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INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS

SITUATION REPORT | Epidemiological week #48-2023

No. 48 (26 Nov–02 Dec 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 <small>(Data from 598 (97.6%) out of 613 surveillance sentinel sites)</small>	1,237,782	229,372	212,805	24,198	1,231	1,281
Death (CFR %)	2,513 (0.2)	7,964 (3.5)	95 (0.04)	64 (0.3)	114 (9.3)	1 (0.1)

Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) (1 Jan-02 Dec 2023)



1,237,782
Total ARI Cases



2,513
Total Deaths



*2,900
Samples tested for influenza



123
Lab confirmed influenza cases



4.2
Influenza test positivity ratio

**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.

Table 1: Summary of the ARI outbreak in the last eight weeks (8 Oct - 02 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	Trend lines
Suspected cases	23,140	25,349	26,204	27,383	30,007	32,133	32,434 *	30,980	
Suspected deaths	45	59	45	48	57	56	51 *	70	
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 suspected cases of ARI and ARI associated deaths during week 47 and were modified from 30,344 to 32,434 and from 44 to 51, respectively.

- The epi curve shows an increase of ARI suspected 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 48-2023, 30,980 cases of suspected ARI-pneumonia and 70 ARI pneumonia associated deaths were reported, which shows 4.7% decrease in the number of suspected cases and 37.3% increase in the number of ARI associated deaths compared to week 47.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,237,782 cases and 2,513 deaths were reported from 34 provinces across the coun-

- try. Out of the total cases, 761,631 (61.5%) were under-five children and 612,484 (49.5%) were females (Figure 2).
- Out of total deaths, 2,066 (82.2%) were under-five children and 1,154 (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 improved surveillance system (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Epidemiological curve of ARI cases in 34 provinces, 01 Jan – 02 Dec 2023 (N=1,237,782)

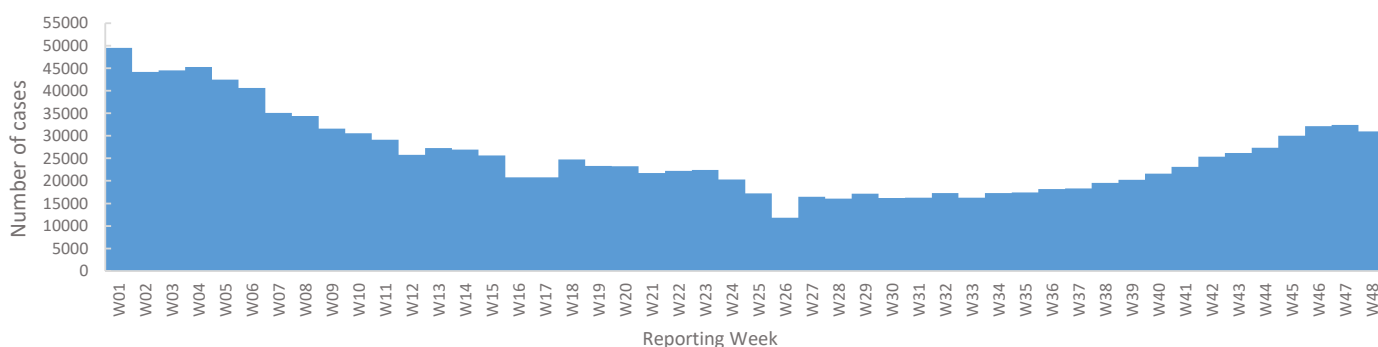




Figure 2. ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province, Afghanistan 01 Jan – 02 Dec 2023

(N=1,237,782)

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ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 02 Dec 2023

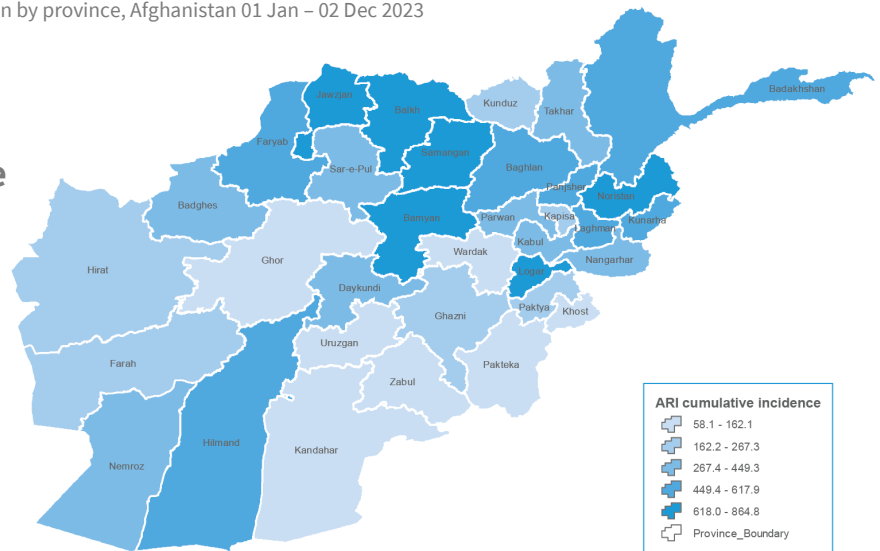
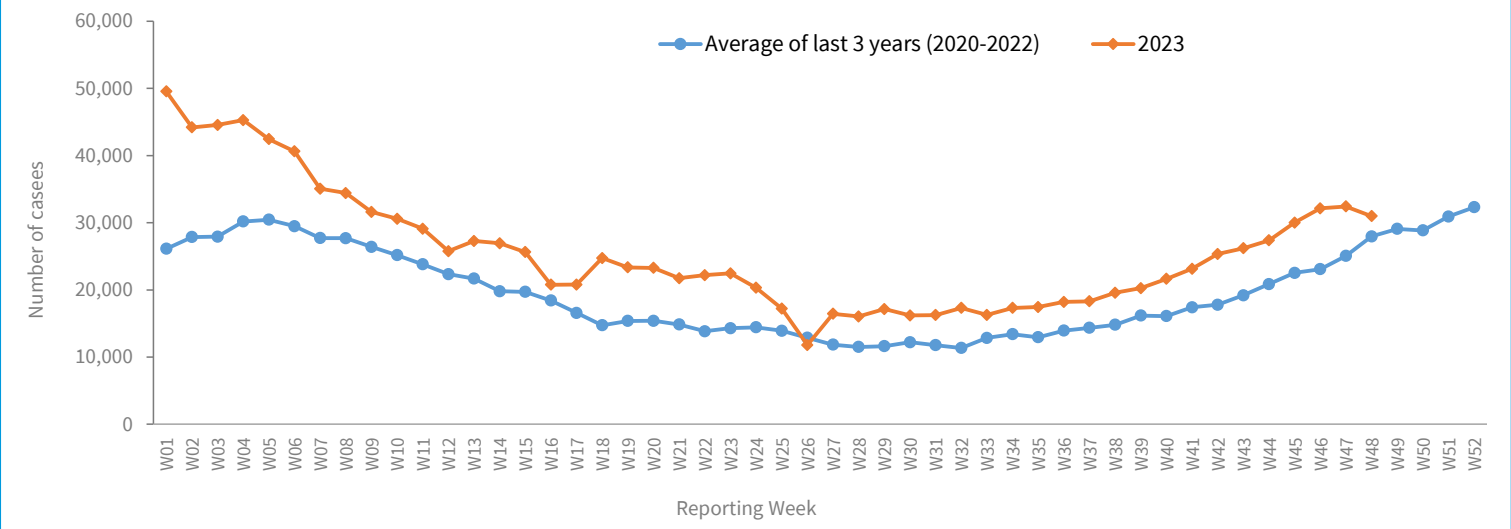


