

CHOLERA EPIDEMIC IN HAITI AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

3 March 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- In Haiti, as 28 February 2023, the Department of Epidemiology, Laboratories, and Research (DELR) have reported 33,661 suspected cases and 2,439 confirmed cases in all 10 departments of the country, which represent a **2.61 % increase in confirmed cases and a 2.51% increase in suspected cases in the last 7 days.**
- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO continues to support the Ministry of Health (Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population – MSPP) and partners, including in:
 - Strengthening coordination of the cholera response in each of the 10 departments by providing surge capacity in epidemiological surveillance, case management, water, hygiene, sanitation, community and risk communication.
 - Enhancing epidemiological and laboratory surveillance at the department level to improve the quality of data and reporting, as well as to strengthen the capacity of the regional laboratories for the rapid detection and diagnosis of cholera, including procuring equipment, laboratory materials and reagents.
 - Improving case management in Cholera Treatment Centers (CTC) by supporting Health Directorates in clinical care, water, hygiene, sanitation and infection prevention and control, including the CTCs established in prisons.
 - Distribute medical and non-medical supplies to aid the cholera response in all departments across the country, including Ringer Lactate fluids, infusion sets and Oral Rehydration Salts for case management as well as aqua tabs for the purification of water.
- In the Dominican Republic, the Ministry of Public Health confirmed **12 new cholera cases** since the last report on 17 February, bringing the **total number of confirmed cases to 88**, of which 71 are reported in the capital city of Santo Domingo.

IN NUMBERS

As of 28 February 2023

Haiti

33,661 Suspected Cases *

2,439 Confirmed Cases

29,782 Hospitalized Cases

594 Deaths

1.77% Case Fatality Rate
(suspected cases)

1.15% Case Fatality Rate
(Hospitalized cases)

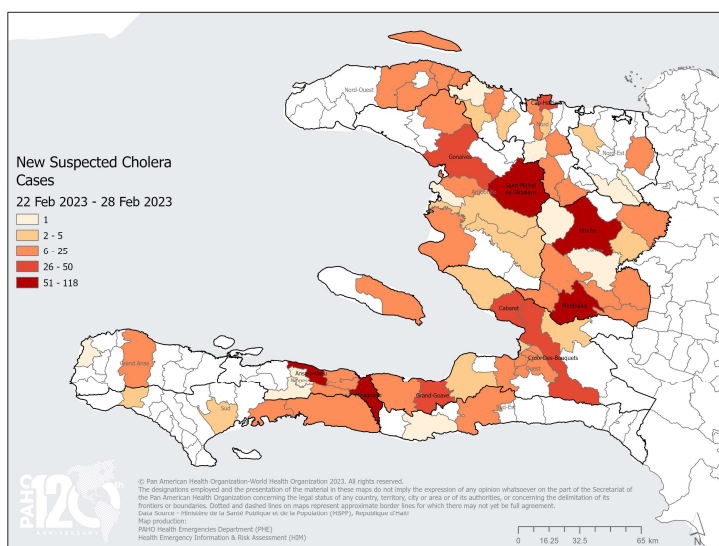
Dominican Republic

88 Confirmed Cases

0 Deaths

**Total suspected cases for Haiti include institutional and community cases as well as cases reported in the Civil Prison of PaP based on Department Epi cumulative data.*

Source Haiti: Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population sitrep #149.
Source Dominican Republic: Ministerio de Salud Pública.



Reported Suspected Cholera Cases in Haiti by Department as of 28 March 2023

Source: Haïti Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population (MSPP). Data generated by PAHO/WHO



CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

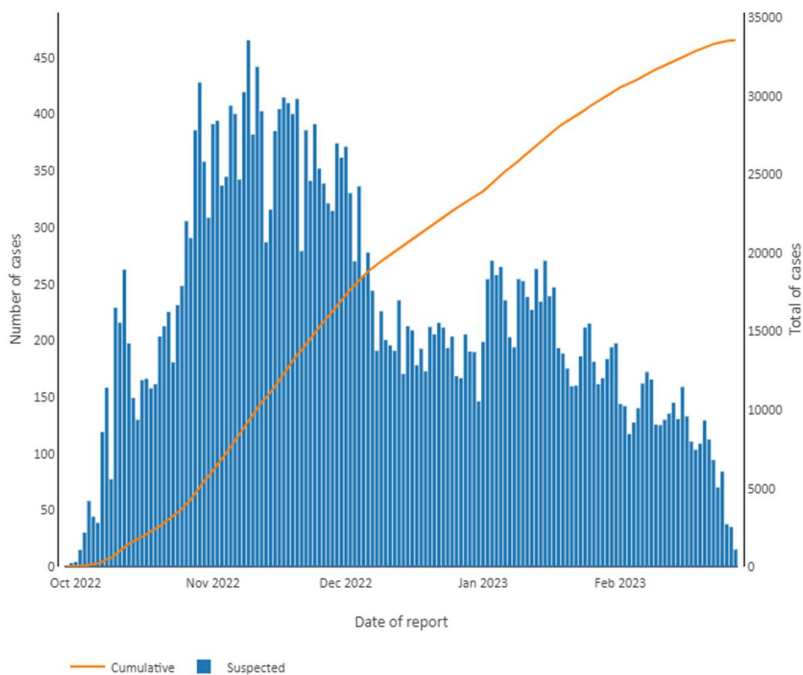
- In Haiti, the complex humanitarian and socio-political crisis, with high levels of insecurity, fuel shortages and economic instability, continue to be major challenges in the response to the cholera outbreak, limiting access to health and basic water, hygiene and sanitation services, as well supplies:
 - Lack of access to affected areas continue to hamper epidemiological surveillance, the installation of Oral Rehydration Points (ORP) and Cholera Treatment Centers (CTCs), the transport of patients to CTCs, and health promotion, as well as community level water, hygiene, and sanitation activities.
 - Although fuel distribution has restarted in the Ouest Department, availability remains limited in other departments, hindering basic water and sanitation services (e.g., garbage collection) and the response and distribution of life-saving cholera medicines and supplies.
- The global cholera crisis generates a high demand for medical and non-medical supplies, including for the oral vaccine, resulting in limited cholera commodities for immediate distribution in all affected countries.



EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE

- In Haiti, as 28 February, a total of **33,661 suspected cholera cases** were reported in all ten departments in the country, (Figure 1) of which **2,439 were confirmed** by the national laboratory, including **594 deaths**.
- To date, **ten departments have reported confirmed cases**, with the majority reported in Ouest (1,272), followed by Centre (448), Nord (152) and Grand Anse (152). The most affected municipalities in the Ouest Department continue to be Port-au-Prince, Delmas, Cité Soleil, Carrefour, and Pétiion-Ville.

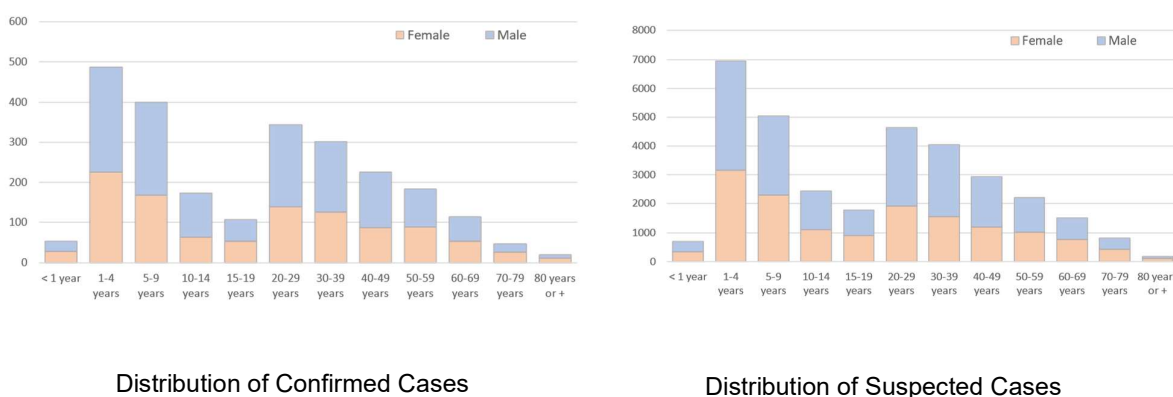
Figure 1. Daily distribution of suspected cases of cholera in Haiti as of 28 February 2023



Source: Haiti Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population

- Based on MSPP information from 28 February, 55.58% of reported suspected cases are male, and 44.42% female (Figure 2).
- Since 24 February, **there has been an overall increase of 2.51% in suspected cases and a 2.61% increase in confirmed cases** across the country (Figure 3). During same period, except for the Ouest Department, the **other nine departments reported an average increase of 4.19% in suspected cases and a 4.66% rise in confirmed cases**, of which the major increase has been observed in the Nord-Est and Nord-Ouest departments.
- The case fatality rate among suspected and hospitalized cases is 1.77% and 1.15% respectively.
- Age groups 1-4 (19.96%) and 5-9 (16.4%) are the most affected among the 2,439 confirmed cases.

Figure 2. Distribution of suspected and confirmed cases of cholera by age group and gender in Haiti as of 28 February



Source: Haiti Ministère de la Santé Publique et de la Population

Figure 3. Summary of percentage difference of suspected and confirmed cases compared to 24 February 2023

Summary				
Department	Suspected Cases 2.2.23	% Difference 24.2.23	Confirmed Cases 2.2.23	% Difference 24.2.23
Ouest	17935	1.07%	1272	0.79%
Artibonite	5447	2.21%	104	0.00%
Centre	4423	5.01%	448	5.66%
Nord	1126	7.03%	152	2.70%
Sud	378	4.42%	69	9.52%
Nord-Est	85	4.94%	15	25.00%
Nord-Ouest	1968	2.39%	52	30.00%
Grand Anse	589	0.68%	152	0.00%
Sud-Est	510	3.87%	123	2.50%
Nippes	1200	13.31%	52	0.00%
Total	33661	2.51%	2439	2.61%



HEALTH NEEDS

- Medical and non-medical supplies for case management, including Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS), Ringer Lactate solution, cholera beds and WASH supplies.
- Human resources at CTC and at Department Level.
- Laboratory reagents and Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) for the investigation and confirmation of cholera cases.
- Access to safe drinking water and improved hygiene and sanitation.
- Access to sufficient fuel and transportation services (air and land) for the timely and effective distribution of essential cholera supplies.



