonstrates a rising trend since the third week of November 2023, that could be explained by increased community transmission exacerbated by the winter season, leading to inadequate ventilation within the households across the country and low immunization coverage (Figure 9).
- During week 49-2023, a total of 345 suspected cases with no measles associated deaths were reported which shows a stabilization in the number of suspected measles cases compared to previous week.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 24,591 suspected cases of measles and 64 deaths (CFR=0.3%) were reported, out of which 17,470 (71.0%) were under-five children and 11,585 (47.1%) were females (Figure 10).
- Out of total deaths, 59 (92.2%) were under 5 children and 28 (43.8%) were females.
- All deaths were reported from 15 provinces across the country, more than three-quarters (49, 76.6%) of the deaths were reported by 5 provinces (Helmand, Samangan, Kandahar, Kunar, and Nangarhar).





Suspected measles cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 09 Dec 2023





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

Preparedness and response to the Measles Outbreak

- During week 49-2023, 150 children aged 9-59 months were vaccinated against measles outbreak in Balablok district of Farah province as part of measles outbreak response activities by the implementing NGOs. This brings the total number of children aged 9-59 months vaccinated against measles to 7,772.
- A total of 132,000 IEC materials on measles have been delivered to MoPH. These materials will be used as part of outbreak preparedness and response in high-risk areas and affected communities.



Outbreak of Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) (01 Jan to 09 Dec 2023)

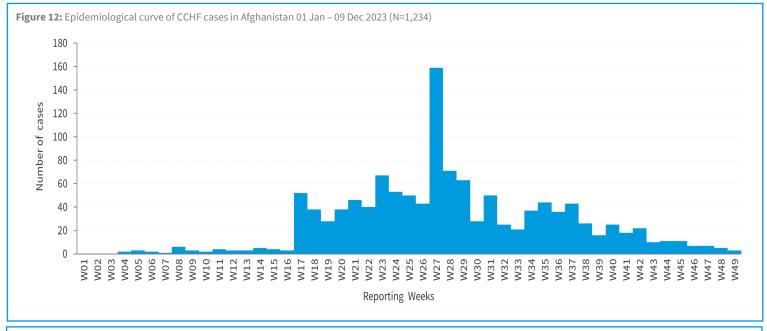
Table 5: Summary of the CCHF outbreak in the last eight weeks (15 Oct -09 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	Trend line
Suspected cases	22	10	11	11	7	7	5	3	•
Suspected deaths	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	
CFR (%)	4.5	20.0	27.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	

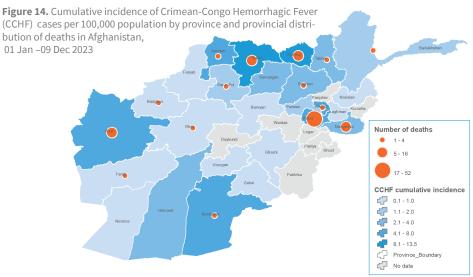
- The epi-curve for Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) indicates a decreasing trend in the number of suspected CCHF cases since 3rd week of September 2023. This decline could be attributed to seasonal changes towards winter (Figures 12 & 13).
- During week 49-2023, a total of 3 new suspected CCHF with no associated deaths were reported, which shows a 40.0% decrease in the number of suspected CCHF cases compared to week 48-2023 (Table 5).
- Since the beginning of 2023, the total number of reported suspected CCHF cases and associated deaths are

1,234 and 114, respectively (CFR 9.2%) (Figure 14).

- 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%).
- Out of the total cases, 1,231 (99.8%) were above 5 years of age and 387 (31.4%) were females.
- Totally, 1,096 samples of suspected CCHF cases were tested since the beginning of 2023, of which 383 samples were positive (positivity = 34.9%).



Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases cumulative incidence per 100,000 population by province as of 09 Dec 2023



Response to CCHF outbreak during 2023

Coordination and leadership

• A national 2-day 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 49-2023, as part of UN-to-UN agreement a technical training was conducted for 37 veterinarians and 40 butchers by the Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) on case definition, self-protection, sample collection, storage, and transportation to nearby RLs for confirmation 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 CCHF treatment algorithm were supplied to 8 provinces (Nangarhar, Kandahar, Herat, Balkh, Bamiyan, 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 6 regional reference laboratory staff; the capacities have been built to utilize the PCR and ELISA technologies for laboratory confirmation of CCHF.

Case management

- 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 across the country.
- 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)

 A total of 199,300 IEC materials on CCHF have been handed over to MoPH; and a total of 34,501 people have been reached through RCCE campaigns in Kandahar, Helmand, and Herat provinces.