Figure 3. Comparison of ARI trend curve using 3 years average (2020-2022) vs 2023, in Afghanistan



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 influenza's 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.

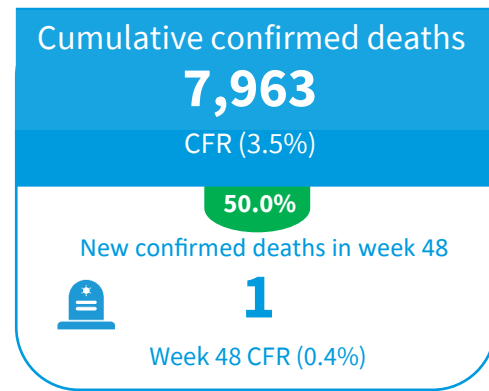
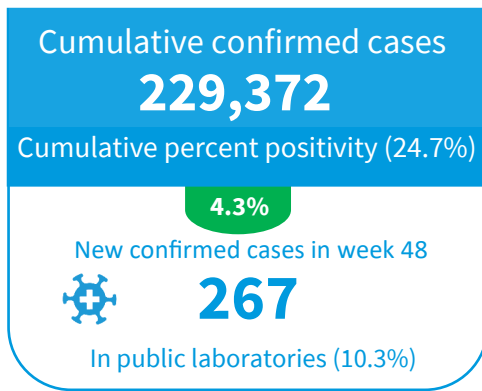
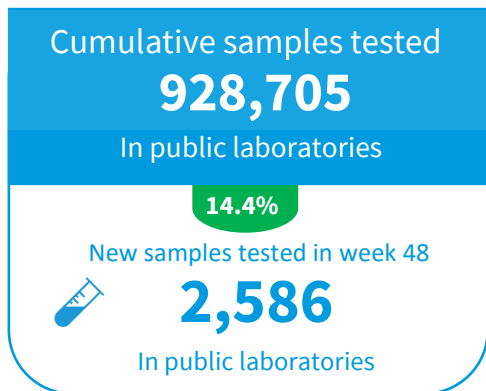
Case management

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,376 HCWs have been trained on ARI case management from all 8 regions across the country.
- As a part of winter preparedness plan to ARI, a total of 397 different types of case management kits have been pre-positioned in Kabul, WHO warehouse since Jan 2023, which will be pre-positioned to all regional sub-offices.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

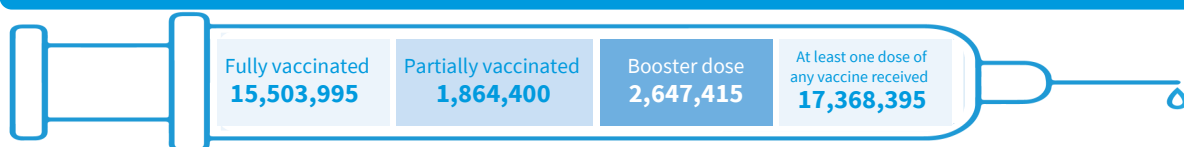
- Since Jan 2023, a 9-day RCCE campaign has been conducted by WHO as a winterization plan in Badakhshan province, covering awareness on winter related diseases including ARI. Thirty-five social mobilizers, including 17 women, have been trained and deployed in their respective districts to implement campaign 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 – 02 Dec 2023)



Key: ● Increasing ● Decreasing ● No change

COVID-19 Vaccination highlights



Note: During Week 47-2023, around 95,369 doses of various COVID-19 vaccines have been administered.
Total population: 39,269,174 (Ref: UN estimation, AFG CMYP 2022)

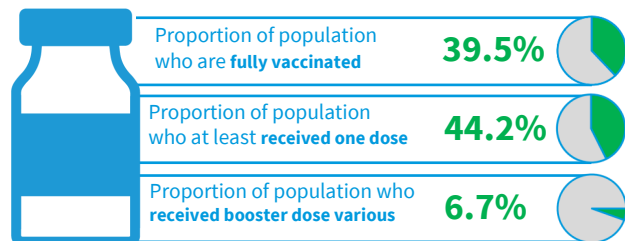


Table 2: Summary of COVID-19 indicators in the last 8 weeks in Afghanistan (8 Oct - 02 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47 *	W48	Trendline
Samples tested (in public Labs)	2,618	2,655	3,256	3,217	3,250	3,532	3,020	2,586	
Confirmed cases	284	265	406	330	397	404	279	267	
Percent positivity (%)	10.8	10.0	12.5	10.3	12.2	11.4	9.2	10.3	
Deaths	1	0	1	3	4	1	2	1	
CFR (%)	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.9	1.0	0.2	0.7	0.4	

*A delayed reporting was experienced during week 47-2023, the number of samples tested was modified from 2,728 to 3,020 and number of confirmed cases was modified from 254 to 279.

- 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 population across the country (44.2%).
- In week 48-2023, a total of 2,586 samples were tested in public labs, of which 267 samples were positive for COVID-19 (positivity rate 10.3%) and 1 associated death was reported. The number of samples tested and COVID-19 associated deaths decreased by 14.4% and 50% respectively compared to week 47-2023 (Figures 4-5).
- The new death was an over 18 years female from Kunar province.
- Since the beginning of the pandemic in Feb 2020, a total of 928,705 samples have been tested for COVID-19 through public laboratories.
- During week 48-2023, 6.4% (17/267 confirmed cases) were hospitalized, whereas 1 out of 17 hospitalized cases was admitted to ICU (Figure 6).

