

INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS
SITUATION REPORT | Epidemiological week #50-2023



Disease Outbreaks	ARI (Jan - Dec 23)	COVID-19 (Feb 20 - Dec 23)	À AWD (Jan - Dec 23)	Measles (Jan - Dec 23)	CCHF (Jan - Dec 23)	Dengue fever (Jan - Dec 23)
Cumulative Cases (Data from 605 (98.7%) out of 613 surveillance sentinel sites	1,310,359	230,076	217,605	24,995	1,234	1,391
Death (CFR %)	2,644 (0.2)	7,969 (3.5)	100 (0.05)	64 (0.3)	114 (9.2)	1 (0.1)

Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) (1 Jan-16 Dec 2023)



*1,310,359
Total ARI Cases



*2,644
Total Deaths



**3,121
Samples tested for influenza



Lab confirmed influenza cases



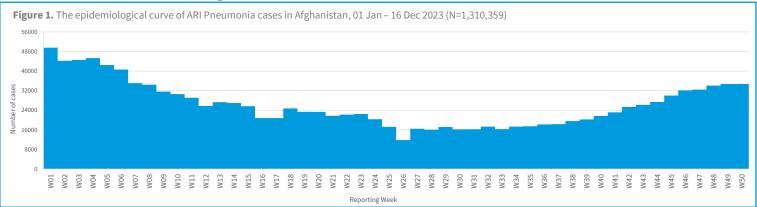
4.6
Influenza test positivity ratio

Table 1: Summary of the ARI outbreak in the last eight weeks (22 Oct - 16 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	Trend lines
Suspected cases	26,204	27,383	30,007	32,133	32,434	34,056	34,742 *	34,739	
Suspected deaths	45	48	57	56	51	77	59 *	65	
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 and ARI associated deaths during week 49-2023 and were modified from 34,583 to 34,742 and from 58 to 59, respectively.

- The epi curve shows an increase in 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 50-2023, 34,739 cases of ARI-pneumonia and 65 associated deaths were reported, which shows stabilization in the number of ARI cases compared to previous week.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,310,359 ARI cases and 2,644 deaths were reported from 34 provinces. Out of the total cases, 805,873 (61.5%) were under-five children and 648,341 (49.5%) were females (Figure 2).
- Out of total deaths, 2,178 (82.4%) were under-five children and 1,214 (45.9%) 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 enhancement of surveillance system and expansion of surveillance sentinel sites. (Figure 3).



^{*}Currently ARI related data (morbidity and mortality) are reported from 613 surveillance sentinel sites across 34 provinces in the country.

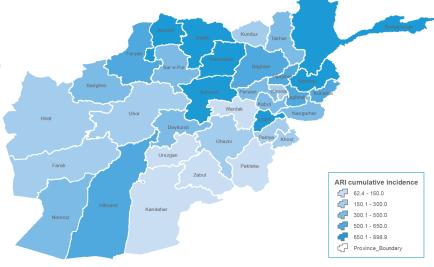
^{**}Currently, there are 10 functional influenza surveillance sentinel sites for both ILI and SARI in ten provinces of Afghanistan. At each site, there is one trained influenza surveillance assistant, collecting specimen and epidemiological data from 4 ILI and 6 SARI cases per week in ARI season and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

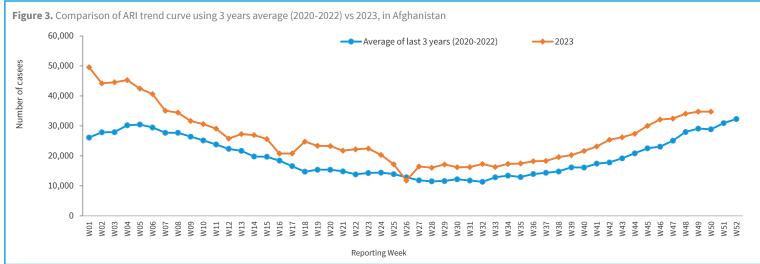


(N=1.310.359)

ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 16 Dec 2023

Figure 2. ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province, Afghanistan 01 Jan - 16 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 samples from SARI and ILI cases 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 sub-offices for quick differential diagnosis of ARI.

Case management

- During week 50-2023, a total of 35 medical doctors and specialists have been trained on ARI case management from East region. This brings the total number of HCWs trained on ARI case management to 1,411 from all 8 regions since Jan 2023.
- As a part of the 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)

- During week 50-2023, WHO printed and distributed 60,000 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on ARI to its regional sub-offices to raise awareness of communities ahead of winter months.
- On November 2023, a 9-day RCCE campaign has been conducted by WHO as part of winterization plan in Badakhshan province, covering awareness on winterrelated 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, 500,000 IEC materials on ARI have been distributed among targeted communities in 34 provinces since Jan 2023.



