



AFGHANISTAN

INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS

SITUATION REPORT | Epidemiological week #11-2024

No. 11 (10 - 16 Mar 2024)

Disease Outbreaks	Measles	ARI	COVID-19	AWD	CCHF	Dengue fever
Cumulative Cases 2024	11,493	436,849	2,406	20,882	56	542
Death 2024 (CFR %)	55 (0.5)	1,033 (0.2)	17 (0.7)	12 (0.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Cumulative Cases 2023	25,876	1,384,646	*230,658	222,249	1,243	1,496
Death 2023 (CFR %)	64 (0.2)	2,798 (0.2)	*7,972 (3.5)	101 (0.05)	114 (9.2)	1 (0.07)

(Data from 612 (99.8%) out of 613 sentinel sites)

* These figures represent the cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and associated deaths recorded from February 2020 to December 2023.

Measles Outbreak (01 Jan-16 Mar 2024)

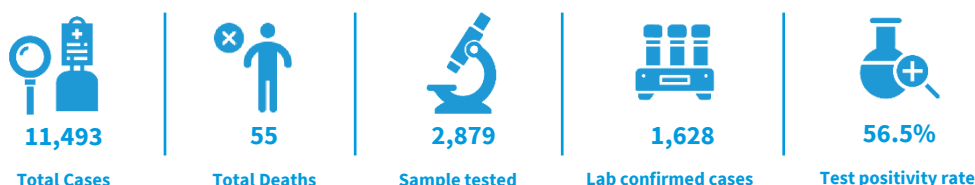


Table 1: Summary of the suspected measles outbreak in the last eight weeks (21 Jan - 16 Mar 2024)

Indicators	W04-24	W05-24	W06-24	W07-24	W08-24	W09-24	W10-24	W11-24	Trend line
Suspected cases	822	976	1,141	1,118	1,190	1,236	1,460	1,618	
Suspected deaths	3	7	4	6	5	8	9	9	
CFR (%)	0.36	0.72	0.35	0.54	0.42	0.65	0.62	0.56	

- The epidemiological curve of suspected measles cases demonstrates a rising trend since the third week of November 2023. This could be explained by increased community transmission exacerbated by the winter season and low immunization coverage (Figure 1).
- During week 11-2024, a total of 1,618 suspected cases and 9 associated deaths were reported compared to 1,460 cases and 9 deaths during the previous week. This is the highest number of weekly suspected cases reported since week 25-2022 (1,833 cases).
- The nine deaths were reported from 5 provinces: Kandahar (4), Faryab (2), Herat (1), Kabul (1), and Paktya (1); out of the total deaths, one was female and all were under five children.
- Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 11,493 suspected measles cases and 55 deaths (CFR=0.5%) were reported. Among suspected measles cases, 9,228 (80.3%) were under-five children, and 5,234 (45.5%) were females.
- Considering the number of suspected cases since the beginning of 2024, the highest cumulative incidence of suspected measles per 10,000 population was in Samangan (10.4) followed by Balkh (9.0), Farah (7.5), and Khost (6.9) (Figure 2).



Figure 1. The epidemiological curve of suspected measles cases in Afghanistan, 01 Jan 2023 to 16 Mar 2024 (N= 37,369)

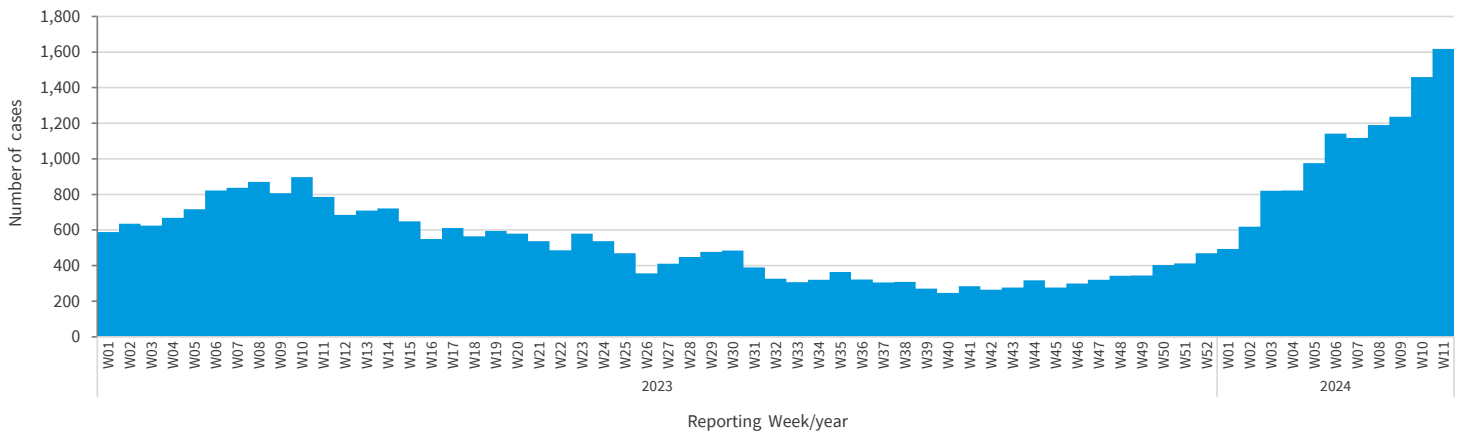


Figure 2. Suspected measles cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province in Afghanistan 01 Jan-16 Mar 2024

AFGHANISTAN Suspected measles cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province 01 Jan–16 Mar 2024

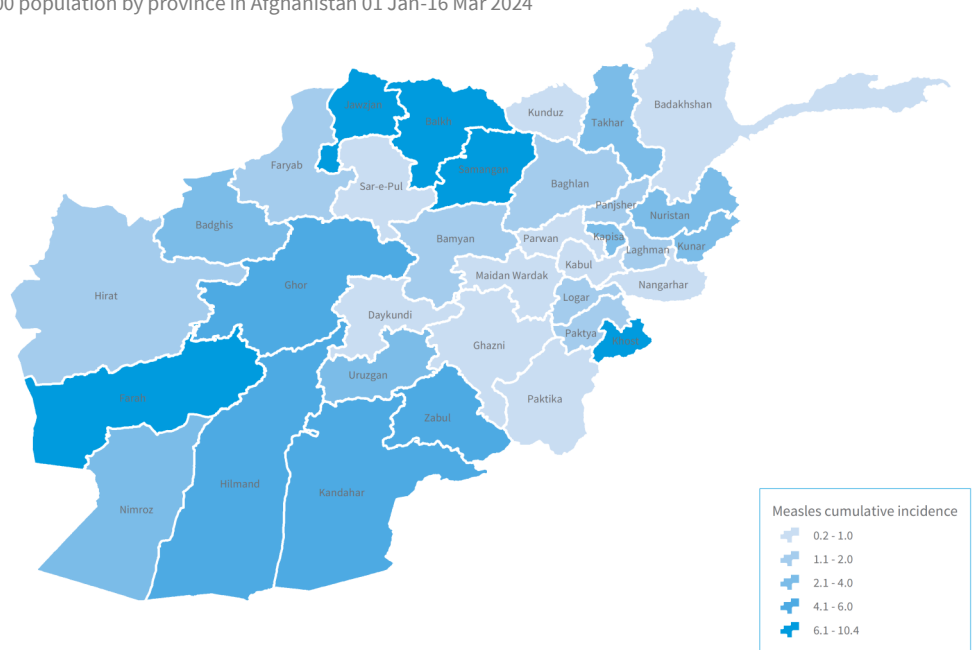
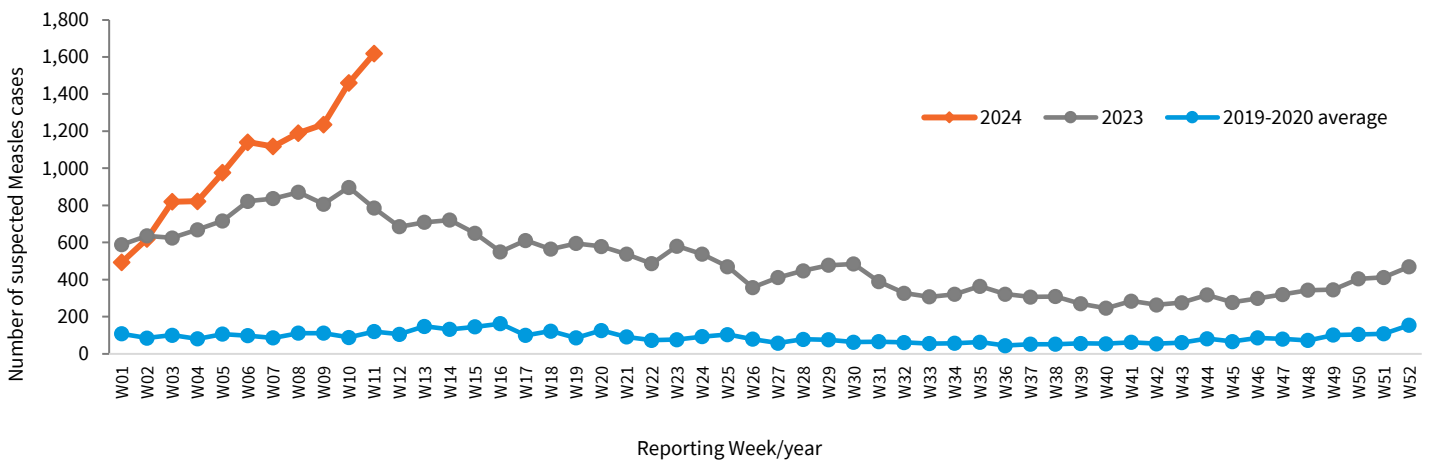