Response:

- Since the beginning of 2023, a total of 30,500 COVID 19 RDTs have been delivered to all 34 provinces across the country.
- 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.

Figure 4. Epidemiological curve of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths in Afghanistan Feb 2020 – 02 Dec 2023

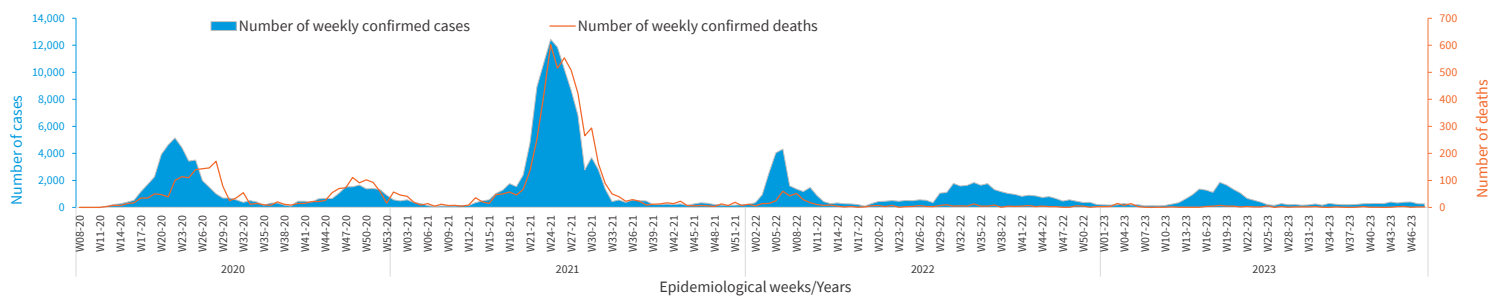


Figure 5. Epidemiological curve of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths in Afghanistan 01 Jan – 02 Dec 2023

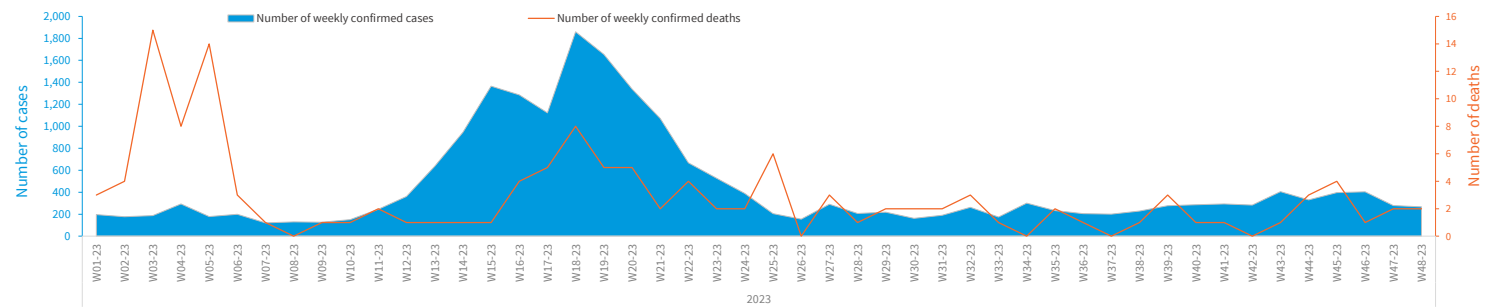
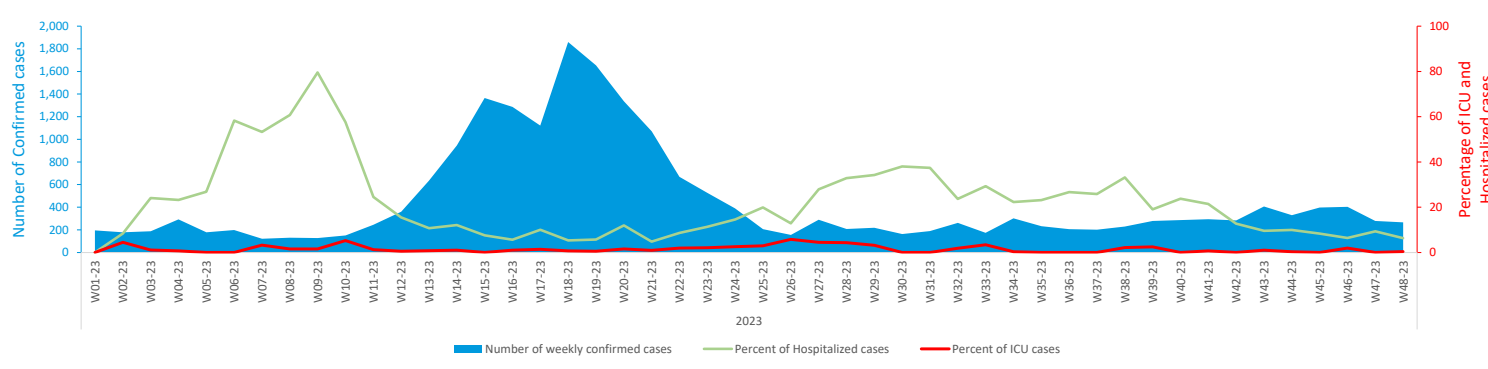


Figure 6. Weekly proportion of hospitalized and ICU cases out of newly confirmed COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan as of 01 Jan – 02 Dec 2023



Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) with Dehydration Outbreak (01 Jan to 02 Dec 2023)

Table 3: Summary of the AWD with Dehydration outbreak in the last eight weeks (8 Oct - 02 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	Trend line
Suspected cases	4,604	4,470	4,503	4,372	4,207	3,272	2,969 *	2653	
Suspected deaths	0	3	3	0	1	0	0	2	
CFR (%)	0.00	0.07	0.07	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.08	

*Delayed reporting was experienced in the number of suspected AWD with dehydration cases in week 47 and were modified from 2,622 to 2,969.