COVID-19 (24 Feb 2020 — 16 Dec 2023)

Cumulative samples tested 935,426 In public laboratories

New samples tested in week 50

3,079

In public laboratories

-12.2%

Cumulative confirmed cases 230,076

Cumulative percent positivity (24.6%)

New confirmed cases in week 50

348

In public laboratories (11.3%)

+4.2%

Cumulative confirmed deaths 7,969 CFR (3.5%) New confirmed deaths in week 50 Week 50 CFR (1.7%)

+100.0%

Key: ● Increasing ● Decreasing ● No change

COVID-19 Vaccination highlights

Fully vaccinated 15,577,202

Partially vaccinated 1,864,424

2,689,601

17,441,626

Note: During Week 50-2023, around 2,339 doses of various COVID-19 vaccines have been administered which shows 73.1% increase compared to week 49-2023.

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

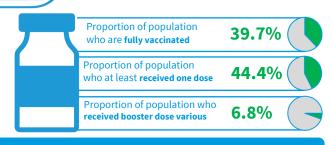


Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 indicators in the last 8 weeks in Afghanistan (22 Oct - 16 Dec 2023)

Indicators	1	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	Trend line
Samples tested (in publ	ic Labs)	3,256	3,217	3,250	3,532	3,020	2,720	3,508 *	3,079	
Confirmed cases		406	330	397	404	279	289	334 *	348	\
Percent positivity (%)		12.5	10.3	12.2	11.4	9.2	10.6	9.5	11.3	
Deaths		0	1	3	4	1	2	0	6	
CFR (%)		0.0	0.3	0.8	1.0	0.4	0.7	0.0	1.7	

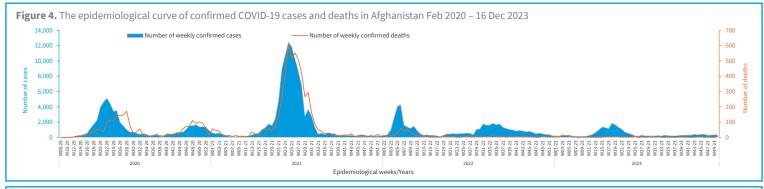
*A delayed reporting was experienced during week 49-2023, the number of samples tested was modified from 3,205 to 3,508 and the number of confirmed cases was modified from 320 to 334.

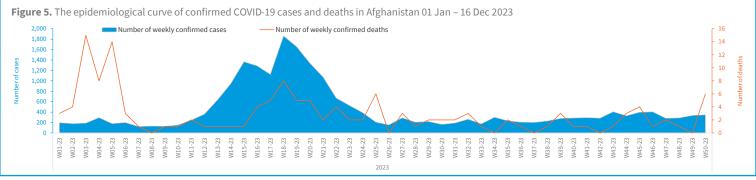
- The epidemiological curve indicates a stabilization in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases since the 3rd week of June 2023, which could be attributed to a decrease in reporting of infected individuals to healthcare facilities and an improvement in vaccination coverage among eligible populations across the country (44.4%).
- In week 50-2023, a total of 3,079 samples were tested in public labs, of which 348 samples were positive for COVID-19 (positivity rate 11.3%) with 6 associated deaths. The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases shows stabilization compared to week 49-2023 while the number of deaths increased from zero to 6 (Figures 4-5).
- The six COVID-19 associated deaths were reported from 5 provinces: Badakhshan (1), Kabul (1), Kunar (1), Nangarhar (2), and Nimroz (1).
- Since the beginning of the pandemic in Feb 2020, a total of 935,426 samples have been tested for COVID-19 through public laboratories.
- During week 50-2023, among 348 confirmed cases 4.6% (16 cases) were hospitalized, whereas among 16 hospitalized cases 6.3% (1 case) were admitted to ICU (Figure 6).