Figure 3. Comparison between the trends of suspected measles cases in 2024 vs 2023 and 2-years average (2019-2020)



Comparing the trend of suspected measles cases in 2024 with the trend for the average number reported during 2019-2020 and the trend of 2023 reveals that despite prevention efforts, the number of suspected measles cases has not decreased to the endemic levels observed in 2019-2020 and has even surpassed 2023 trend (Figure 3).

Updates on the preparedness and response to the Measles outbreak

During week 11-2024, a total of 728 children aged 9-59 months were vaccinated against measles outbreaks in Parwan, Uruzgan, Paktika, Takhar, and Nangarhar provinces. This brings the total number of vaccinated children as part of outbreak response immunization campaigns to 6,995 since Jan 2024.

Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI)

(01 Jan-16 Mar 2024)



***436,849**

Total ARI Cases



***1,033**

Total Deaths



****1,009**

Samples tested for influenza



****40**

Lab confirmed influenza cases



4.0%

Influenza test positivity ratio

*Currently ARI related data (morbidity and mortality) are reported from 613 surveillance sentinel sites across 34 provinces in the country.

**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 the ARI season and sending them to the National Influenza Center (NIC) for testing.

Table 2: Summary of the ARI outbreak in the last eight weeks (21 Jan - 16 Mar 2024)

Indicators	W4-24	W5-24	W6-24	W7-24	W8-24	W9-24	W10-24	W11-24	Trend lines
Suspected cases	41,919	40,339	43,053	41,874	38,948	35,533	39,793	36,428	
Suspected deaths	91	98	95	92	81	93	116	75	
CFR (%)	0.22	0.24	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.26	0.29	0.21	

- The epi curve shows an increase in ARI cases since the 3rd week of September 2023, which could be linked to the change of the season to cold weather across the country; however, a slight decrease has been observed since week 07-2024 (Figure 4).
- During week 11-2024, a total of 36,428 cases of ARI pneumonia and 75 associated deaths were reported, compared to 39,793 cases and 116 deaths in the previous week.
- Since 01 Jan 2024, a total of 436,849 ARI pneumonia cases and 1,033 associated deaths (CFR=0.2%) were reported from 34 provinces. Out of the total cases, 276,412 (63.3%) were under-five children and 215,629 (49.4%) were fe-

males. The cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province is shown in (Figure 5).

- Out of 1,033 deaths, 907 (87.8%) were under-five children and 459 (44.4%) were females.
- 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 and 2024 could be explained by the improvement in reporting due to the enhancement of the surveillance system and expansion of surveillance sentinel sites (Figure 6).

Figure 4. The epidemiological curve of ARI Pneumonia cases in Afghanistan, 01 Jan 2023 – 16 Mar 2024 (N=1,821,495)

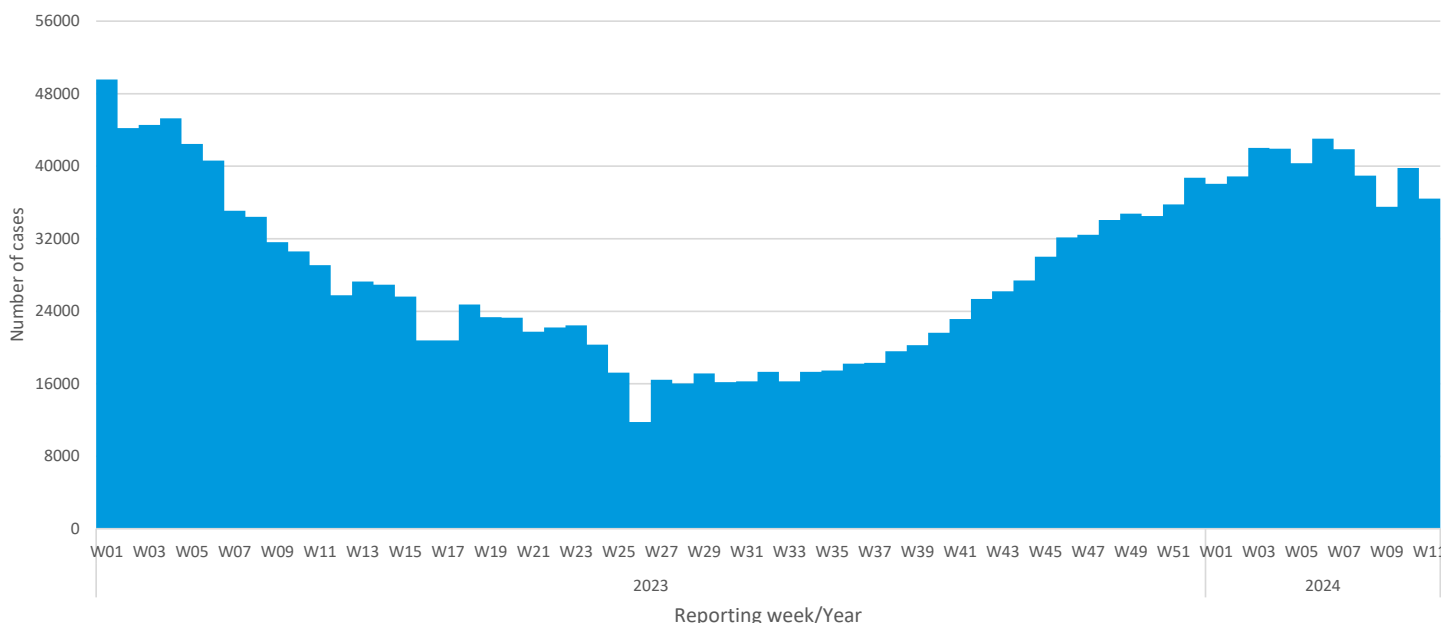


Figure 5. ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province, Afghanistan 01 Jan- 16 Mar 2024

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ARI pneumonia cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province