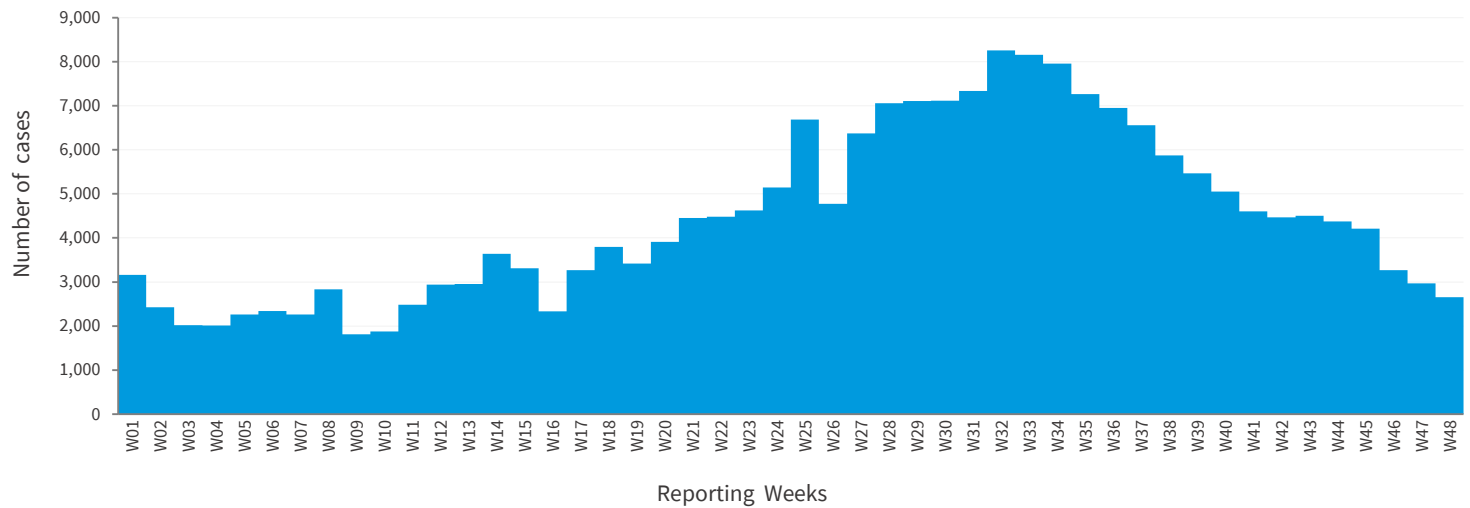
- The epi-curve of AWD with dehydration cases shows a decreasing trend since the 4th week of August 2023. This decline could be explained by seasonal changes, conclusion of the summer season in the country.
- During week 48-2023; 2,653 AWD with dehydration suspected cases and 2 AWD with dehydration associated deaths were reported from 138 districts which shows a 10.6% decrease in the number of suspected cases compared to last week (Figure 7).
- The new AWD with dehydration associated deaths were both under 5, one male from Kabul and another female

from Baghlan province.

- Since Jan 2023, a total of 212,805 AWD with dehydration cases were reported, out of which 121,483 (57.1%) were under-five children and 105,938 (49.8%) were females (Figure 8).
- During week 48-2023, no new district reported alert of AWD with dehydration and the number of districts reported AWD with dehydration remained at 334.
- A total of 5,678 rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) were conducted among AWD with dehydration cases since the beginning of 2023.



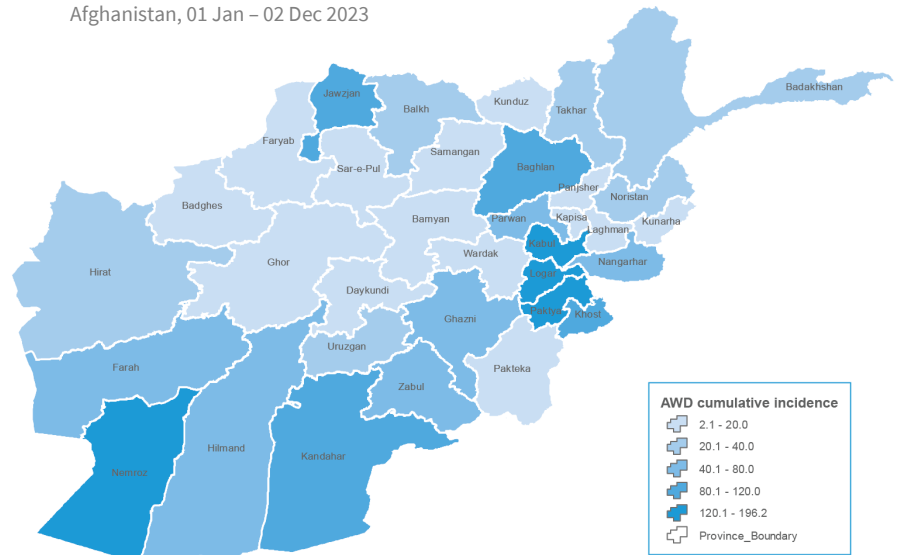
Figure 7. Epidemiological curve of AWD with dehydration cases in Afghanistan 01 Jan – 02 Dec 2023 (N=212,805)



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AWD with dehydration cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 02 Dec 2023

Figure 8. AWD with dehydration cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province in Afghanistan, 01 Jan – 02 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

- During week 48-2023, electronic surveillance reporting has been expanded to additional 71 surveillance sentinel sites at health facility level, the training was provided for 71 surveillance focal points (including 7 females). This brings the total number of sentinel sites reporting through e-surveillance to 325.
- 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

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 facilities 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 sessions to around 2,000 individuals in 5 provinces (Badakhshan, Balkh, Herat, Kunduz and Nangarhar).
- Conducting of hygiene Promotion session 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 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 02 Dec 2023)

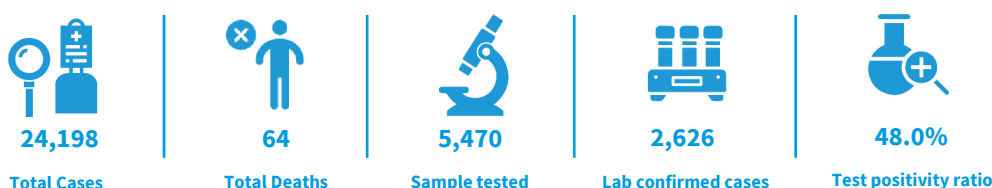


Table 4: Summary of the suspected measles outbreak in the last eight weeks (8 Oct - 02 Dec 2023)

