Infectious Disease Surveillance and Monitoring for Animal and Human Health: summary of notable incidents of public health significance. December 2019

*Incident assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident assessment</th>
<th>Deteriorating</th>
<th>No Change</th>
<th>Improving</th>
<th>Undetermined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incident is deteriorating with increased implications for public health</td>
<td>Update does not alter current assessment of public health implications</td>
<td>Incident is improving with decreasing implications for public health</td>
<td>Insufficient information available to determine potential public health implications</td>
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Notable incidents of public health significance

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Incident assessment*</th>
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<td>EVD, Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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The decline in case incidence seen in November was not sustained. During December 2019, there were 67 newly confirmed cases compared with 39 the previous month. The upsurge in violence at the end of November severely disrupted contact tracing and follow up, and consequently lead to increased transmission in the first 2 weeks of December. As of 31 December 2019, there had been 3,262 confirmed and 118 probable cases across 3 provinces (North Kivu, Ituri and South Kivu), with 2,232 deaths (66%). Eight health zones (of the 29 ever affected) reported cases in December, in contrast with the 4 zones in November. In addition to the newly confirmed EVD cases, one individual relapsed 6 months after their primary infection. This relapse was the source of an extended single chain of transmission that had by 24 December included 29 cases. Progress towards zero cases is slow and likely to remain challenging.

Other incidents of interest

- in late December, an outbreak of viral pneumonia of unknown aetiology was identified in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province in Central China. Many, but not all, of the cases were linked with a seafood and live animal market in the city (Huanan South China Seafood Market). The pathogen was subsequently identified as a novel coronavirus. A full update will be provided in the January 2020 summary
- 181 staff and students of the Veterinary Research Institute in Lanzhou (China), tested positive for Brucella antibodies. Except for one person with clinical symptoms, the rest were asymptomatic. A subsequent investigation by the Health Commission of Gansu Province suggested a biopharmaceutical company in close proximity to the Institute and producing a brucellosis vaccine, was responsible for a prolonged, unintentional release of the bacteria into the environment, apparently due to the use of expired disinfectants
- in the longstanding cholera outbreak in Yemen, December showed a slight downward trend with 43,949 suspected cases and 9 associated deaths. Between 1 January and 31 December 2019, there were 860,995 cases and 1023 associated deaths (compared to 370,208 cases and 505 deaths in 2018), and ~5% of tested cases were culture positive for V. cholerae
Publications of interest

- in Afghanistan, autochthonous dengue cases were confirmed for the first time, bringing a new public health challenge amidst its complex humanitarian emergencies.
- two further locally-acquired dengue cases were reported in Florida, USA, bringing the 2019 total to 16 (Florida’s highest annual total since 2014). Affected counties are Miami-Dade (14 cases), Broward (1) and Hillsborough (1).
- MERS was diagnosed in Qatar, in a 67-year-old female without contact with dromedary camels or recent travel. Follow-up and contact tracing detected 2 asymptomatic secondary cases. The last MERS-CoV infection reported from Qatar was in May 2017. Since 2012, Qatar has reported 22 cases (including these 3 new cases).
- a traveller from Nigeria was diagnosed with monkeypox in England. This was the fifth travel-related case to be reported globally, after being reported for the first time in England in 2018. In Nigeria, sporadic cases continue to be reported with 2 confirmed during December 2019.
- polio due to circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses continues to be reported from many countries; Malaysia reported its first polio case in 27 years, due to cVDPV1. As of 31 December 2019, 249 cVDPV cases had been reported in 2019. This, together with the increase in wild poliovirus in Pakistan, means that the polio eradication program faces significant challenges in the coming year.
- three travel-related human rabies cases were reported in Europe in December - one in Latvia, acquired in India; one in Spain following a cat bite in Morocco; and one in Italy after a dog bite in Zanzibar. The latter case occurred despite immediately undergoing post-exposure prophylaxis (rabies vaccination but no rabies immunoglobulin). This was not effective as the patient was immunocompromised due to a corticosteroid therapy.
- in the ongoing Rift Valley fever outbreak in Sudan, an increase of 148 cases brought the total to 493 human cases as of 21 December. No new areas reported livestock disease.
- an outbreak of yellow fever was reported in Mali: as of 22 December, there were 41 cases: 33 suspected, 3 probable and 5 confirmed cases from two regions Sikasso and Koulikoro.

Emerging Infections Summary – December 2019
treatment of drug-resistant TB will replace all previous and current WHO guidelines on the treatment of drug-resistant TB

- the European Union One Health 2018 Zoonoses Report was published with results of zoonoses monitoring activities carried out in 2018 in 36 European countries

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