01 Jan-16 Mar 2024

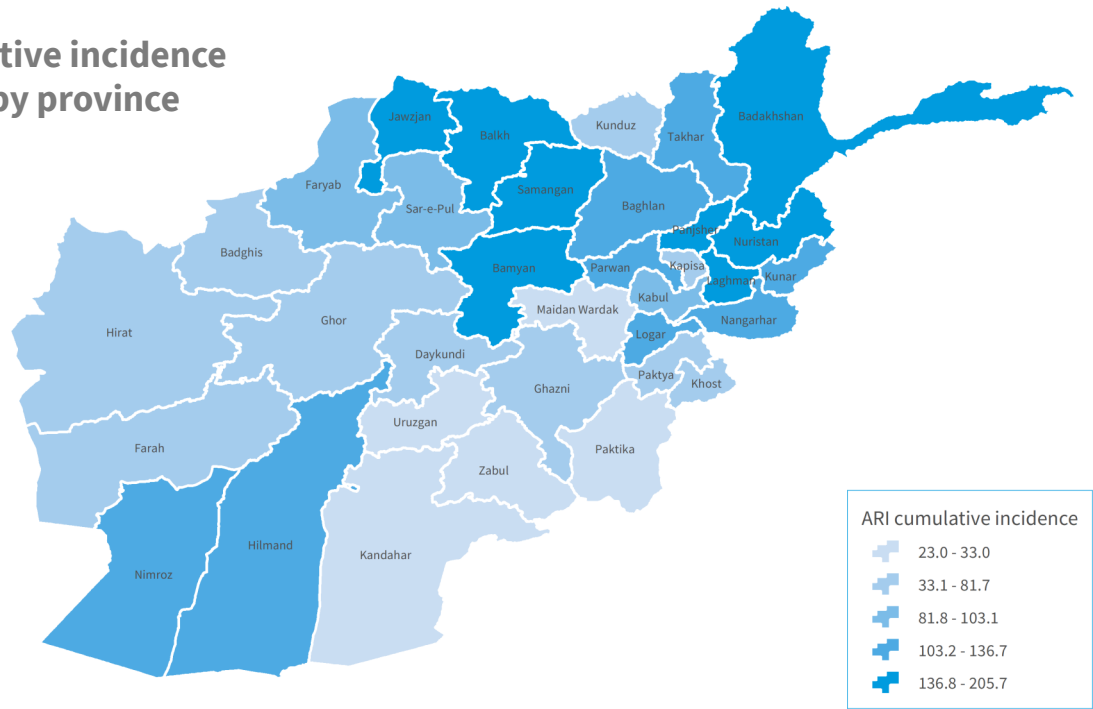
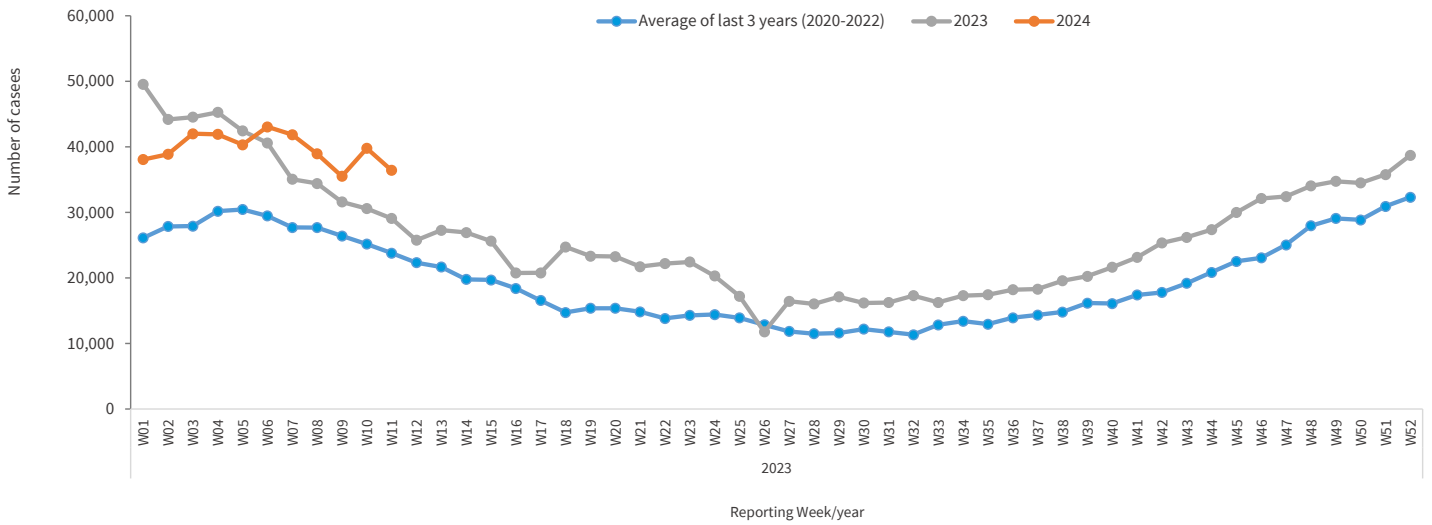


Figure 6. Comparison between the trend of ARI cases in 2024 vs 2023 and 3-years average (2020-2022)



Updates on the response activities to the ARI outbreak

Lab and supplies

- Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 6,500 Viral Transport Media (VTM) have been distributed to North-east and Central-east NDSR offices.

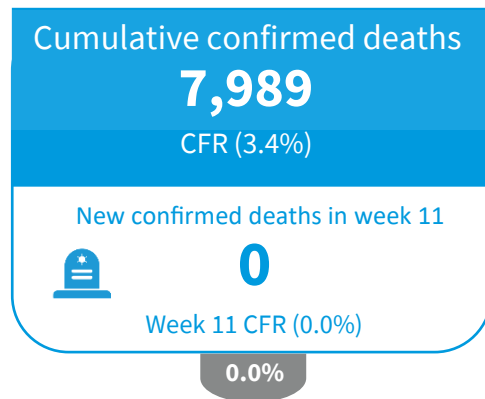
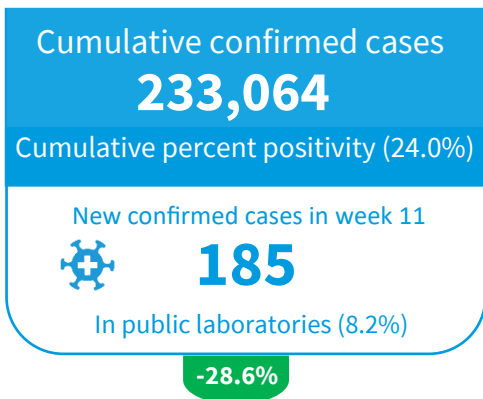
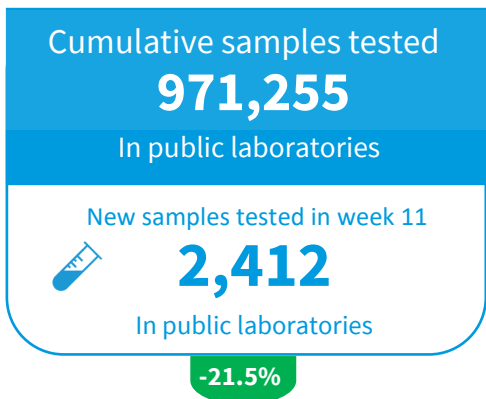
Case management

- As a part of the winterization preparedness and response plan to ARI in 2023-24, a total of 397 case management kits have been prepositioned in the WHO main office and regional sub-offices. These kits are being used in health facilities nationwide to respond to the ARI outbreak.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- Since the beginning of 2024, more than 85,000 Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials (60,000 Posters and 25,000 Brochures) on ARI have been handed over by WHO to the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) as part of the countrywide winterization response to ARI. These IEC materials are being used in health facilities and affected communities across the country.

