The coronavirus disease COVID-19 continues to spread at the regional and global levels. As of 12 December 2020, the global cumulative incidence reached is 69 521 294 reported cases and 1 582 674 associated deaths with a case fatality ratio (CFR) of 2.3%. Meanwhile, the 22 countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) have reported a total of 4 533 815 cases, which represent about 6.5% of the global count, with 112 649 associated deaths (CFR 2.5%). Most countries in the Region are in the community transmission phase.

Since the beginning of the outbreak, the country that has reported the highest number of total cases in the Region is Islamic Republic of Iran (1 115 770 cases; 24.6% of the Region's total), followed by Iraq (575 972; 12.0%) and Pakistan (440 787; 9.7%). Islamic Republic of Iran also reported the highest number of total associated deaths (52 447; CFR 4.7%) followed by Iraq (12 603; CFR 2.1%) and Pakistan (8832; CFR 2%). The highest CFRs were reported by Yemen (29.0%) followed by Sudan (6.2%), while the lowest CFRs were reported by Qatar (0.2%) followed by United Arab Emirates (0.3%) and Bahrain (0.4%).

During epidemiological week 50, the Region reported a decrease in cases of 16.8% when compared to the previous week (201 806 cases compared to 242 688 cases). Similarly, a 12.6% decrease was observed for associated deaths (4424 deaths compared to 5066 deaths).

Occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Pakistan and Egypt reported a relative increase in COVID-19 activity. The cumulative number of cases in oPt increased from 94 861 to 126 205 (37.7% increase), Pakistan from 418 861 to 440 787 (15.7% increase) and Egypt from 119 011 to 122 086 (14.7% increase). Syria, Pakistan, oPt and Egypt had the largest relative increase in deaths.

In terms of testing, a total of 63 090 701 laboratory PCR tests were conducted since the start of the outbreak across the Region including 2 998 675 tests in week 50, which shows a 13% increase compared to the previous week (2 607 534). The highest number of PCR tests were reported from United Arab Emirates (18.5 million), followed by Saudi Arabia (10.4 million) and Islamic Republic of Iran (6.7 million). The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are performing the highest rate of testing per capita (1872/1000 and 1295/1000, respectively). The average positivity rate for the Region is 7%. WHO recommends a positivity rate of around 3–12% as a general benchmark indicating adequate testing, which was achieved in most countries of the Region.

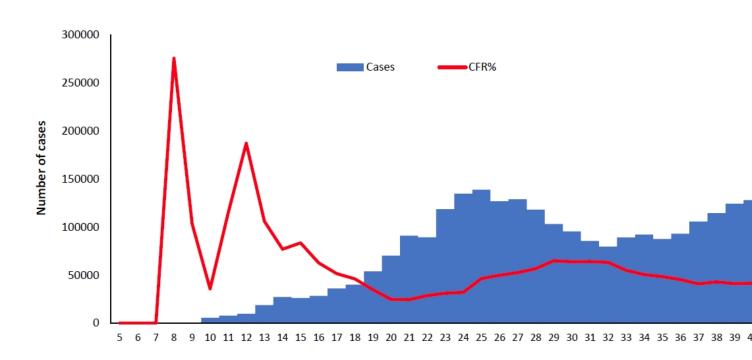
Supporting countries in the Region

The regional incident management support team continues to coordinate the response and provide technical support to countries and partners in the Region in the areas of coordination and partnership, surveillance, laboratory capacity, clinical management, infection prevention and control, risk communication and community engagement, points of entry according to the International Health Regulations (2005), research, health systems, and essential health services among others. Activities this week included:

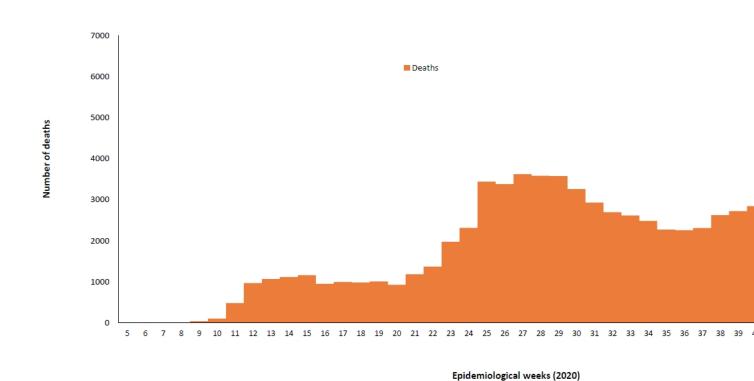
Providing technical support and guidance to adopt the tools for COVID 19 pandemic through mitigating package;

training participants in Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan and Tunisia policy dialog during and beyond crisis for reproductive, material, new-born, child and adolescent health; and

conducting a mission to Lebanon to support COVID-19 response.



Epidemiological weeks (2020)



For more data from the Region, please visit the COVID-19 dashboard.

<u>Subscribe</u> to the monthly infectious hazard preparedness newsletter of WHO's Health Emergencies Programme for latest data and analysis on epidemic- and pandemic-prone diseases, as well as news on outbreak preparedness and response within WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region.

Thursday 11th of April 2024 12:23:18 AM