

Myanmar Acute Watery Diarrhea / Cholera Outbreak

External Situation Report

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This report summarizes the situation as of 23 September 2024.

Situation Overview

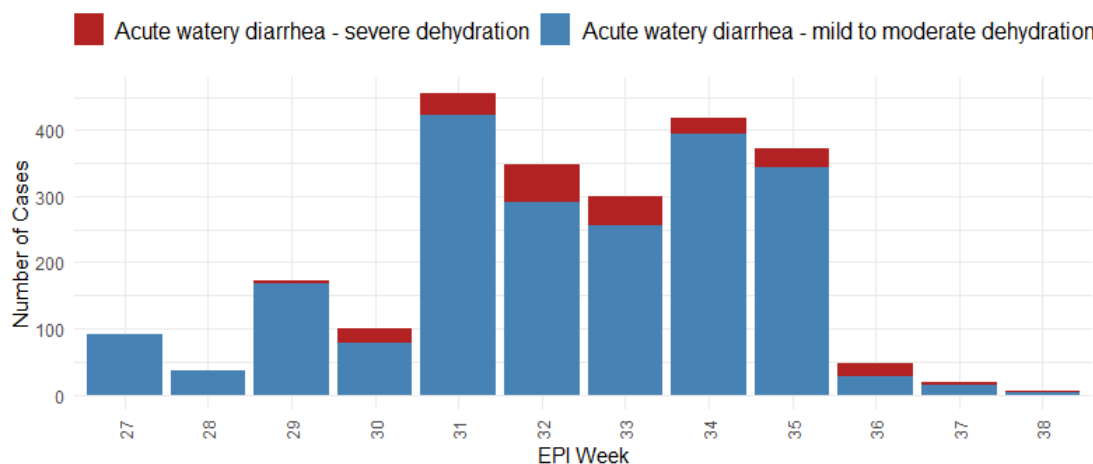
Yangon

- After 25 August 2024, no official data on AWD cases and deaths were shared publicly. WHO also has not received the relevant data.
- A total of 3 421 hospitalized cases of acute watery diarrhea (AWD) including 160 cases with severe dehydration were reported in Yangon Region from 24 June to 25 August 2024, by the ministerial authorities for health.
- Information from open sources suggests AWD cases are on the rise again in some townships such as Hlaingtharyar.

Rakhine

- According to the ministerial authorities for health, from 4 to 25 August 2024, a total of 235 hospitalized AWD cases including 63 cases with severe dehydration were reported in Sittwe, Rakhine.
- According to the early warning and response systems (EWARS) supported by the Health Cluster in Myanmar:
 - In the epidemiological week 38 (15-21 September 2024), a total of 5 AWD cases were recorded, 72% decrease compared the week 37 (8-14 September 2024). The AWD cases with severe dehydration decreased to two in the week 38.
 - The substantial decline of AWD cases was observed after the week 35 - approximately 300 or more AWD cases had been reported for five consecutive weeks (week 31 to week 35, or 28 July – 3 August 2024), with 20 – 30 AWD cases with severe dehydration per week. The reasons for sudden decrease of AWD cases are not well understood.

Figure 1. Weekly Trend of AWD cases in Rakhine state, Myanmar from 30 June to 21 September 2024



Source: Health Cluster in Myanmar

Situation in other areas

- A cluster of AWD cases including cases with severe outcomes were observed around Kyaikkhami Township, Mon State. As per information available from open sources, cases have received health care services from the township hospital. The local health authorities have implemented control measures, including closure of restaurants.
- With the severe flooding caused by the remnants of the Typhoon Yagi in the context of ongoing monsoon, the risk of AWD, including potential transmission of cholera, is heightened in flood-affected areas, due to contamination of water sources and limited access to clean water and food. Conflict zones where access to healthcare is difficult face particular challenge.

Public Health Response

Vaccination

- 2.4 million doses of oral cholera vaccines (OCVs) have arrived in Myanmar for the vaccination campaign.
- The reactive vaccination campaign has started in Yangon Region on 22 September 2024 and will continue until 3 October 2024 ¹.
- The campaign is being implemented in densely populated areas with sub-optimal sanitation and hygiene, monasteries, religious schools, charitable organizations, orphanages, schools, nursing homes, prisons, mental health hospitals, factories, schools, boarding schools, markets, and street food shops of 34 townships with high case load.
- The vaccine will be administered to the individuals above one years of age.
- The authorities are planning to provide OCV to other States/Regions which are at high risk of severe AWD.

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- The OCV campaign's key messages along with questions and answers is uploaded on the WHO channels, mainly Facebook and Viber which are active in Myanmar.
- Social listening exercise will be conducted to monitor the online conversations, any misinformation related to OCV.
- WHO continues sharing the [cholera RCCE materials](#) to stakeholders, targeting communities in Yangon through various communication channels and platforms.

Case management and infection, prevention and control (IPC)

- During last two weeks, WHO Myanmar country office team conducted a field visit to three key hospitals in Yangon Region. According to the hospital staff, while AWD cases have shown a decline, the cases continue to be recorded from certain townships. To cope with the caseload, the hospitals are in need for additional human resources, as well as diagnostics and case management supplies.

Challenges

- Lack of access to the real-time disaggregated data for the ongoing cholera situation has been a challenge for effective planning of response actions and mobilization of resources. WHO has requested the

¹ <https://www.mohs.gov.mm/page/19895>

Ministerial authorities to continue communicating detailed public health information on AWD and cholera to WHO as per the requirements under the International Health Regulations (2005).

- The reactive OCV campaign can support the containment efforts; however, effective and efficient public health measures are required in the longer-term, along with more sustained investments, both in health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).
- AWD/cholera cases continue to be reported, indicating that the transmission chain remains active. This highlights the need to further intensify community engagement efforts to stop the transmission.

Way forward

- WHO will work with relevant partners to support implementation of OCV campaign in Yangon Region, and strengthening of community engagement.
- In collaboration with Rakhine State Health Department, ministerial authorities for health, and partners, WHO will continue to monitor the AWD situation in Sittwe, and provide relevant technical, logistic and coordination support.