COVID-19 (24 Feb 2020 – 16 Mar 2024)

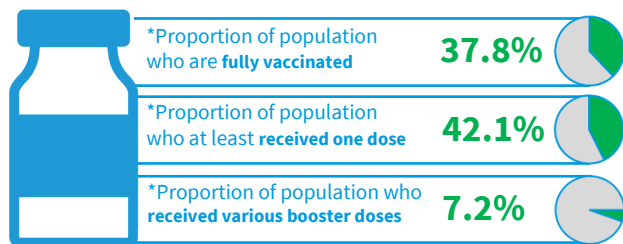


Key: ● Increasing ● Decreasing ● No change

COVID-19 Vaccination highlights



Note: During Feb 2024, around 400,304 doses of various COVID-19 vaccines have been administered which shows a 14.2% decrease compared to Jan-2024.



** The denominator is 43,100,596 based on OCHA estimation 2024*

Table 3: Summary of COVID-19 indicators in the last 8 weeks in Afghanistan (21 Jan - 16 Mar 2024)

Indicators	W04	W05	W06	W07	W08	W09	W10	W11	Trend line
Samples tested (in public Labs)	2,363	2,781	3,104	2,776	3,034	2,118	3,073 *	2,412	
Confirmed cases	210	235	240	221	263	146	259 *	185	
Percent positivity (%)	8.9	8.5	7.7	8.0	8.7	6.9	8.4	7.7	
Deaths	0	1	1	0	5	3	0	0	
CFR (%)	0.00	0.43	0.42	0.00	1.90	2.05	0.00	0.00	

**A delayed reporting was experienced during week 10-2024, the number of samples tested, and the number of confirmed cases were modified from 2,731 to 3,073 and from 223 to 259 respectively.*

- The epidemiological curve indicates a stabilization in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases at a low level since the 3rd week of June 2023, which could be attributed to a decrease in attendance of infected individuals at healthcare facilities and an improvement in vaccination coverage among eligible populations across the country (37.8%) (Figure 7).
- During week 11-2024, a total of 2,412 samples were tested in public labs, of which 185 were positive for COVID-19 (positivity rate 7.7%), while no COVID-19-associated deaths were reported in this week.
- The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases shows a 28.6% decrease compared to the previous week (Figure 8).
- During week 11-2024, among 185 confirmed cases, 7.0% (13 cases) were hospitalized while 4 cases (30.8%) out of 13 hospitalized cases were admitted to the ICU (Figure 9).
- Since the beginning of the pandemic in Feb 2020; 971,255 samples have been tested for COVID-19 through public laboratories.

Figure 7. The epidemiological curve of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths in Afghanistan Feb 2020 – 16 Mar 2024 (cases= 233,064, deaths=7,989)

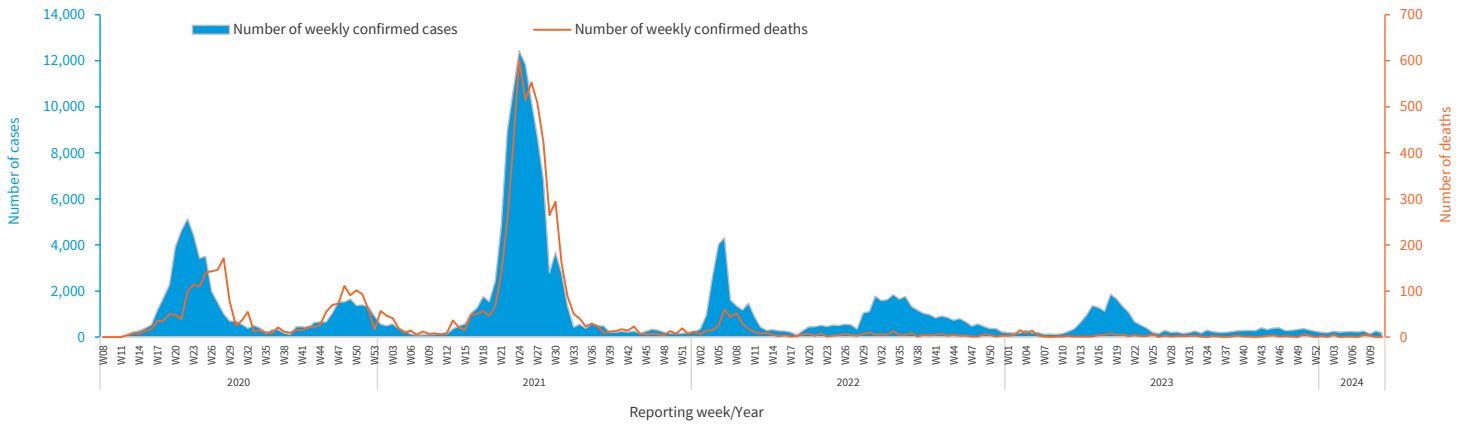


Figure 8. The epidemiological curve of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths in Afghanistan 01 Jan 2023 – 16 Mar 2024 (cases= 25,170, deaths=160)

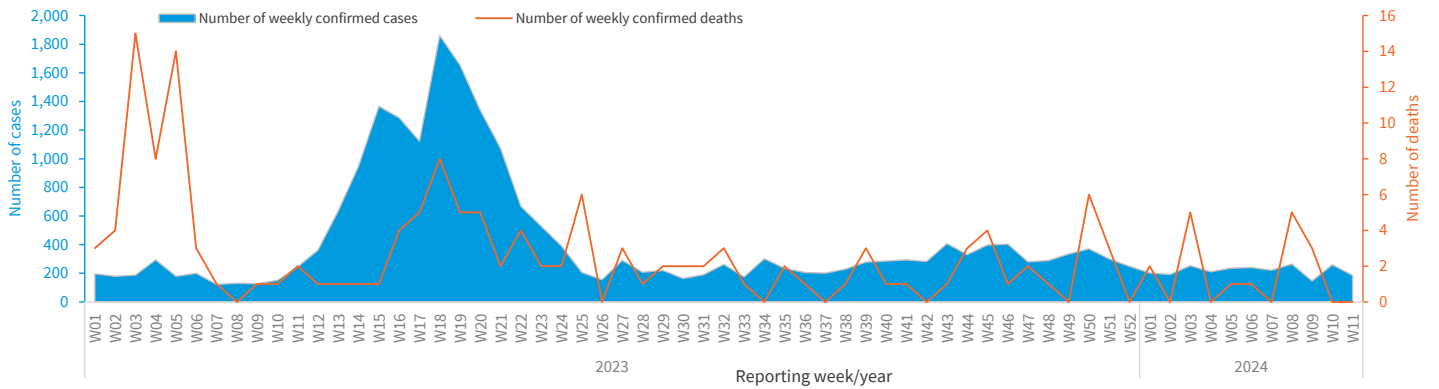
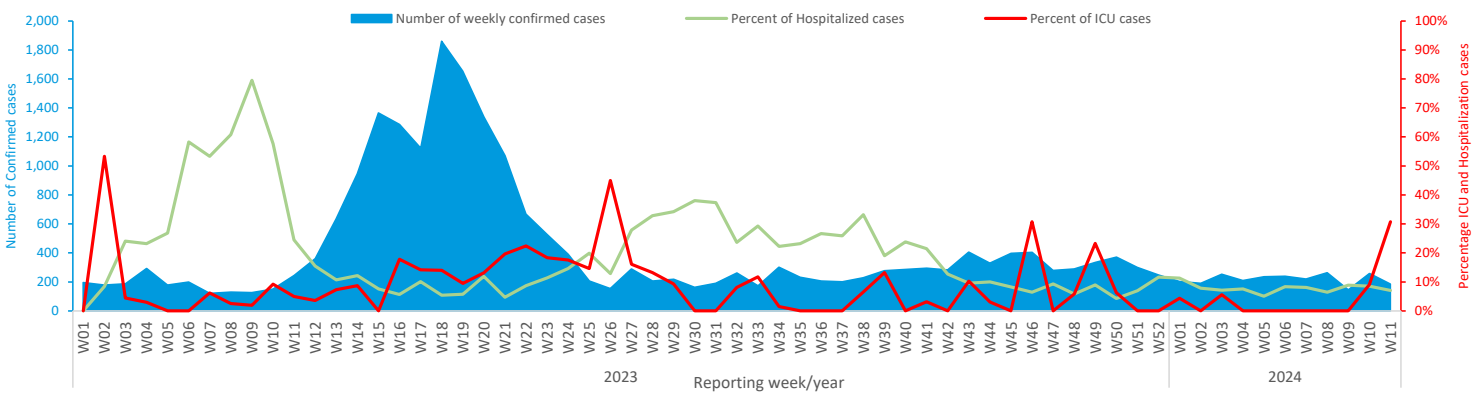