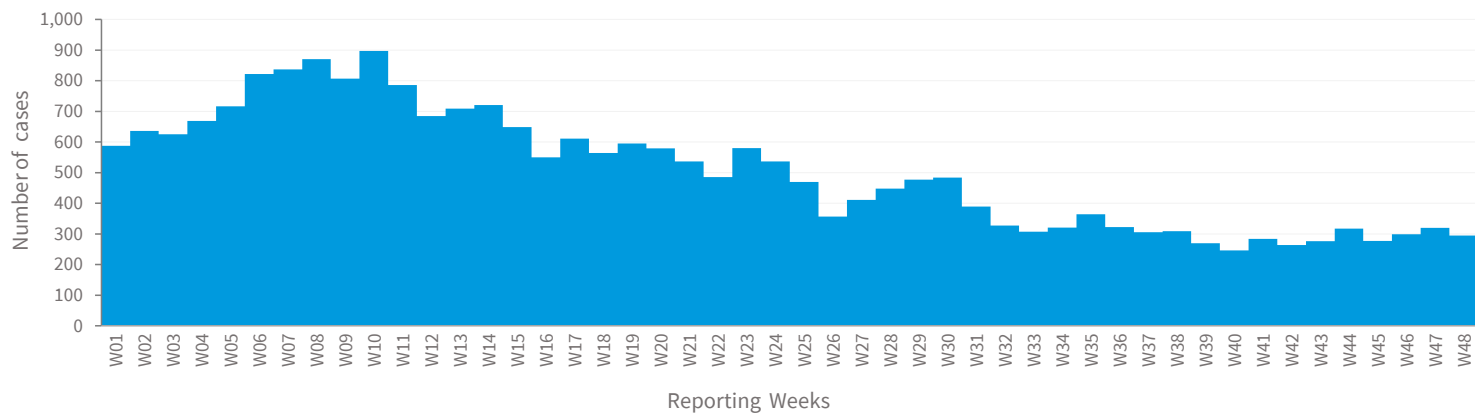
Indicators	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	Trend line
Suspected cases	284	264	276	317	277	299	320 *	295	
Suspected deaths	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	
CFR (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	

*Delayed data reporting was experienced during week 47 in the number of suspected measles cases was modified from 267 to 320.

- The epi curve of measles suspected cases shows a consistent stabilization for the last 8 weeks, maintaining an average of 292 cases during this period (Figure 9).
- During week 48-2023, a total of 295 suspected cases with no measles associated deaths were reported which shows a 7.8% decrease in the number of suspected measles cases compared to previous week.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 24,198 suspected cases of measles and 64 deaths (CFR=0.3%) were reported, out of which 17,157 (70.9%) were under-five children and 11,398 (47.1%) were females (Figure 10).



Figure 9. Epidemiological curve of suspected measles cases in Afghanistan, 01 Jan to 02 Dec 2023 (N=24,198)



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Suspected measles cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province as of 02 Dec 2023

Figure 10. Suspected measles cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province in Afghanistan 01 Jan -02 Dec 2023

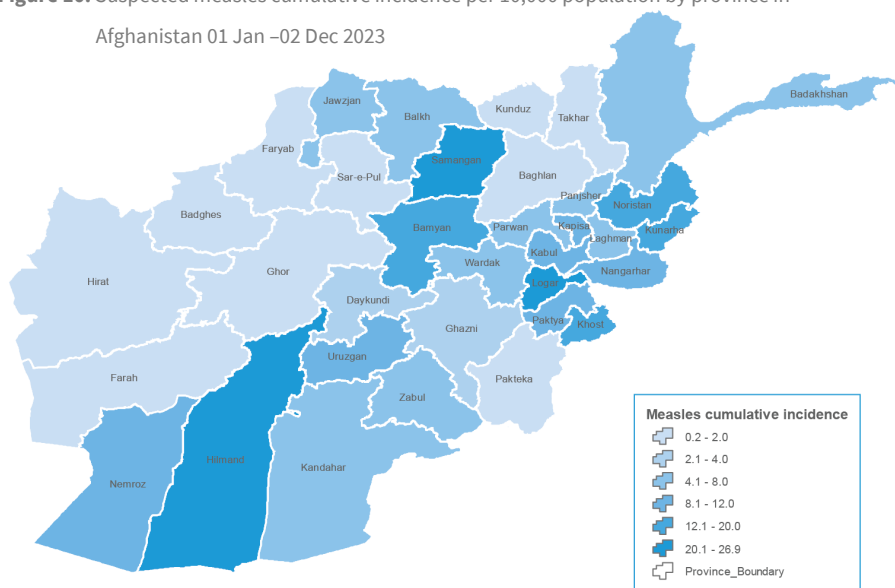
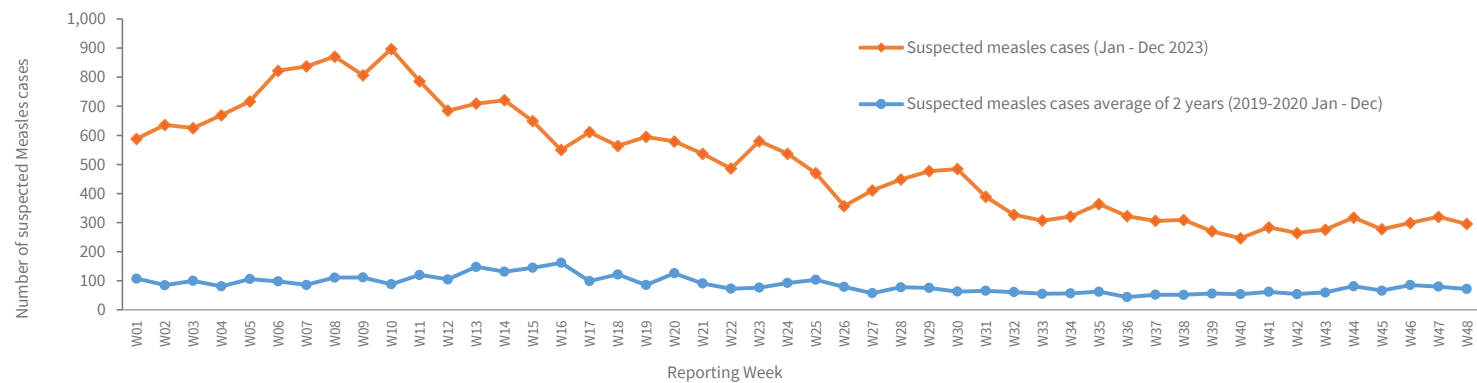


Figure 11. Comparison of suspected measles trend curve using 2 years average (2019-2020) vs Jan-Dec 2023, Afghanistan



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 48-2023, a total of 245 children aged 9-59 months were vaccinated as part of outbreak response by implementing NGOs in Mazar-e-sharif district of Balkh province, this brings the total number of children vaccinated to 7,622 since January 2023 in the country.
- 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 02 Dec 2023)

Table 5: Summary of the CCHF outbreak in the last eight weeks (08 Oct –02 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	Trend line
Suspected cases	18	22	10	11	11	7	7	5	
Suspected deaths	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	
CFR (%)	5.6	4.5	20.0	27.3	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 (Figure 12, 13).
- During week 48-2023, a total of 5 new suspected CCHF with no death were reported, which shows 28.6% decrease in number of suspected CCHF cases compared to week 47-2023 (Table 5).
- Since the beginning of 2023, the total number of reported suspected CCHF cases and associated deaths are

