

KEY UPDATES:

- ◆ 10 suspected Crimean–Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) outbreaks were reported from Herat province in May – with the support of WHO, intensive outbreak control activities are carried out by the Herat Emergency Preparedness and Response and Zoonotic Committees
- ◆ Second polio case for the year was reported from Farah province
- ◆ Nine measles (Paktika 7, Ghor 1, Uruzgan 1) and two pertussis (Paktika 1, Kandahar 1) outbreaks were reported in May 2015
- ◆ Measles vaccination campaign is completed in Khost, Helmand and Kandahar provinces and immunization campaigns continue in other provinces
- ◆ There was an increase of complex attacks around the country; the windows and doors of a health facility run by Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) in Qalat city of Zabul Province were damaged by an explosion but the facility remains functional

PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- ◆ WHO conducted emergency preparedness and response refresher trainings for 133 provincial public health officers of central, southern and eastern regions to enhance their capacity to manage an early warning and response system that detects public health emergencies at the provincial level
- ◆ Mass casualty management simulation exercises were conducted with the support of WHO in Laghman and Kunar provinces for 25 community health workers and 100 healthcare providers from provincial hospitals
- ◆ WHO conducted a mass casualty management planning workshop for 19 provincial health managers from Badakhshan, Kabul, Baghlan, Kandahar, Kapisa, Saripul, Uruzgan and Zabul provinces on 10–12 May 2015
- ◆ 95 public health officers from 30 provinces were trained by WHO through refresher trainings on the prevention and control of diarrhoeal and other water-borne diseases
- ◆ WHO supported an eight-day training on Basic Life Support (BLS) conducted by Emergency NGO for 47 doctors from comprehensive health centers (CHCs) of high-risk districts of Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Paktia, Paktika, Khost and Kapisa provinces



Midwife Shakila listens to a baby's heartbeat in a WHO-supported mobile clinic in Bamyan



The doors and windows of Zabul Basic Health Centre in Qalat City run by ARCS were destroyed by an explosion



Emergency preparedness and response training in Jalalabad

MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH RISKS:

- ◆ Outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases such as polio, measles and pertussis continue to be a major challenge for public health in Afghanistan
- ◆ Outbreaks of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever in Herat province have reached an alarming point. CCHF virus causes severe viral haemorrhagic fever outbreaks that have a case fatality rate of up to 40%
- ◆ Conflict-related weapon-wounded cases and damage to health facilities increased in May 2015
- ◆ Confirmation of this year's second polio case in Farah poses a challenge to the National Polio Eradication programme

Launching integrated Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever control activities in high-risk (Enzootic) provinces must be accelerated in the coming months

KEY MESSAGES:

- ◆ Prevention of hospital-acquired (nosocomial) infections through better infection control procedures in hospitals is crucial for CCHF control
- ◆ Enhanced personal protection practices of people in contact with animals could reduce the incidence of CCHF and brucellosis that are common in Afghanistan—community awareness and outreach campaigns to this end are needed
- ◆ Strengthening routine vaccination activities is the only solution for the control of vaccine-preventable diseases in Afghanistan

Preparation for the prevention and control of diarrhoeal diseases should be a priority of Provincial Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) committees



A mass casualty management simulation exercise in Kunar



WHO's national health coordinator facilitating an emergency preparedness and response training in Kandahar province



A CCHF case investigation team conducting an investigation in the Injil district of Herat province in May

Programme Update
Emergency Humanitarian Action WHO Afghanistan

Contact:
Dr Iman Shankiti, Emergency Coordinator
Email: shankitii@who.int