Figure 9. The weekly proportion of hospitalized and ICU cases and the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan between 01 Jan 2023 and 16 Mar 2024



Update on the response activities to COVID-19

Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 50 kits (25 tests per kit) of COVID-19 RDTs have been distributed to each of Baghlan, Takhar, Badakhshan, and Kunduz NDSR offices.

Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) with Dehydration Outbreak (01 Jan-16 Mar 2024)

Table 4: Summary of the AWD with Dehydration outbreak in the last eight weeks (21 Jan - 16 Mar 2024)

Indicators	W04-24	W05-24	W06-24	W07-24	W08-24	W09-24	W10-24	W11-24	Trend line
Suspected cases	1,966	1,829	1,722	1,808	1,787	1,784	1,790	1,742	
Suspected deaths	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	
CFR (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.06	0.11	0.00	0.00	



- The epi-curve of AWD with dehydration cases shows a decreasing trend since the 4th week of August 2023 with almost stabilization during the past 6 weeks. The decline could be explained by seasonal changes towards winter in the country.
- During week 11-2024, 1,742 AWD with dehydration cases were reported from 132 districts compared to 1,790 cases in the previous week (Figure 10). The cumulative incidence of AWD with dehydration cases per 10,000 population by province is illustrated in Figure 11.
- Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 20,882 AWD with dehydration cases and 12 associated deaths (CFR=0.1%) were reported, out of which 11,340 (54.3%) were under-

- five children and 10,443 (50.0%) were females.
- The number of districts reported AWD with dehydration has reached 243 since the beginning of 2024 while no additional new district reported AWD with dehydration cases during this week.
- Since the beginning of 2024, 718 Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) have been conducted on AWD with dehydration cases, of which 110 tests turned positive (positivity rate 15.3%).

Figure 10. The epidemiological curve of AWD with dehydration cases in Afghanistan 01 Jan 2023– 16 Mar 2024 (243,131)

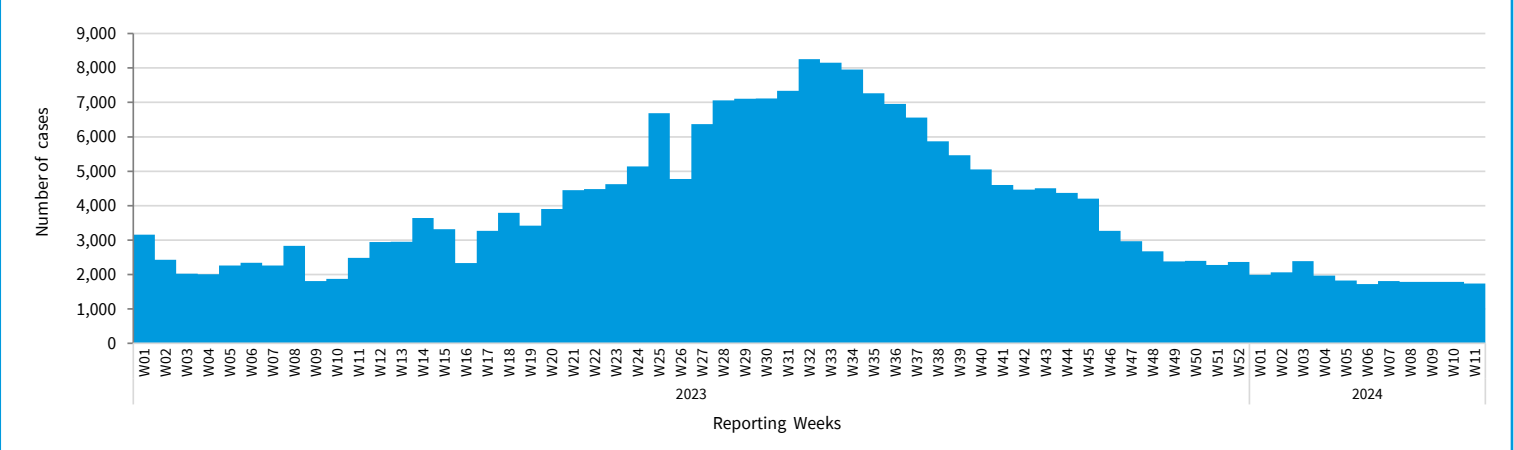
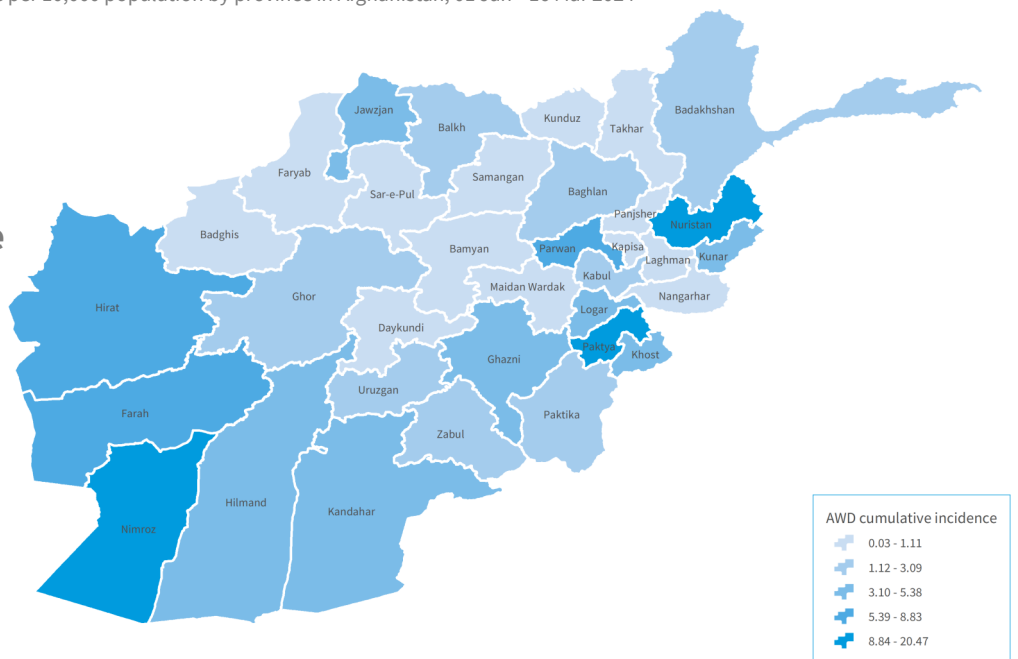


Figure 11. AWD with dehydration cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province in Afghanistan, 01 Jan – 16 Mar 2024

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AWD with dehydration cumulative incidence per 10,000 population by province 01 Jan - 16 Mar 2024



Updates on the preparedness and response to the AWD with dehydration outbreak

Surveillance

- Since Jan 2024, a total of 233 sentinel sites’ focal points, including 10 females, were trained on surveillance procedures in Kabul, East and South regions.
- The case management kits, lab reagents and RCCE materials supplied during 2023 are being used for the response to AWD with dehydration outbreaks reported during 2024.

