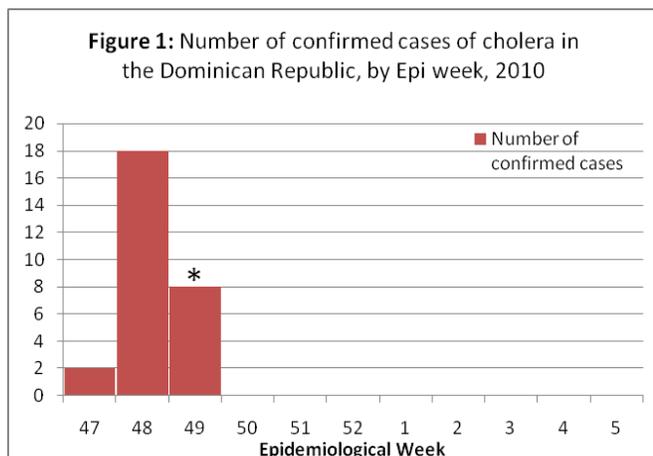


Situation Overview

The recent Cholera outbreak in Haiti has spurred global action to manage cases and to prevent further spread. Proximity and the frequency of travel between islands make other Caribbean countries especially vulnerable. Following Hurricane Tomas, several islands suffered damage to water facilities and health infrastructure, which has placed these countries at greater risk in the eventuality of a Cholera outbreak. PAHO is currently collaborating with the Eastern Caribbean Donor Group for Disaster Management and Ministries of Health for a project on Caribbean Cholera Preparedness.

Epidemiology

The first Caribbean cholera cases outside Haiti were confirmed in Santo Domingo and Santiago, Dominican Republic, in week 47 (see Figure 1). By December 10th, 2010, there were 28 confirmed cases in the Dominican Republic of which only two were imported. Affected areas now include Santiago (11 cases), Santo Domingo (7), Elias Piña (6), San Juan de la



Source: Data obtained from SESPAS on Dec. 10, 2010. Figure created by PAHO/WHO (PED-BAR) on Dec. 14, 2010. *Week 49 data incomplete

Maguana (1), Independencia (1), Valverde (1) and La Altagracia (1) (see Figure 2). No deaths have been reported.

CAREC hosted an Elluminate session on December 8th, 2010, on surveillance and laboratory preparedness for Cholera in the Caribbean. It was reported that laboratories in most countries are equipped for cholera, or are expecting their supplies to be delivered shortly.

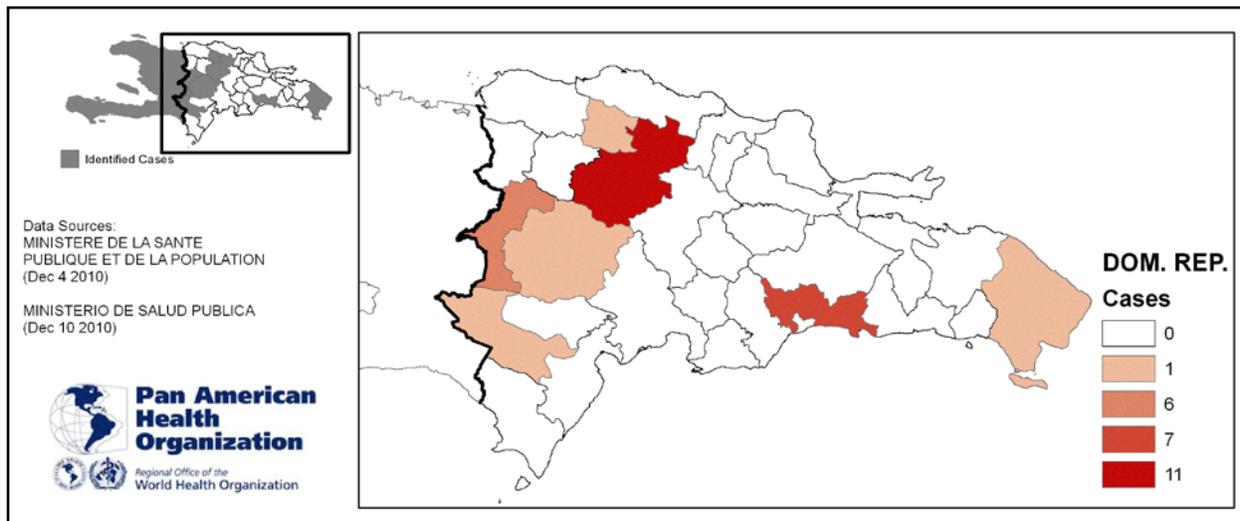
The Ministry of Public Health of the Dominican Republic (Ministerio de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social) reports regularly on the following website: <http://www.sespas.gov.do/>.

PAHO/WHO publishes Epidemiological Alerts and Situation Reports on the Cholera Outbreak on Hispaniola on the following website: http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4500&Itemid=3527&lang=en.

Activities

A meeting of the Eastern Caribbean Donor Group (ECDG) took place on December 1, 2010 with representatives from PAHO, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), and the Barbados Meteorological Services. The importance of preparedness in the context of cholera in the sub-region was emphasized, with special attention to the most vulnerable

Figure 2: Reported Cholera Cases in Dominican Republic



populations. Topics included cholera scenarios, preliminary assessments on preparedness, mitigation gaps, mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS, the feasibility of a multiagency appeal, coordination models, and the frequency of subsequent coordination meetings.

There was a consensus that countries must be involved in decisions made and that the Caribbean Tourism Organization, Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM), Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and Ministries of Health should be invited to the next meeting. A meeting with CARICOM's Assistant Secretary-General and Programme Manager of Health Sector Development was conducted and it was agreed that CARICOM Secretariat will be part of the ECDG.

Priorities regarding the national cholera plans included not only the revision and updating of existing plans but also the development of communication plans, scenarios and the application of simulation exercises. Other agencies showed interest in a multi-agency

appeal for the sub-region, with a coordinated approach for the response to the Dominican Republic and preparedness for the Caribbean sub-region. The next meeting of the Committee will be on January 19, 2011.

PAHO deployed a Cholera expert and a communications specialist to Turks and Caicos on December 14, 2010 to assist with preparedness planning.

References

Area on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief, Office of Caribbean Program Coordination, PAHO http://new.paho.org/disasters/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=828&Itemid=807

Ministry of Public Health of the Dominican Republic (Ministerio de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social - SESPAS) <http://www.sespas.gov.do/>

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Health partners are asked to contribute to this bulletin with information on needs and activities as well as corrections to content, by emailing eochar@cpc.paho.org (subject heading: Cholera Bulletin). For useful information, please visit: http://new.paho.org/disasters/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=828&Itemid=807