

Northwest of Syria Cholera Outbreak

Situation Report No.29

Epidemiological Week - 15 (9 April – 15 April 2023)

Suspected Cases: 67310

Confirmed Cases: 597

Cholera Deaths : 23

Case Fatality Rate: 0.03%

NWS Attack Rate: 1.45%

Date of Onset of Outbreak: 16 September 2022

Reporting Date of outbreak: 17 September 2022

Confirmation Date: 19 September 2022

Key Highlights

Cumulatively, a total of **67310 suspected** cases (**28220** in Aleppo governorate, **39090** in Idleb governorate) including **597 confirmed** have been reported by EWARN team since 16 September, including **23 deaths** case.

- The highest number of cases were reported in Harim district (20348) and Idleb district (11336) in Idleb governorate, then Azaz district (6752), Jebel Saman district (6648) in Aleppo governorate.
- 11347 total suspected cases (including 377 new cases in Epi week 15 - 2023) were reported from camps.
- 44.71 % Of the suspected cases are in the age group <5 years. Males are 52% of the total and females are 48%.
- Since the outbreak started, surveillance and reporting from facilities are being supported and strengthened. For better understanding of the background and context, [please read pervious sitreps.](#)
- Line list is shared with WHO and WASH team to aid Targeted response at a household level being conducted for identified cases.
- Active case search is ongoing, especially in the camps.

Situation Updates

1. Epidemiology

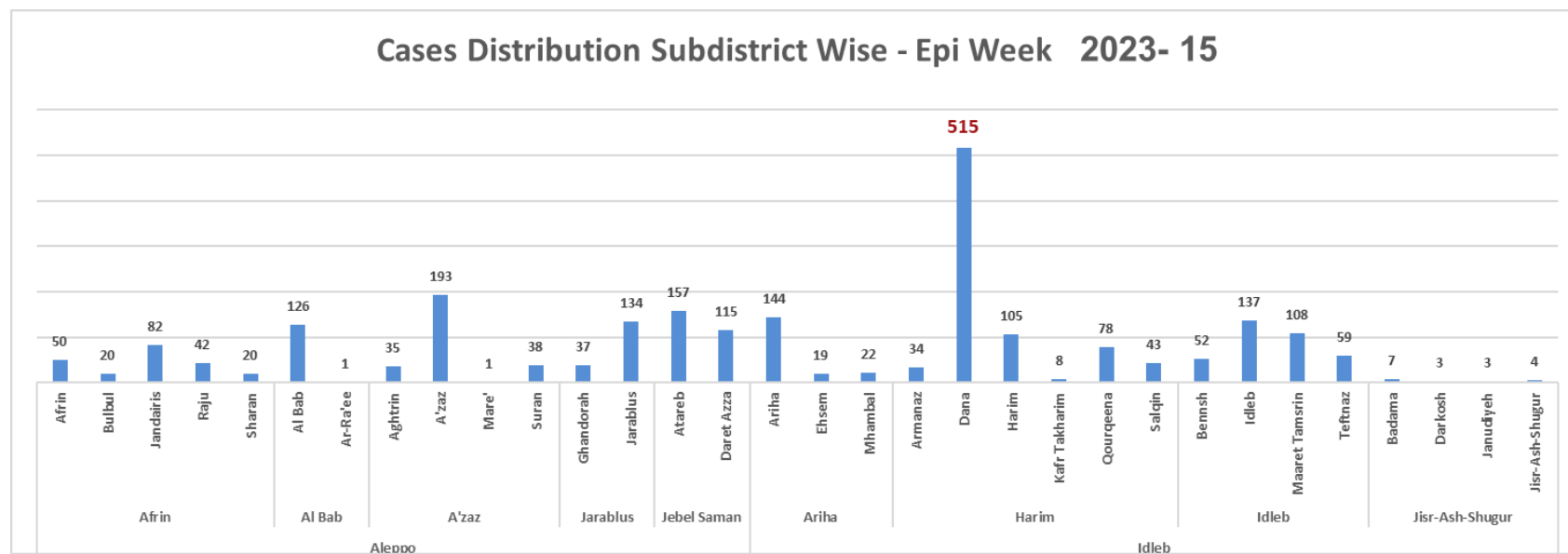
Updated case definition: A resident of outbreak areas with sudden onset of acute watery diarrhea with or without vomiting.

In Epi week 15 - 2023, **2392 suspected cases of cholera were reported**. The affected governorates are Aleppo (1051 suspected cases, 5 confirmed), and Idleb (1341 suspected cases, 0 confirmed).

The age group less than 5 reported 46.4 %, while the age group more than 60 reported 21.24 % of the total.

There were no death cases in the epi week 15

Dana subdistrict in Idled governorate reported the highest number of cases (515), in contract Azaz subdistrict reported the highest number in Aleppo governorate (193).