Lab and Supplies

- During week 11-2024, a total of 8 kits of Carry Blairs (125/kit) were distributed to WHO regional offices in Kandahar, Nangarhar, Balkh, Herat, Bamyan, Kunduz and Paktya provinces.
- During the reporting period, 125 AWD with dehydration treatment kits were distributed to WHO regional offices of Kandahar, Nangarhar, Balkh, Herat, Bamyan, Kunduz, and Paktya provinces.

WASH

During the first two weeks of Mar 2024 (01-15 Mar 2024), the following activities were conducted as WASH response:

- Provision of clean water to 3,500 individuals by chlorination of wells in 6 provinces (Badghis, Kandahar, Khost, Logar, Paktika and Zabul).
- Distribution of aquatabs to 160 individuals in Bamyán province.
- Installation of handwashing facilities in Kandahar reaching almost 200 individuals.
- Distribution of hygiene Kits to 18,000 individuals in 11 provinces (Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Badghis, Herat, Khost, Kunar, Kunduz, Logar, Paktika, Paktya and Takhar).
- Conducting Hygiene promotion sessions for 20,000 individuals in 13 provinces (Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Badghis, Ghazni, Herat, Khost, Kunar, Kunduz, Logar, Paktika, Paktya, Takhar, and Urozgan).
- Conduct household water treatment promotion sessions for 2,140 individuals in 8 provinces (Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Herat, Khost, Kunar, Kunduz, Paktika, and Takhar).
- Provision of sanitary facilities for 1,300 individuals by installation/rehabilitation of latrines in 10 provinces (Nangarhar, Badghis, Herat, Khost, Kunar, Kunduz, Paktika, Paktya, Takhar and Zabul).
- Provision of safe clean water to 5,800 individuals by water supply systems rehabilitation in 7 provinces (Nangarhar, Badghis, Herat, Kabul, Paktika, Takhar, and Zabul).

**Outbreak of Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF)
(01 Jan-16 Mar 2024)**

Table 5: Summary of the CCHF outbreak in the last eight weeks (21 Jan - 16 Mar 2024)

Indicators	W04-24	W05-24	W06-24	W07-24	W08-24	W09-24	W10-24	W11-24	Trend line
Suspected cases	4	2	3	4	7	7	3	6	
Suspected deaths	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
CFR (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

- The epi-curve indicates that the peak for suspected CCHF cases was during the week 27-2023 with a declining trend in the weeks later, while a stabilization is observed in recent weeks in 2024. The decline could be attributed to seasonal changes toward winter and response activities (Figures 12 & 13).
- During week 11-2024, 6 new suspected CCHF cases with no associated deaths were reported, compared to 3 cases and no death in the previous week (Table 5).
- Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 56 suspected cases of CCHF with no associated deaths were reported. All the suspected cases were over five years of age, while 17 (30.4%) of them were females.
- Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 34 samples of suspected CCHF cases have been tested, out of which one was positive in Balkh province (positivity 2.9%).

Figure 12. The epidemiological curve of CCHF cases in Afghanistan 01 Jan 2023 –16 Mar 2024, (N=1,299)

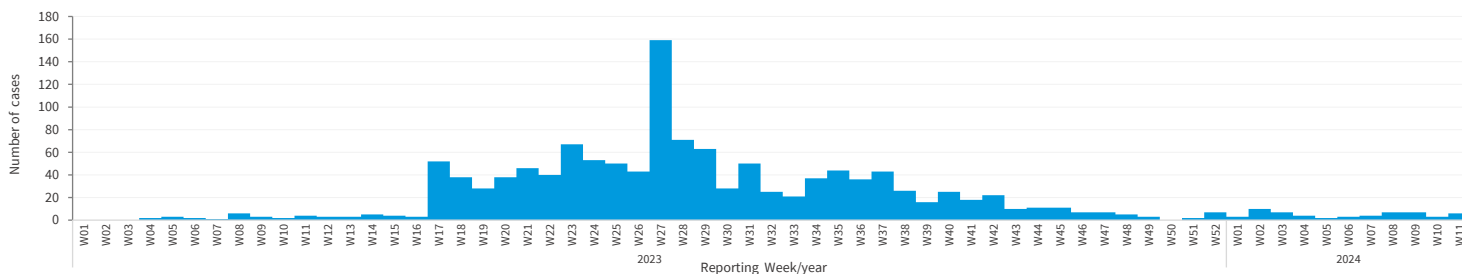
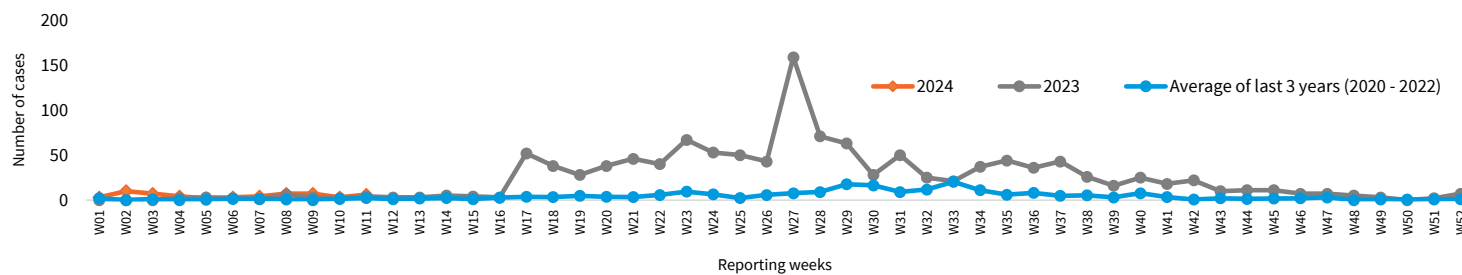


Figure 13. Comparison between the trends of suspected CCHF cases in 1014 vs 2023 and 3 years average (2020-2022)

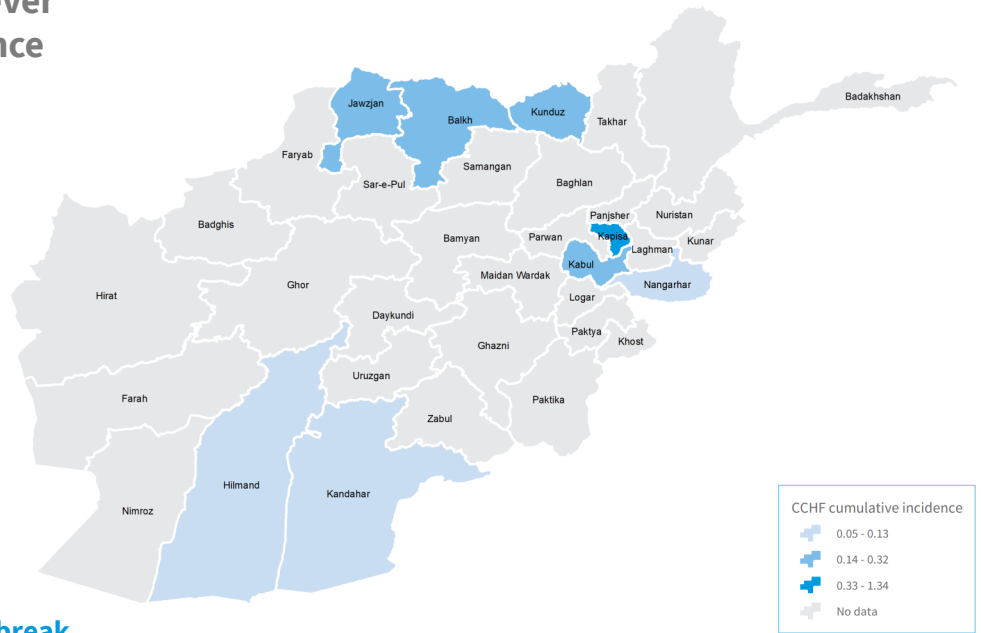




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Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases cumulative incidence per 100,000 population by province 01 Jan -16 Mar 2024

Figure 14. Cumulative incidence of Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) cases per 100,000 population by province in Afghanistan, 01 Jan - 16 Mar 2024



Updates on the response to the CCHF outbreak.

- Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 469 doses of ribavirin 200mg tablets and 1,530 ribavirin injections have been supplied to 7 WHO sub-offices across the country.
- In the same period, the following activities have been conducted as preparedness and response to outbreaks of CCHF in 7 provinces (Balkh, Herat, Kandahar, Kabul, Kunduz, Nangarhar, and Takhar) through the partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):
 - A total of 1,000 tick samples and 500 blood samples have been collected from castles.
 - A total of 26,020 households' animal stables and 46 live animal markets as well as 36 commercial dairy forms have been sprayed.
 - Awareness sessions related to the source of CCHF, route of transmission, and signs and symptoms of CCHF have been conducted in 60,715 households.
 - A total of 28,043 flyers and stickers were distributed between the targeted communities.
 - A total of 280 veterinarians have been trained on the case definition of CCHF as well as the collection, storage, and transportation of the blood and tick samples to the Central Veterinary Diagnostic and Research Laboratory (CVDRL) for confirmation and vector control activities.
 - A total of 700 butchers received training on preventive measures against CCHF and the safe handling of animals.

Dengue Fever Outbreak (01 Jan-09 Mar 2024)



Note: Dengue fever laboratory data was reviewed, utilizing the confirmed case definition from EMRO. This definition is characterized by confirmation through PCR, positive virus culture, DENV NS1 antigen detection, seroconversion of IgG in paired sera, or a significant increase (fourfold) in IgG titer in paired sera. The focus was placed on cases confirmed by PCR, excluding cases that were only positive for IgM or IgG based on a single sample (dengue--outbreak-toolbox_20220921.pdf (who.int))

Table 6: Summary of the Dengue fever outbreak in the last eight weeks (21 Jan - 16 Mar 2024)

Indicators	W04-24	W05-24	W06-24	W07-24	W08-24	W09-24	W10-24	W11-24	Trend line
Suspected cases	68	56	54	49	36	57	45	41	
Deaths	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
CFR (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	



- The trend last weeks is showing an overall decrease despite the fluctuation observed during week 9-2024 which could be attributed to underreporting during week 8-2024 (Figure 15).
- The number of suspected dengue fever cases in 2024 is higher than 2 years average (2021-2022) and has surpassed the previous year's trend (Figure 16).
- During week 11-2024, 41 suspected cases of dengue fever were reported only from Nangarhar province.
- Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 542 suspected cases of dengue fever and no deaths were reported, out of which 335 (61.8%) were females, and 3 (0.6%) were under 5 years of age. The geographical distribution and weekly change rate are shown in Figure 17.
- Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 303 samples have been collected, out of which 110 were positive (positivity 36.3%).

