



Epidemiological Alert: Update on the Cholera Situation

(7 December 2010)

Epidemiological Situation

Haiti

As in the previous epidemiological alerts, the information presented here, which integrates data obtained by the partners of the Health Cluster¹, has been provided by the Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population (MSPP),

From epidemiological week (EW) 42² to EW 48³, the MSPP reported at the national level a total of 93,222 cholera cases⁴, of which 47.4% (44,157) were hospitalized and 2,120 died (1,459 at the health services level and 661 at the community level). The in-hospital case fatality rate as of EW 48 is 3.3% and the overall case fatality rate is 2.3%.

Currently, there are cases and deaths due to cholera in the 10 departments of Haiti. The highest cumulative incidence rate⁵ as of EW 48 was observed in the department of Artibonite with 274 cases per 10,000 inhabitants, followed by Nord Ouest and Centre with 149 and 145 cases per 10,000 inhabitants, respectively. These departments also recorded the highest cumulative incidence rates in the previous week.

In Port-au-Prince and its metropolitan area⁶, and from EW 44⁷ to EW 48, 12,592 cholera cases, of which 35.4% (4,459) were hospitalized and 186 died (179 at the health services level and 7 at the community level), were recorded. The cumulative in-hospital case fatality rate as of EW 48 is 4% and the overall case fatality rate is 1.5%.

At the national level, it can be observed that during EW 48, there was a slight decrease in the number of new cholera cases vis-à-vis the previous week. Although there was an increase in the number of hospitalized cases, the in-hospital case fatality rate due to cholera has continued decreasing during this week.

¹ Health Cluster: conformed by organizations which are currently working in response to the cholera outbreak in Haiti and which include the International Committee of the Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, Doctors of the World, Merlin, International Medical Corps, Partners in Health and Save the Children, and other United Nations agencies and bilateral organizations. The Health Cluster is coordinated by the MSPP and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO).

² On 20 October 2010 the first cholera cases in hospitalized patients were laboratory confirmed in the Department of Artibonite. The Haiti Public Health Laboratory isolated *V. cholerae* O: 1 serotype Ogawa. This isolation was confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

³ Data from MSPP, updated as of 27 November 2010.

⁴ On 16 November, the MSPP began including data on hospital visits due to cholera in its daily reports, which for the purpose of this report are considered as cases.

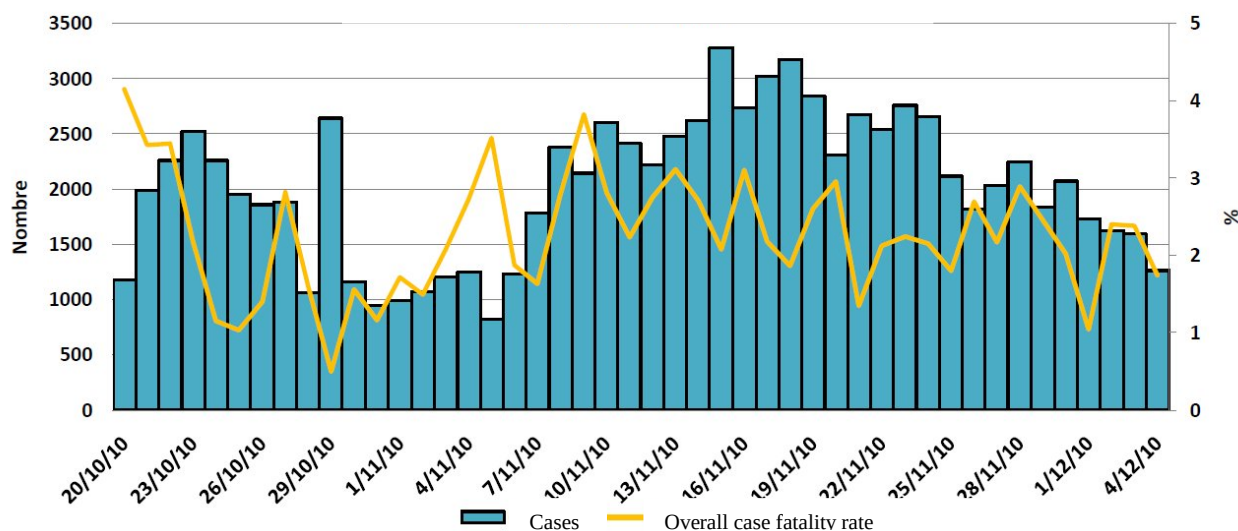
⁵ Haiti Population Estimate 2009: IHSI/Direction des Statistiques Démographiques et Sociales (DSDS).

