KEY UPDATES:

- Conflict escalated in the northeastern region on 28 September with an attack by non-state armed groups on Kunduz City. The conflict has resulted in multiple civilian casualties, major disruptions in health service provision and large-scale displacement of people to northern provinces.
- 13 health facilities in Nangarhar province, 12 in Helmand, 3 in Uruzgan and 1 health facility in Paktia province have been closed due to insecurity and threats against health workers.
- WHO continues to support mass casualty management preparedness and response in high-risk provinces by training medical officers on stabilization of trauma cases and basic life support.
- Public information campaign highlighted prevention measures and common symptoms of the Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) targeting pilgrims returning from Hajj.

PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The new Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) was introduced into the routine immunization schedule of Afghanistan on 30 September—the vaccine is free and now available at all health facilities.
- WHO, UNICEF, IMC, and HNITPO supported polio vaccinations for over 180,000 children <10 in Khost and Paktika.
- WHO supplied medicines and trauma kits to Faryab Public Health Directorate for trauma care interventions in response to the ongoing conflict.
- WHO and the Ministry of Public Health conducted a training on gender mainstreaming in humanitarian health action for 30 Health Cluster members, including EPHS/BPHS implementers, NGOs and UN agencies.
- WHO conducted training on Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) for 44 Disease Early Warning System (DEWS) focal points.
- Community mobilization for safe slaughtering practices during Eid days conducted by the zoonotic committee.
- Malaria outbreak investigation and response in Laghman was conducted in collaboration with MoPH/NMLCP, SCA and HNITPO. With the support of WHO, 3,632 houses were sprayed with anti-malarial medicines and 12 laboratory technicians were hired for active case finding.
- MoPH and SCA prepositioned anti-malaria drugs to Laghman and 12,526 people received health education on malaria prevention and symptoms.
MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH RISKS AND CHALLENGES:

- The ongoing conflict in the North has caused internal displacement and serious disruption of health services.
- There is a risk of communicable disease outbreaks in the displacement camps in the North.
- As pilgrims return from Hajj from Saudi Arabia, the common symptoms of the Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS CoV) must be closely monitored and reported.
- CCHF continues to be a public health risk in Afghanistan.

Disease cases during week 39/2015 (DEWS):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>&lt; 5 years</th>
<th>≥ 5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>6574</td>
<td>19558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWD</td>
<td>4296</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWD with Dehydration</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute Bloody Diarrhea</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningitis</td>
<td>1006</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute Viral Hepatitis</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neonatal Tetanus</td>
<td>2216</td>
<td>1186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typhoid Fever</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY MESSAGES:

- WHO urges all parties in conflict to respect the safety and neutrality of health workers and health facilities.
- WHO calls on all governments and military officers to observe their obligations under international law and to ensure the protection of health services in conflict.
- Daily surveillance for communicable diseases and injuries is needed to enable effective preparedness and action.
- Proper monitoring of the IDP situation and addressing WASH, food and shelter issues as well as gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response are key priorities.
- MERS-CoV: If Hajj travellers develop a significant acute respiratory illness with fever and cough during the two weeks after their return, they should immediately seek medical attention.

Programme Update
Emergency Humanitarian Action WHO Afghanistan

Contact:
Dr Iman Shankiti, Health Cluster and Emergency Coordinator
Email: shankiti@who.int

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