



Epidemiological Update

Cholera
15 January 2013

Current status of cholera outbreaks in the Region

In **Haiti**¹, since the beginning of the epidemic (October 2010) to 7 January 2013, the total number of cholera cases reached 638,511, of which 352,532 (55%) were hospitalized and 7,943 died. The global case-fatality rate has been 1.2% since November 2011, however, with significant variations for example, in Grand Anse (4.0%) and Port-au-Prince (0.7%).

While there has been a downward trend in the nationwide number of cases and deaths since October 2012, the first week of 2013 is comparatively showing higher numbers of cases and deaths than what was registered for the same period in 2012.

In the **Dominican Republic**², since the beginning of the epidemic (November 2010) through epidemiological week (EW) 1 of 2013 the total number of suspected cholera cases reported was 29,490 of whom 426 died. During the first year, the epidemic went through increased activity, with an increase of cases during the rainy season, bringing the case-fatality rate to 1.7% and the attack rate to 0.2%. During the second year of the epidemic, the trend showed a continual decline with peaks related to outbreaks in certain municipalities, ending the year with a case-fatality rate of 0.8% and a cumulative attack rate of 0.3%.

In the first week of 2013, a cholera outbreak of 37 cases and two deaths registered in the prison of La Altagracia. The outbreak has been linked to contaminated drinking water and overcrowding of the prison population. The actions taken by the authorities in the Dominican Republic include improvement of water and sanitation services and the administration of chemoprophylaxis with a single dose of doxycycline.

In **Cuba**, their International Health Regulations (IHR) National Focal Point reported that as of 6 January 2013 there was an increase of acute diarrheal diseases in the municipality of Cerro and other municipalities of Havana related to food handling. Samples were taken of suspected cholera cases and then analyzed by the Pedro Kouri Institute of Tropical Medicine. As of 14 January, 51 cholera cases had been confirmed, all of which were characterized as *Vibrio cholerae* toxigenic serogroup O1, serotype Ogawa, biotype El Tor.

Previously, a total of 47 confirmed cholera cases had been reported in the provinces of Camaguey, Guantanamo and Santiago de Cuba, following the passage of Hurricane Sandy.

In response, the Cuban authorities are strengthening public health education awareness with an emphasis on hand hygiene and safe food and drinkable water consumption; while continuing to take action to ensure the supply of drinkable water and the strict control of food products.

¹ http://www.mspp.gouv.ht/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=120&Itemid=1

² <http://www.sespasdigepi.gob.do/>

Recommendations

The PAHO/WHO reiterates that recommendations made in the [Epidemiological Alert of November 2, 2012](#) continue to be applicable.

References

1. Ministry of Public Health and Population, Haiti: Rapports journaliers du MSPP sur l'evolution du cholera en Haiti. Port-au-Prince, Haiti: Ministry of Public Health and Population, Haiti; 2013. Available at: <http://www.mspp.gouv.ht/site/index.php>
2. The Dominican Republic Epidemiological Bulletin. Epidemiological Week 1 of 2013. Available at: <http://www.sespasdigepi.gob.do/>
3. Informative note to the population. Digital Gramma. Organiza Oficial del Comité Central del partido Comunista de Cuba. Available at: <http://www.granma.co.cu/2013/01/15/nacional/artic09.html>