Dengue Fever Outbreak (01 Jan to 09 Dec 2023)





Total Deaths



Sample tested



Lab confirmed cases



Test positivity ratio

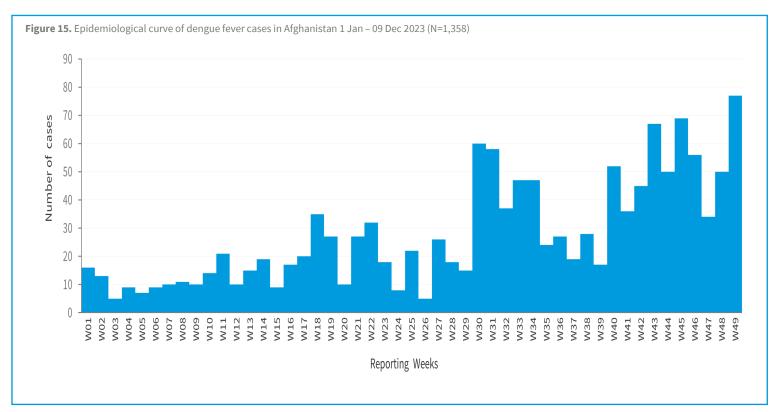
Table 6: Summary of the Dengue fever outbreak in the last eight weeks (15 Oct - 09 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	Trend line
Suspected cases	45	67	50	69	56	34	50	77	/
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	• • • • • • •

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- Overall, the epidemiological curve depicts a rising trend in suspected dengue fever cases starting from the last week of Aug 2023, this is the peak season for vector activities as reported during 2021 and 2022 outbreaks, as well (Figures 15 and 16).
- During week 49-2023, 77 suspected cases of dengue fever were reported from 2 provinces: Nangarhar 75 and Laghman 2, which shows 54.0% increase in the number of suspected cases of dengue fever compared to the week 48-2023.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,358 suspected cases of dengue fever and one death was reported (Figure 17), out of which, 652 (48.0%) were females and 1,326 (97.6%) were over 5 years of age.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 803 samples have been collected, out of which 269 were confirmed (positivity= 33.5%).



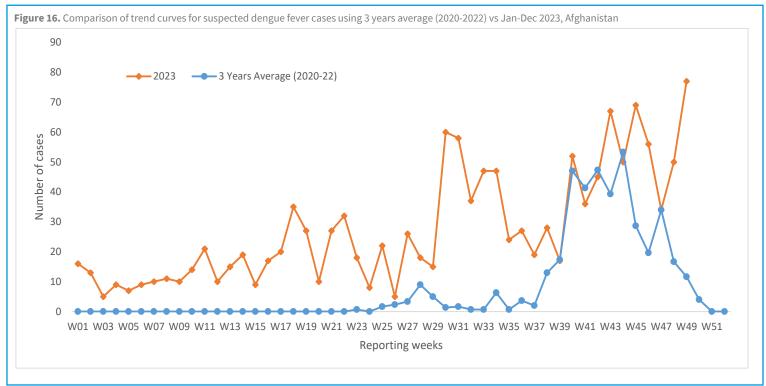
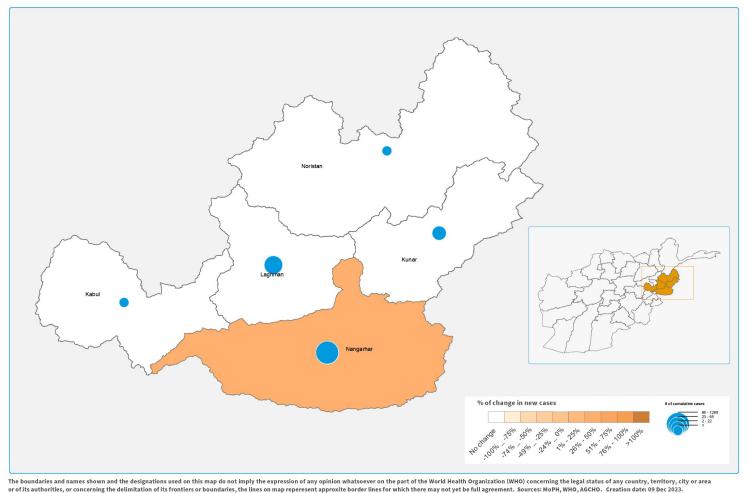




Figure 17. Geographical distribution of suspected dengue fever cases and percent change of new cases in Afghanistan, Jan - Dec 2023



Geographical distribution of suspected dengue fever cases in Afghanistan and weekly percent of changes (between weeks 48 and 49, 2023)



Response to the dengue fever outbreak

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 283 Kits (10 test/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 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.
- 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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