- 1,231 and 114, respectively (CFR 9.3%) (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, 1,228 (99.8%) were above 5 years of age and 384 (31.2%) 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 12: Epidemiological curve of CCHF cases in Afghanistan 01 Jan – 02 Dec 2023 (N=1,231)

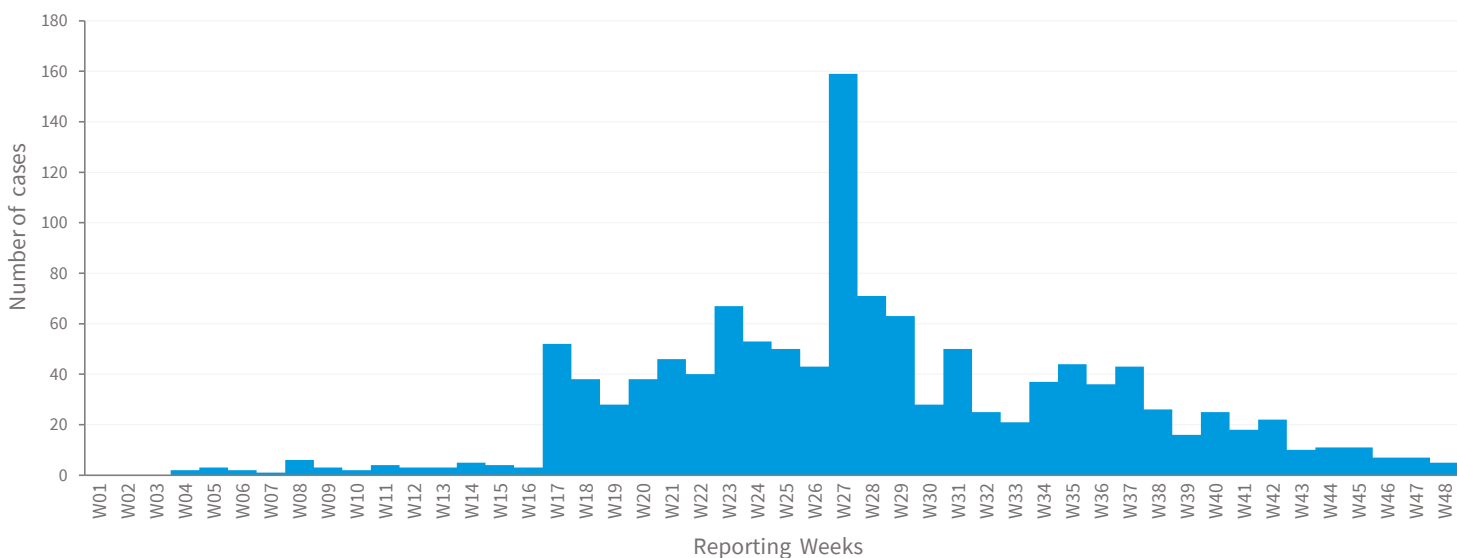
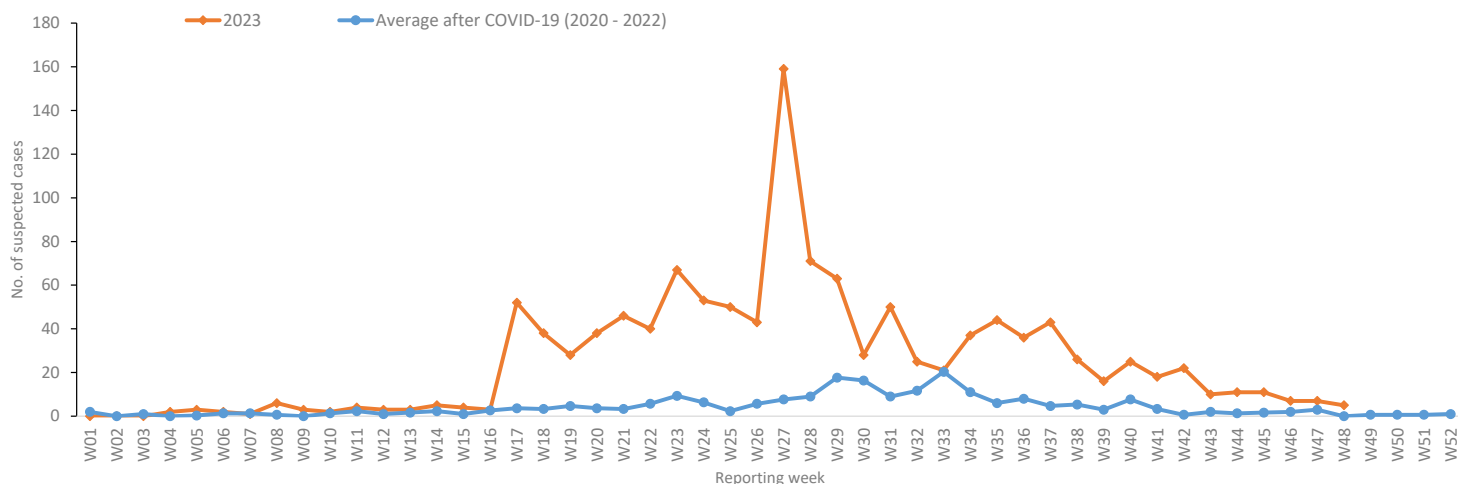


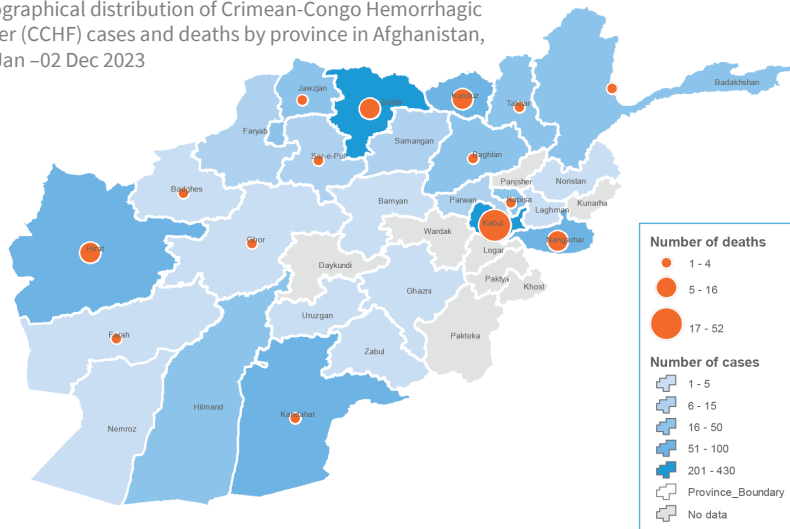
Figure 13. Comparison of trend curves for suspected CCHF cases using 3 years average (2020-2022) vs Jan-Dec 2023, Afghanistan



