

# Epidemiological situation of cholera in 2023

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The years 2022 and 2023 have been marked by a number of cholera outbreaks affecting populations around the world. Hundreds of thousands of cholera cases and thousands of deaths have been reported. Outbreaks have spread across country borders and affected areas that haven't seen cholera in recent years. The WHO assesses the current global level cholera risk as very high. Here we examine the current epidemiological dynamics of cholera and compare it to historical data from the last decades. We find that the current situation is not unprecedented but nevertheless very concerning, and that cholera mortality has been and remains unacceptably high. We then analyze drivers of the current outbreak dynamics.

Through a series of examples, we illustrate that the main communality of outbreaks is a vulnerable population with lack of access to safe water and sanitation and a lack of access to care. Acute crises, such as conflict, displacement, instability, economic crises and extreme weather events contribute to the general vulnerability of the population. In 2022/23, many such events have been linked to ongoing cholera outbreaks. We conclude that current cholera outbreaks should be attributed to these known risk factors, and that often cited causes such as COVID-fatigue or climate change, whereas not directly causing outbreaks, can increase the population's general vulnerability.

Recent years have been marked by a number of cholera outbreaks affecting populations around the world. We examine the current epidemiological dynamics of cholera and compare it to historical data from the last decades. We further analyze drivers of the current cholera outbreak dynamics.