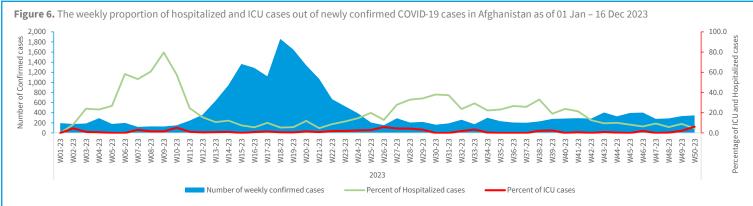
Response:

- 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 to 16 Dec 2023)

Table 3: Summary of the AWD with Dehydration outbreak in the last eight weeks (22 Oct - 16 Dec 2023)

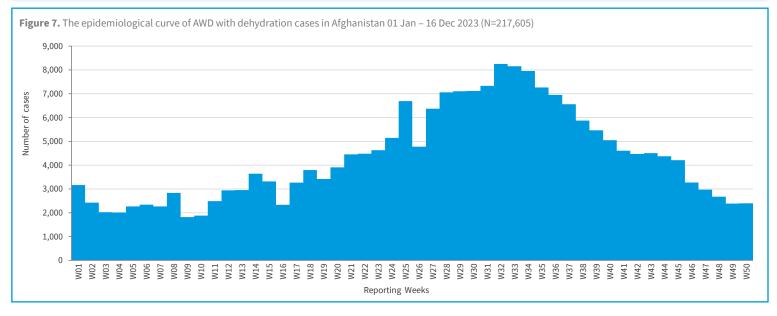
Indicators	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	Trend line
Suspected cases	4,503	4,372	4,207	3,272	2,969	2,676	2,382 *	2,395	
Suspected deaths	3	0	1	0	0	2	4	1	
CFR (%)	0.07	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.17	0.04	

*Data entry error was experienced in the number of suspected AWD with dehydration cases in week 49-2023 and was modified from 2,399 to 2,382.

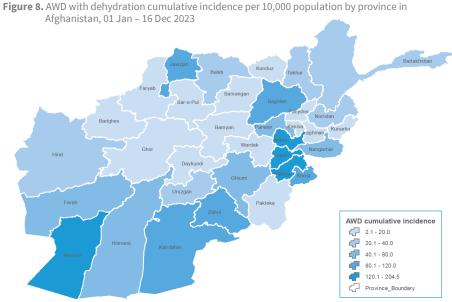
- The epi-curve of AWD with dehydration cases shows a decreasing trend since the 4th week of August 2023. This decline could be explained by seasonal changes, conclusion of the summer season in the country.
- During week 50-2023; 2,395 AWD with dehydration cases and 1 associated death were reported from 138 districts which shows stabilization in the number of suspected cases Figure 7 & 8).
- The new AWD with dehydration associated death was an over-5 male from Kunar province.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 217,605 AWD with dehydration cases were reported, out of which 124,211 (57.1%) were

- under-five children and 108,346 (49.8%) were females.
- During week 50-2023, no new district reported an alert of AWD with dehydration and the number of districts reported AWD with dehydration remained at 334.
- A total of 5,912 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 16 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

- 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, 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

During first two weeks of December (01-15 Dec 2023), the following activities were conducted as WASH response:

- Chlorination of almost 7,000 wells in 9 provinces (Badghis, Ghazni, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, Logar, Wardak, Paktya and Zabul) which supported 124,000 people.
- Distribution of aqua tabs and soap in the South region (Kandahar and Uruzgan) which benefited 185,000 individuals.
- Installation of handwashing facilities in 5 provinces (Ghazni, Kandahar, Khost, Logar and Paktya) supported 14,000 individuals.
- Hygiene Kits distributions in 18 provinces (Badakhshan, Badghis, Balkh, Daikundi, Ghazni, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktya, Takhar, Uruzgan and Zabul) reached 110,000 individuals.
- Household water treatment promotion campaigns in 6 provinces (Badghis, Balkh, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, and Kunar) benefited 2,000 people.
- Hygiene Promotion sessions in 18 provinces (Badakhshan, Badghis, Balkh, Ghazni, Hirat, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Kunduz, Laghman, Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, Paktika, Paktya, Uruzgan and Zabul) reached 102,000 individuals.

- Installation/rehabilitation of latrines in 11 provinces (Badakhshan, Badghis, Balkh, Ghazni, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Logar, Paktika, and Paktya) supported 1.800 individuals.
- Rehabilitation or new set-up of water supply system in 13 provinces (Badghis, Balkh, Ghazni, Hirat, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Logar, Wardak, Nangarhar, Paktya and Zabul) supported 12,500 individuals.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- On Oct 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.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 357 (including 117 females)
 MoPH staff, healthcare workers and community mobilizers 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 have been printed and distributed among targeted communities in 34 provinces.