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Geographic Distribution of Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases by province as of 02 Dec 2023

Figure 14. Geographical distribution of Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases and deaths by province in Afghanistan, 01 Jan -02 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

- 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

- During week 48-2023, a 3 days training was conducted for 43 HCWs (including 5 females) on CCHF case management. This brings the total number of HCWs trained on CCHF case management to 319 (including 10 females) 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 02 Dec 2023)

1,281
Total Cases

1
Total Deaths

780
Sample tested

252
Lab confirmed cases

32.3%
Test positivity ratio

Table 6: Summary of the Dengue fever outbreak in the last eight weeks (8 Oct - 02 Dec 2023)

Indicators	W41	W42	W43	W44	W45	W46	W47	W48	Trend line
Suspected cases	36	45	67	50	69	56	34	50	
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, as well (Figure 15 and 16).
- During week 48-2023, 50 suspected cases of dengue fever were reported from Nangarhar provinces which shows 47.1% increase in the number of suspected cases of dengue fever compared to the week 47-2023.
- During week 48-2023, no cases of dengue fever were reported from Nuristan province. The first-ever case of dengue fever was reported from Nuristan province during week 46-2023. The suspected case was a 25-year-old male from Kotagy village in the Noorgram district, with a history of frequent travel to Jalalabad city for medical consultations related to another chronic disease. The individual presented symptoms such as fever, headache, vomiting, and nausea, and was hospitalized at the public health hospital in Jalalabad city, Nangarhar province. An RDT was conducted by SST and the result was positive.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 1,281 suspected cases of dengue fever and one death was reported (Figure 17), out of which, 613 (47.9%) were females and 1,253 (97.8%) were over 5 years of age.
- Since Jan 2023, a total of 780 samples have been collected, out of which 252 were confirmed (positivity= 32.3%).

Figure 15. Epidemiological curve of dengue fever cases in Afghanistan 1 Jan – 02 Dec 2023 (N=1,281)

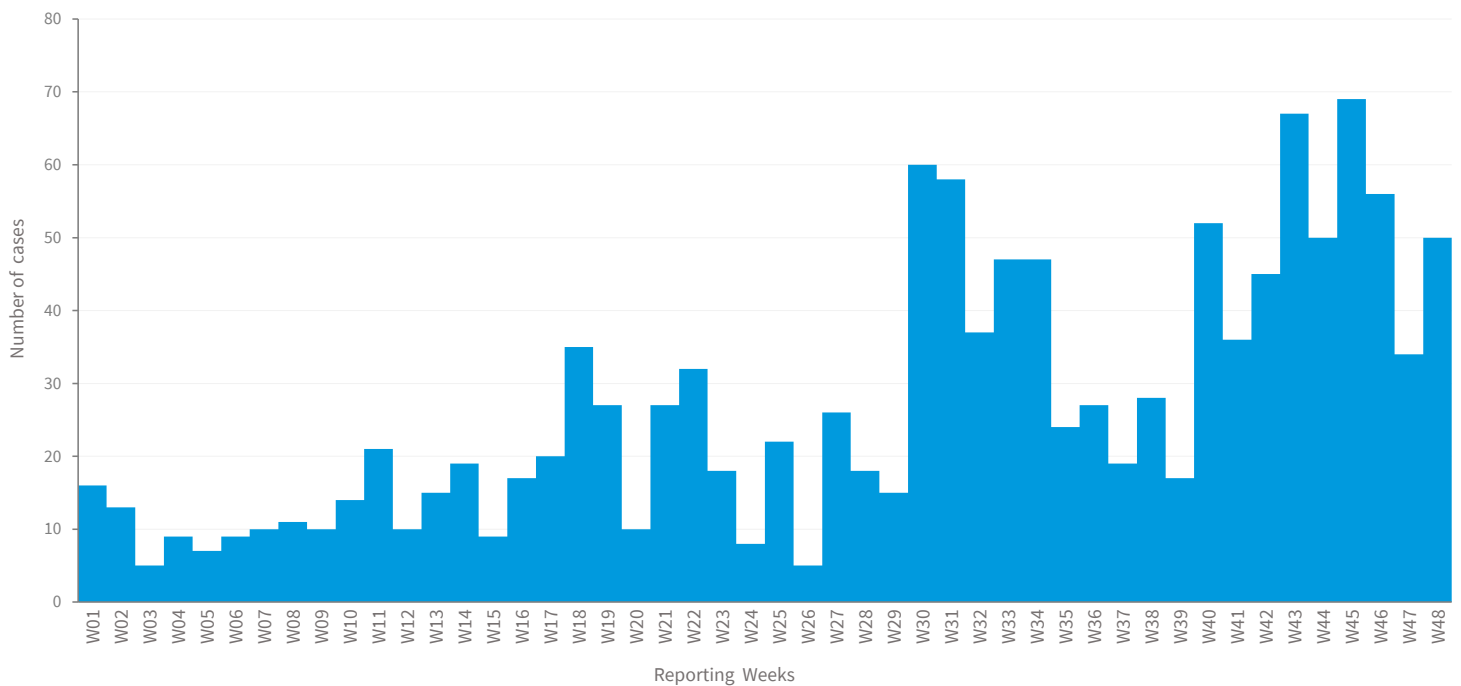


Figure 16. Comparison of trend curves for suspected dengue fever cases using 3 years average (2020-2022) vs Jan-Dec 2023, Afghanistan