PAHO/WHO RESPONSE

PAHO/WHO continues to support national health authorities and operational partners in prioritizing the cholera response in the departments and municipalities most affected based on the epidemiological situation as follows:

Coordination and leadership

- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO continues to strengthen coordination of the cholera response by supporting surge capacity in epidemiological surveillance, case management, water, hygiene, sanitation, community intervention and risk communication under the leadership of Department Health Directorates.
- In the Dominican Republic, PAHO/WHO is supporting the Ministry of Health and other partners to coordinate and provide technical support to the cholera outbreak response in Santo Domingo as well as to investigate alerts across the country.

Epidemiological and laboratory surveillance

- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO, in collaboration with the National Laboratory of Public Health (LNSP) is supporting the Sud-Est, Nippes, Sud and Grand Anse Departments in efforts to improve the laboratory network for the rapid investigation of cholera alerts and to ensure appropriate implementation of surveillance guidelines.
- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO continues to support the MSPP to strengthen the capacity of regional laboratories for the rapid detection and diagnosis of cholera, including in procuring equipment, laboratory materials and reagents.
- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO supports the Departmental Health Directorates in the timely investigation of suspected cases in the Nord-Est, Nippes, and Centre departments as well as in conducting initial response activities during the field missions.
- In addition, PAHO/WHO continues to monitor and support the rapid investigation of cholera alerts and response activities in prisons (more details under below), in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and its partner Health Through Walls.

Case management

- In Haiti as of 2 March, there are 123 health structures and a total of 1,591 beds providing care to cholera patients in all 10 departments.
- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO continues to support the Departmental Health Directorates to monitor and ensure the quality of case management in CTCs. Currently, PAHO/WHO is supporting the assessment and improvement of all CTCs in the Centre department, in terms of clinical management, WASH and IPC conditions. This includes supporting the quality assessment of case management for cholera cases in the Hinche prison.
- PAHO/WHO continues to support departmental health authorities in monitoring the number of active CTCs and bed occupancy rates in all departments, to ensure an effective distribution of cases among all available health facilities.

Water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) and infection, prevention and control (IPC)

- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO supported the Departmental Health Directorate in Nord Est to carry out two WASH trainings, targeting 57 staff including 5 doctors and 30 nurses, working in CTCs to improve their capacities in medical waste management and IPC.
- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO supported the improvement of WASH conditions in the CTC established in the prison of Hinche, Centre Department, through the donation of water, hygiene and sanitation materials.

Risk communications and community engagement

- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO is supporting the Centre department to mobilize and deploy Community Health Workers (ASCP - Agent de Santé Communautaire Polyvalent) to rural areas with limited access to health service. These ASCPs will carry out awareness and prevention activities in public schools, churches, markets, and public squares. PAHO/WHO also participated in an advocacy meeting with 37 leaders of different religious denominations, media, and civil society to increase their engagement in mobilization of communities in the prevention of cholera.
- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO is supporting the Departmental Health Directorates to improve data collection and reporting from the interventions carried out by ASCPs, by facilitating the deployment of community data management officers to ensure regular field collection, monitoring, entry, and analysis of data.
- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO continues to support cholera prevention activities in 13 municipalities in Grand Anse and 10 municipalities in Centre departments through risk communication and community engagement interventions, such as the deployment of 14 Sound-trucks, the organization of cholera awareness activities in 329 churches and schools, and by broadcasting cholera awareness messages in 18 radio stations.
- In the Dominican Republic, PAHO/WHO supported the printing of informative materials on prevention in Creole (e.g., brochures) to be distributed in areas with cholera transmission in Santo Domingo, as well the creation of billboards with preventive messages for the general population residing in the affected areas.

Vaccination

- In the Dominican Republic, the cholera vaccination campaign that began on 25 January has already reached 33,574 people in eight provinces, five of which are in the border with Haiti (Elias Piña, Pedernales, Monte Cristi, Dajabón, and Independencia), as well as two sectors in the capital city: National District and Santo Domingo Este (26,633 doses). PAHO/WHO continues to support the Ministry of Health in the vaccination communication campaign, updating vaccination guidelines, the development of monitoring tools, the distribution of a cold chain kit in target areas and the distribution of safe water kits along with the vaccines.

Supplies and Logistics

- In Haiti, PAHO/WHO continues to support the response led by the Departmental Health Directorates and the MSPP through the distribution of cholera supplies for case management and WASH interventions.
 - PAHO/WHO has distributed to the Centre Department 30 tons in cholera supplies, which include 21,000 Ringer Lactate fluids for the case management of approximately 2,000 severe cases as well as 16,000 ORS for the management of mild cases and 30,000 aqua tabs for the purification of water at household and CTC level, among other medical and hygiene items.
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