Measles Outbreak

(01 Jan to 16 Dec 2023)



Total Cases



Total Deaths



Sample tested



Lab confirmed cases



48.0%

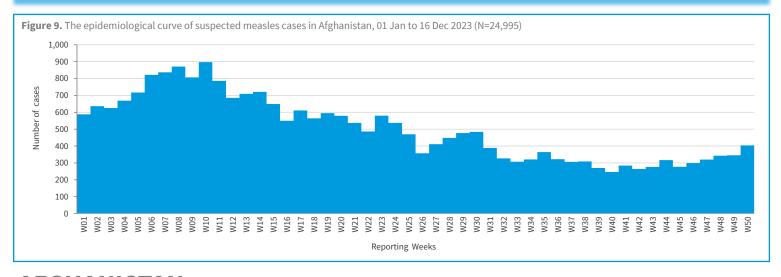
Test positivity rate

Table 4: Summary of the suspected measles outbreak in the last eight weeks (22 Oct - 16 Dec 2023)

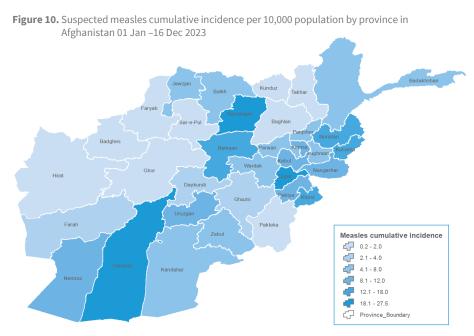
Indicators	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	Trend line
Suspected cases	276	317	277	299	320	343	345	404	
Suspected deaths	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	
CFR (%)	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	

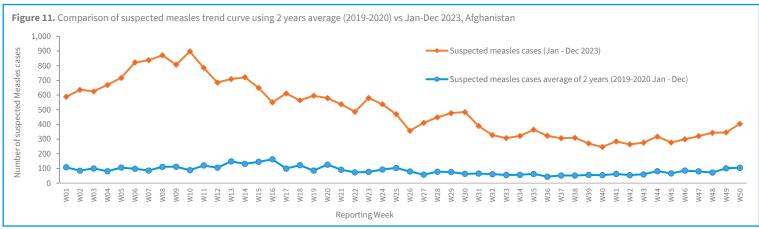
- The epidemiological curve of suspected measles cases demonstrates a rising trend since the third week of November 2023, which could be explained by increased community transmission exacerbated by the winter season and low immunization coverage (Figure 9).
- During week 50-2023, a total of 404 suspected cases with no measles associated deaths were reported which shows 17.1% increase in the number of suspected measles cases compared to the previous week.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 24,995 suspected measles cases and 64 deaths (CFR=0.3%) were reported, out of which 17,789 (71.2%) were under-five children and 11,782 (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 16 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 50-2023, a total of 5,398 children aged 9-59 months were vaccinated against measles outbreak in Mazar-e-sharif district of Balkh (5,363) and Rohani Baba district of Paktya (35) provinces as part of the measles outbreak response activities by the implementing NGOs. This brings the total number of children aged 9-59 months vaccinated against measles to 13,170.
- 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 to 16 Dec 2023)

Table 5: Summary of the CCHF outbreak in the last eight weeks (22 Oct - 16 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	Trend line
Suspected cases	10	11	11	7	7	5	3	0	
Suspected deaths	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	•
CFR (%)	20.0	27.3	0.0	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 50-2023, no new suspected CCHF cases and associated deaths were reported, which shows a 100.0% decrease in the number of suspected CCHF cases compared to week 49-2023 (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%).

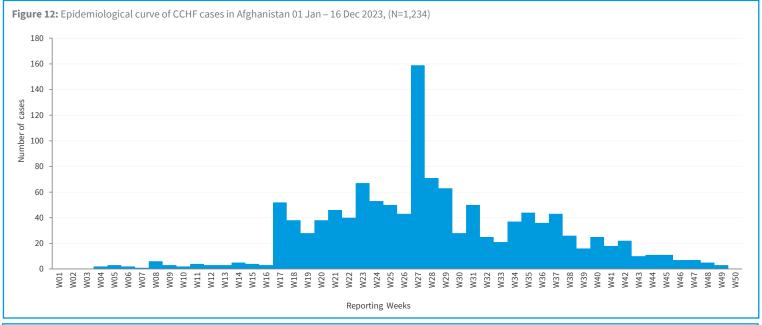
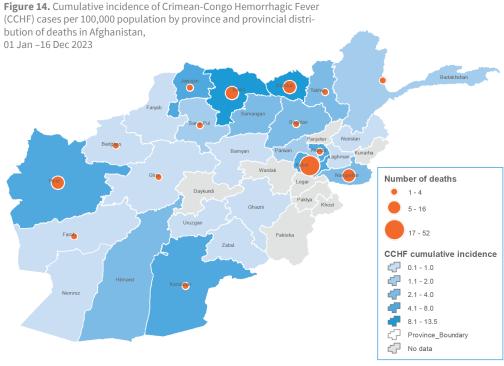