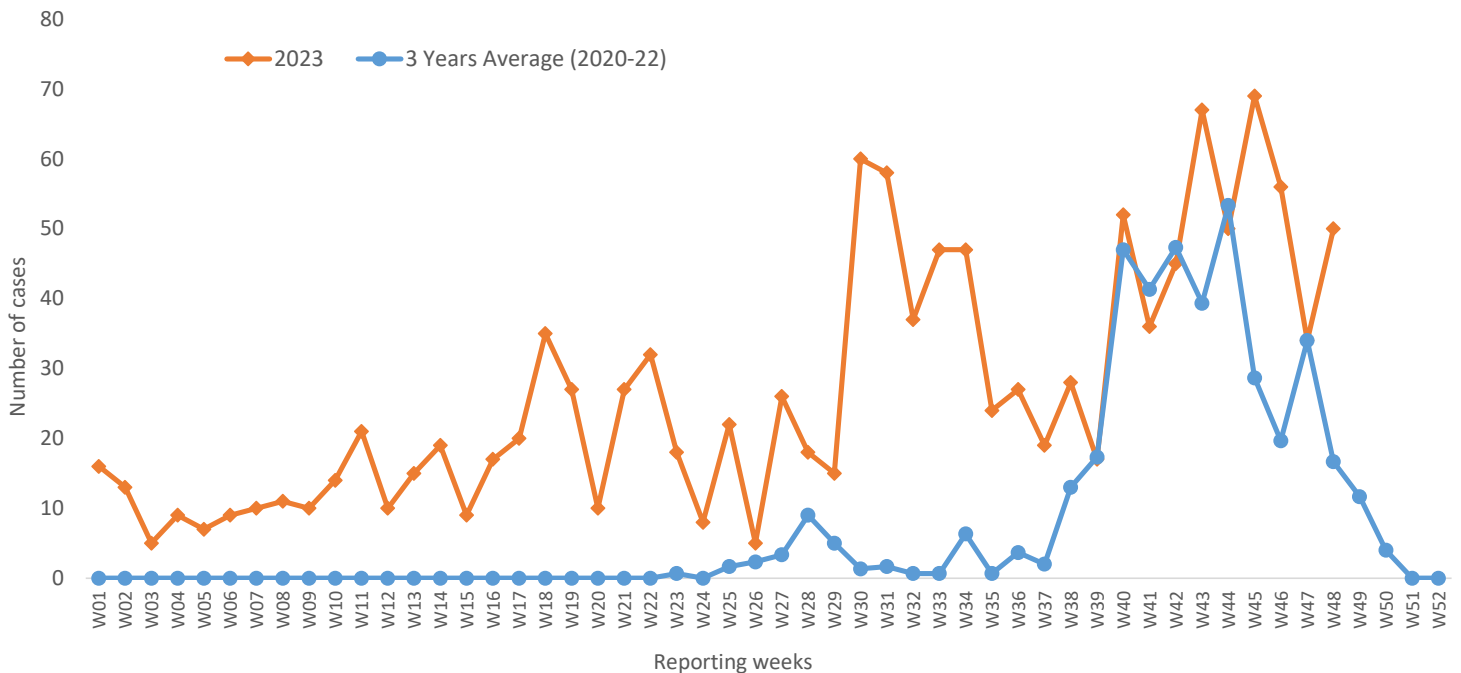
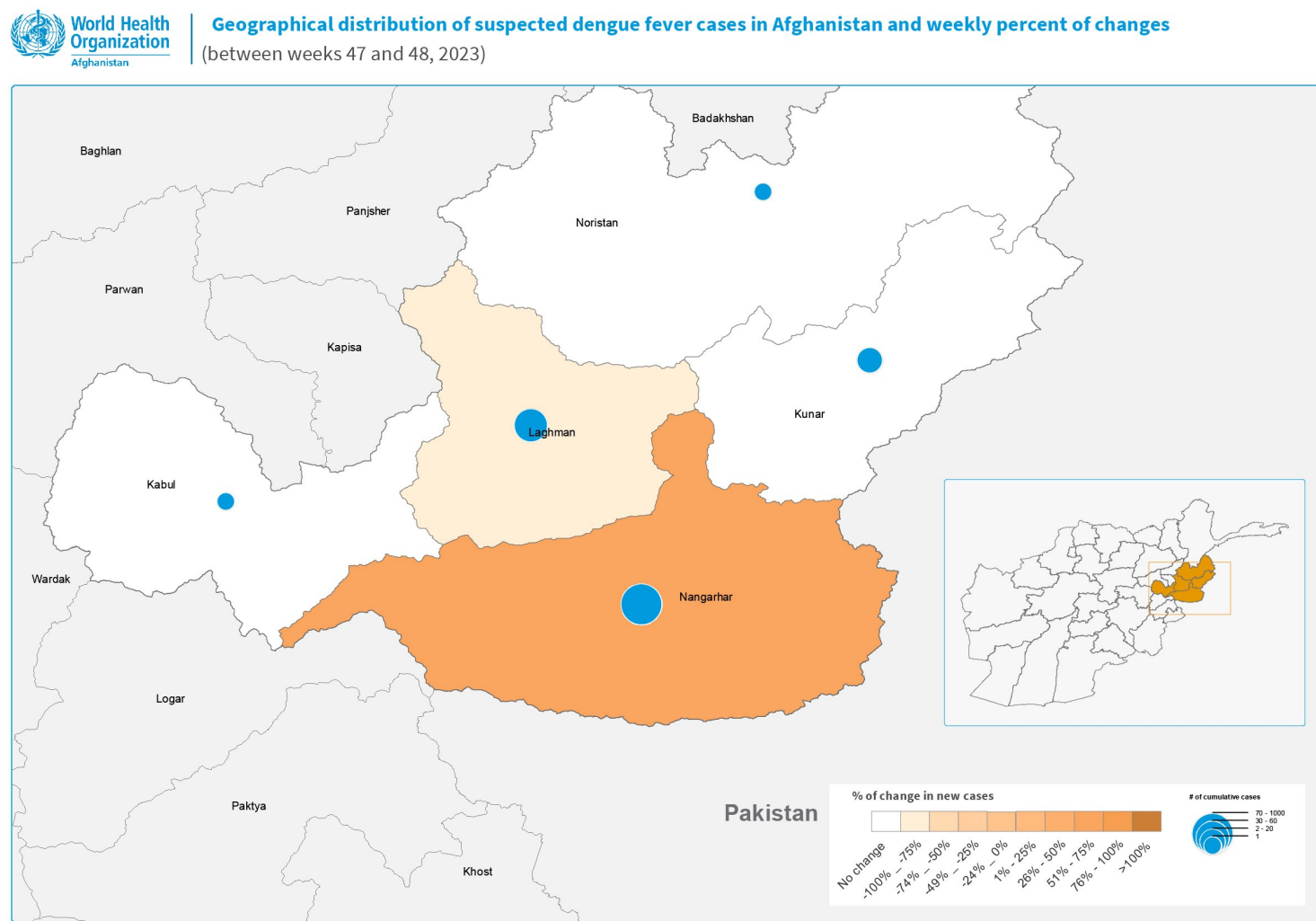


Figure 17. Geographical distribution of suspected dengue fever cases and percent change of new cases in Afghanistan, Jan - Dec 2023



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization (WHO) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries, the lines on map represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. Sources: MoPH, WHO, AGCHO. Creation date: 02 Dec 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, Bamyán, 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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