⁶ Carrefour, Cité Soleil, Delmas, Kenscoff, Pétiön-Ville, Port-au-Prince, Tabarre and Croix des Bouquets.

⁷ The first hospitalizations due to cholera were reported by the MSPP on 7 November 2010.

At the departmental level in EW 48 - with the exception of Artibonite - every department presented an increase in the number of cases and hospitalizations due to cholera vis-à-vis what was recorded in the previous week (EW 47). Also in EW 48, the departments of Grand Anse, Nippes, and Sud Est, recorded an increase in both the in-hospital and overall case fatality rates vis-à-vis EW 47.

Figure 1. Daily cholera cases and overall case fatality rate. Haiti. EW 42 to EW 48



Source: Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population

Daily updates, which include information on the number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths due cholera, are published on the Cholera Interactive Map, which is available at the following link:

http://new.paho.org/hq/images/Atlas_IHR/CholeraHispaniola/atlas.html

During this week, response activities continued and included:

1. Awareness activities.
2. Distribution of hospital supplies.
3. Establishment of new Cholera Treatment Centers (CTC) and Cholera Treatment Units (CTU).

A report on the response activities conducted by the Health Cluster, at national and departmental levels is available at:

http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4404&Itemid=3487

Dominican Republic

From EW 46⁸ to EW 48, the Ministry of Public Health of the Dominican Republic recorded 22 laboratory confirmed cholera cases, of which 15 were hospitalized. No deaths were recorded. Also, 2 cases have been considered imported and 20 autochthonous.

As of EW 48, four provinces have recorded cases: Elias Piña, Santo Domingo, Santiago, and Valverde. In Santo Domingo, cases are from the municipalities of Santo Domingo Este (6) and Santo Domingo Norte (1). In Santiago, cases are from the municipalities of Navarrete (6), Janico (1), San Juan (1), Santiago (1), and Platanal (1). In Valverde, the cases are from the municipality of Mao and in Elias Piña, the cases are from Sabana Cruz de Banica.

86% (19) of laboratory- confirmed cases are people 5 years of age and older, 14 (63%) are males and 8 (37%) are females.

The Ministry of Public Health continues implementing a national contingency plan against cholera and enhancing actions relating to surveillance, risk communication, water and environmental sanitation, assurance of food quality, and organization of health services networks.

The Pan American Health Organization would like to remind Members States the need to strengthen surveillance measures, update response and preparedness plans, and implement appropriate prevention and promotion measures.

The following is an update, as of 7 December 2010, of the World Health Organization's International Travel and Health website.

Haiti - travel, trade and cholera

7 December 2010 -- Although it is unusual for tourists and short term visitors to be affected by cholera provided that they adhere to proper food safety and adequate hygiene, this disease continues to cause serious outbreaks in parts of the world where water supplies, sanitation, food safety, and hygiene are inadequate. WHO does not recommend any travel and trade restrictions in relation to the Haiti cholera outbreak. National authorities are encouraged to provide arriving travellers with information on cholera symptoms, hygienic preventive measures and how to seek for medical care in case of symptoms. Authorities are also encouraged to disseminate information about the cholera situation worldwide, and about current outbreaks in particular, to travel clinic, travel medicine networks, and other health care networks.

<http://www.who.int/ith/updates/20101207/en/index.html>

⁸ On November 16, 2010, the National Reference laboratory isolated V. cholerae O: 1 serotype Ogawa from a sample of a 32 years-old patient.

References

1. Préliminaire data Ministère de la Sante Publique et de la Population de Haïti. Available at:
http://www.mspp.gouv.ht/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=57&Itemid=1
2. Health Cluster Bulletin N°5, November, 27 2010. Available at:
http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4404&Itemid=3487