Figure 13. Comparison of trend curves for suspected CCHF cases using 3 years average (2020-2022) vs Jan-Dec 2023, Afghanistan 180 Average after COVID-19 (2020 - 2022) -2023 160 140 No. of suspected cases 120 100 80 60 40 20 Ω W19 W20 W34 W35 W36 W38 W39 W40 W17 W18 W21 W24 W25 W26 W28 W29 W31 W32 W33 W37 W41 Reporting week

Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases cumulative incidence per 100,000 population by province as of 16 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

- As part of UN-to-UN agreement a technical training was conducted in early December 2023 for 70 veterinarians by the Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) on case definition, use of PPE, ticks sample collection, storage, and transportation to Central Veterinary Diagnostic and Research Laboratory (CVDRL) 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, 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

- 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)

 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 to 16 Dec 2023)









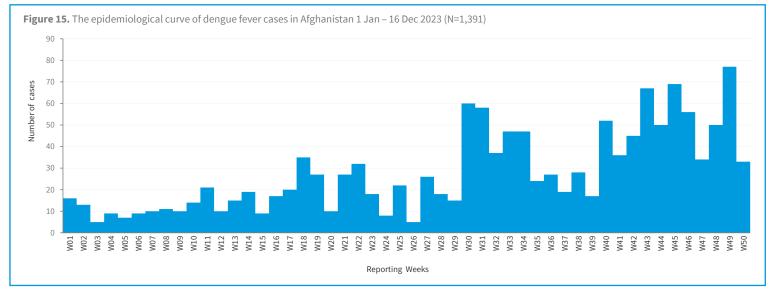
Lab confirmed cases



Table 6: Summary of the Dengue fever outbreak in the last eight weeks (22 Oct - 16 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	W49	W50	Trend line
Suspected cases	67	50	69	56	34	50	77	33	\\\
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 is the peak season for vector activities as reported during 2021 and 2022 outbreaks (Figures 15 and 16).
- During week 50-2023, 33 suspected cases of dengue fever were reported from only Nangarhar province which shows 57.1% decrease in the number of suspected cases of dengue fever compared to the week 49-2023.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,391 suspected cases of dengue fever and one death was reported (Figure 17), out of which, 667 (48.0%) were females and 1,358 (97.6%) were over 5 years of age.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 860 samples have been collected, out of which 310 were confirmed (positivity= 36.0%).



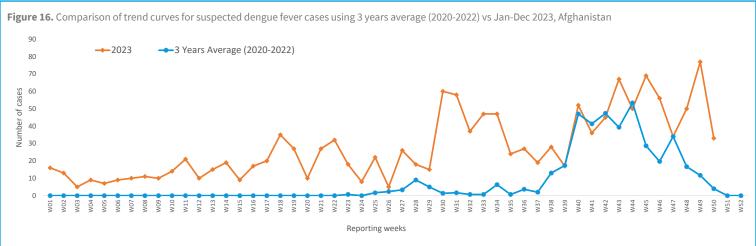
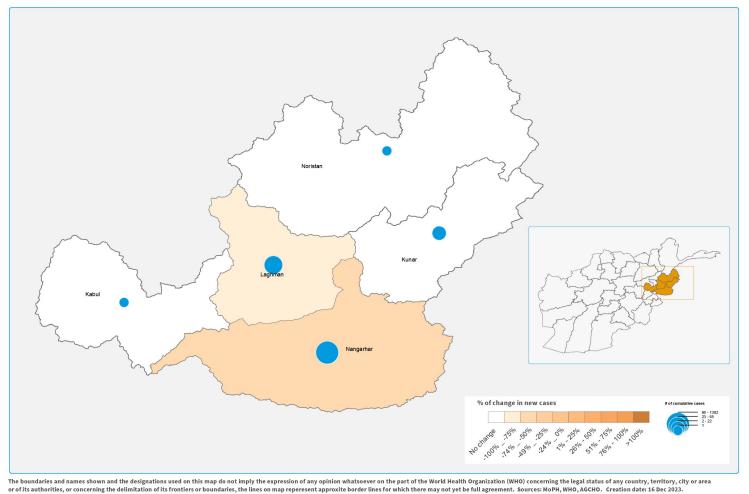




Figure 17. Geographical distribution of suspected dengue fever cases and percent change of new cases in Afghanistan, Jan - Dec 2023



Geographical distribution of suspected dengue fever cases in Afghanistan and weekly percent of changes (between weeks 49 and 50, 2023)



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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