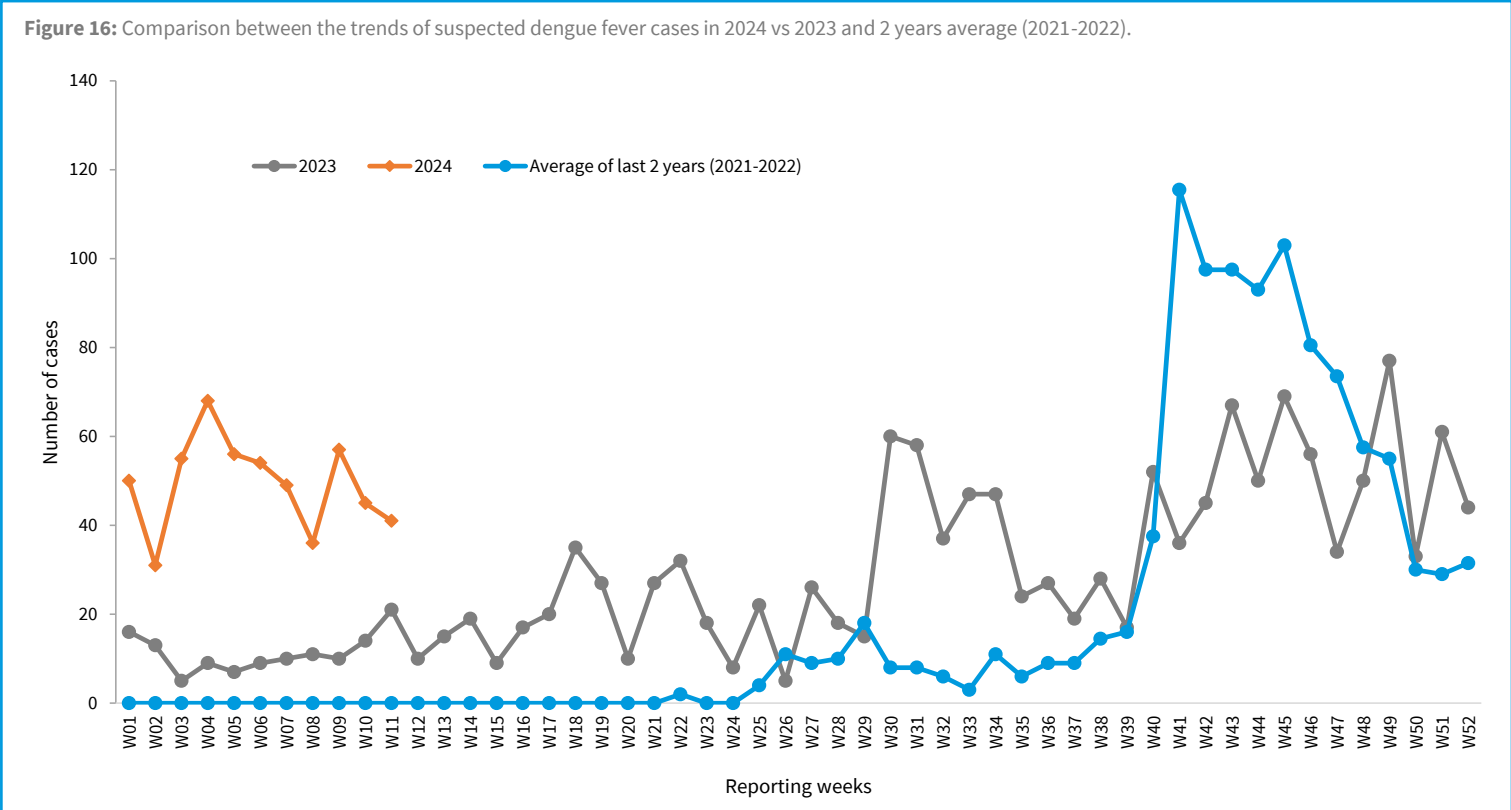
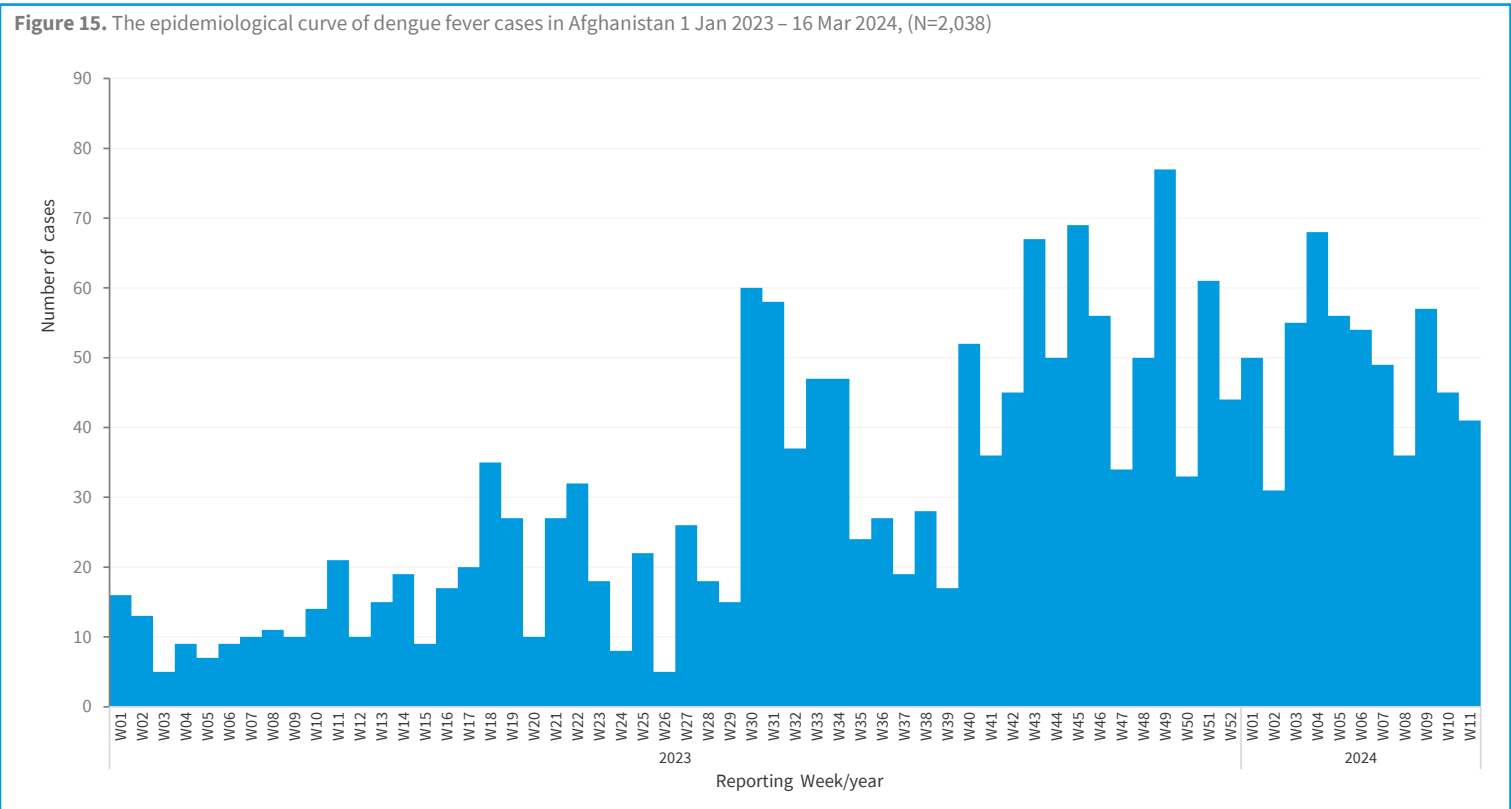
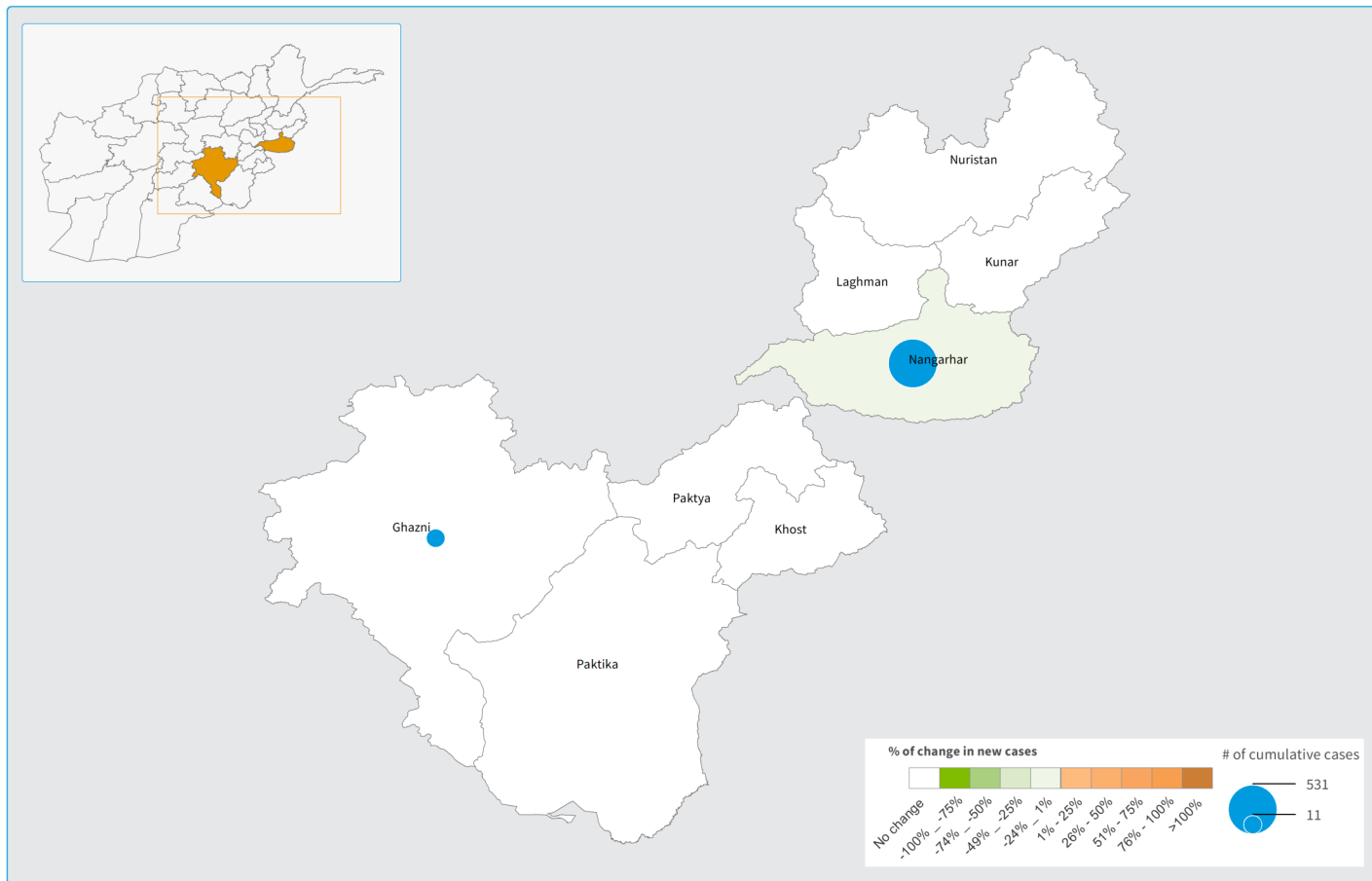


Figure 17. Geographical distribution of suspected dengue fever cases and percent change of new cases in Afghanistan, 01 Jan – 16 Mar 2024



Geographical distribution of suspected dengue fever cases in Nangarhar and Ghazni provinces and weekly percent of changes (between weeks 10 and 11, 2024)



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: 16 Mar 2024.

Updates in the response to the dengue fever outbreak

Since the beginning of 2024, a total of 380 Kits (10 tests per kit) of dengue RDTs have been delivered to Nangarhar, Laghman, and Kunar NDSR offices.

Note: MOPH is the source of epidemiological data

Case definition & alert/outbreak thresholds

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