



WHO Representative's Office in Iraq

Daily Situation Report on Cholera Outbreak in Northern Iraq

Sitrep number: 11; Date of Reporting: 18th of September 2007

1. New Developments

- a. **Basra:** (Modiana district) On the 17th of September, a 7 month; breast and bottle fed child, presenting with fever and diarrhea for 6 days tested positive for *vibrio cholera* of the *Inaba serotype*. The isolate was sent on 18th of September to the CPHL for confirmation.
- b. **Diala:** The stool samples of 2 out of the 3 patients (reported on sitrep 10) tested negative for cholera organism in Baquba general hospital, however, original stool and isolate were sent to Central public Health laboratory in Baghdad for confirmation.
- c. **Tikrit:** No secondary cases were reported following the case reported in sitrep 10.
- d. **Falluja:** For the first time in 2 years, WHO was able to establish daily reports with Falluja general hospital and falluja health centers. Daily reports shows that a diarrhoeal disease surveillance has been set and stool samples are collected from 15% of admitted diarrhea cases. All specimens collected since the beginning of the month were negative for cholera organism.
- e. **Mosul :** Despite high quality surveillance no additional suspect or confirmed cases were reported from Mosul directorate of health following cases reported in sitrep 10 .
In response to Mosul cholera cases; a team from CDC/Mosul, food inspection sector, environment and WHO medical officer in Mosul visited today 17th Sep. 2007 Al Aqsa PHCC and the location where confirmed cholera cases were reported; for further investigation and assessment of the health condition of the family, active case finding, environmental assessment and assessing the preparedness of the PHCC.
The visit revealed the followings:
- f. Nobody from the affected family and 3 near by families living in the area developed diarrhea during the last week. These families also utilize river water for drinking and other domestic activities.
- g. Chlorine level in the village near these farms was acceptable during visit.
Assessment of Al Aqsa PHCC showed the followings:
- h. No significant increase in the number of diarrhea cases reported during the period 1-17th sep.2007.
- i. No reporting of acute watery diarrhea as well.
- j. Chlorine level in water network is tested everyday and the level was acceptable (above 0.5 ppm) in 81% of the readings during the period 1-17 Sep. 2007.
- k. There is adequate amount of Tetracycline cap. And Erythromycin syrup but the PHCC lacked ORS powder and Doxycyclin cap.

OVERVIEW

As of 18th of September 2007, 25 districts of Northern Iraq have reported laboratory-confirmed cases of cholera. All the 12 districts of Sulaymaniyah governorate, all five districts of Kirkuk governorate and 4 out of seven districts of Erbil governorate are now affected by this cholera outbreak.

This outbreak, first unfolded in Kirkuk province on 14 August spread to Sulaymaniyah governorate on 25 August and then to Erbil governorate on 6th of September. The outbreak has so far caused 10 deaths and continues to be a major threat to public health in the region. Over 3.4 million people living in these areas are presumed to be exposed to this epidemic risk.

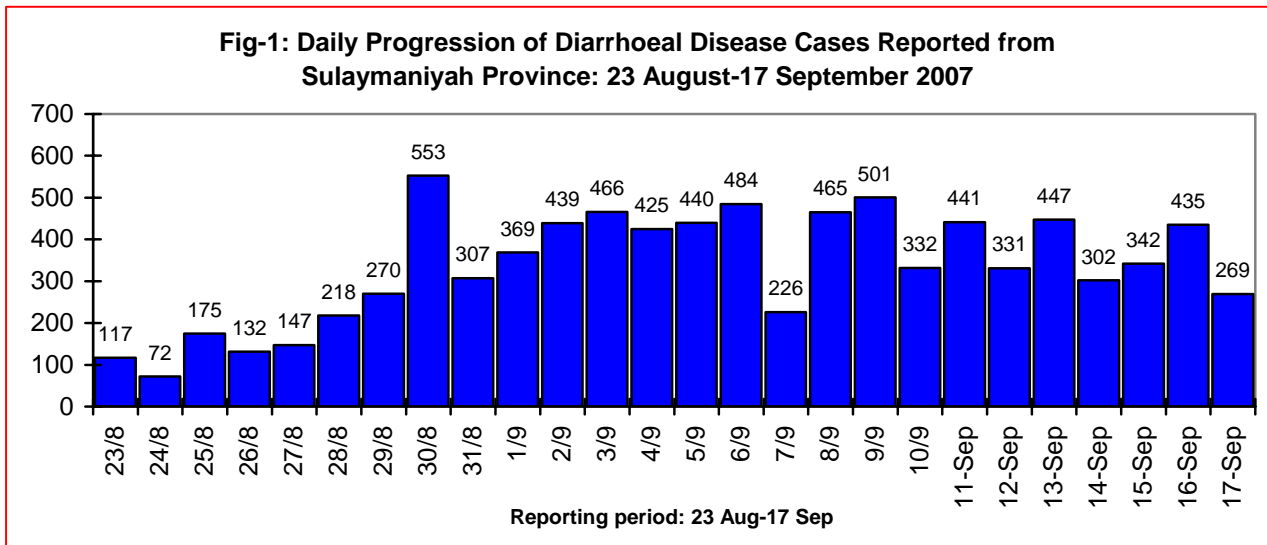
Table-1: Cases of diarrhoeal diseases reported from three provinces of Northern Iraq

Province	No of districts affected	Date outbreak started	No of deaths reported	No of laboratory- confirmed case of cholera
Sulaymaniyah	16	23/08/07	9	505
Kirkuk	5	14/08/07	1	717
Erbil	2	06/09/07	0	66

Specific control measures to contain this ongoing outbreak and limit its spread to other areas have been reinforced by the health authorities of the affected provinces with technical support from WHO.

2. PATTERN OF TRANSMISSION IN SULAYMANIYAH PROVINCE

Although the number of diarrhea cases, as illustrated in figure-1, has not shown any definite peak, it is expected that with the improvement of surveillance system, already visible, the transmission pattern of diarrhoea could be better explained in the coming weeks. Therefore, owing to lack of comprehensive surveillance data, the overall epidemiological trend of the prevailing situation needs to be interpreted with caution. Although diarrhea is mainly a disease of children, however, 80% of reported cases are among >5 year old population. Another feature of this out break is that 54% of cases are among females which point the fact most of the infection is most probably indoors rather than out door.



3. PATTERN OF TRANSMISSION IN KIRKUK PROVINCE

Nothing to add to yesterday's report..

4. PATTERN OF TRANSMISSION IN ERBIL PROVINCE

4 out of the 7 districts in Erbil governorate have reported 66 laboratory-confirmed case of *Vibrio cholerae*. The total number of cases of diarrhoeal disease reported from this province from 1st of September to 17th of September stands at 24940 with no death which is reflects good case management. Erbil seems to have a fairly sensitive diarrhea disease surveillance system that was able to pick up cholera cases very early and swiftly responded and contained the first few cases.

5. SITUATION IN REST OF IRAQ

Nothing to add to yesterday's report.