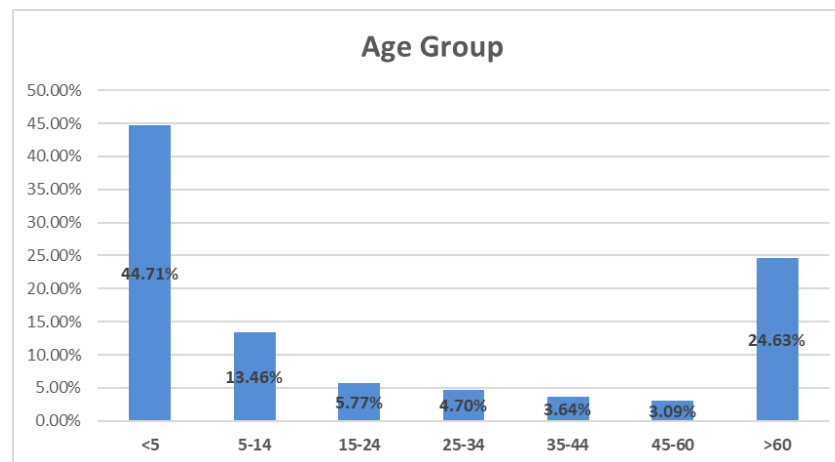
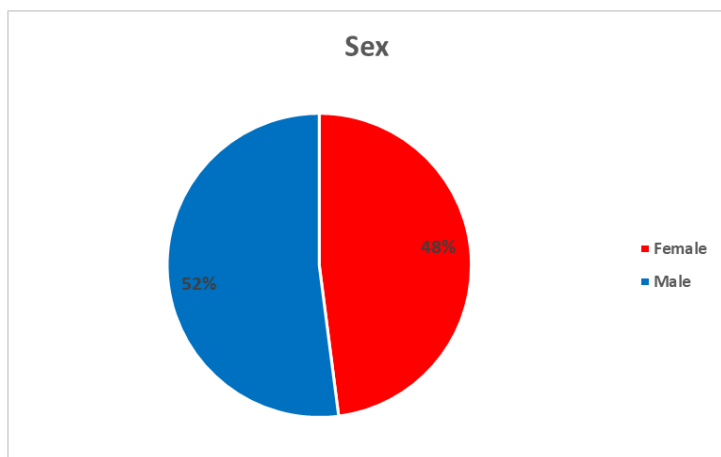


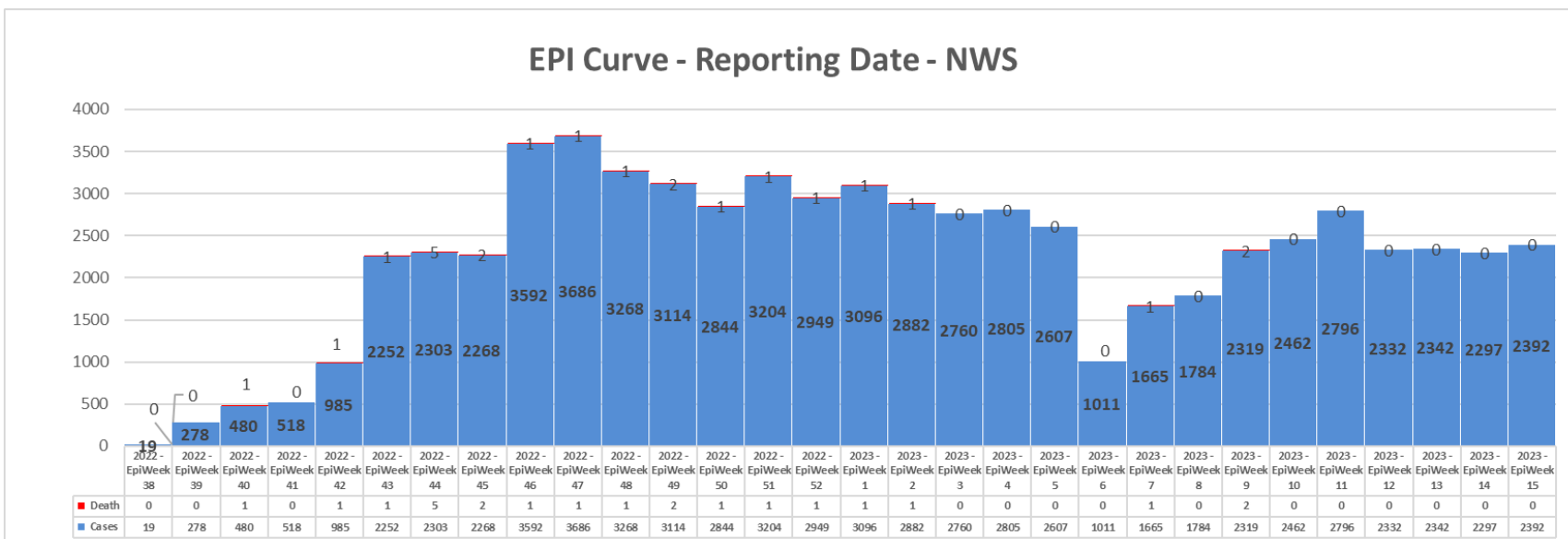
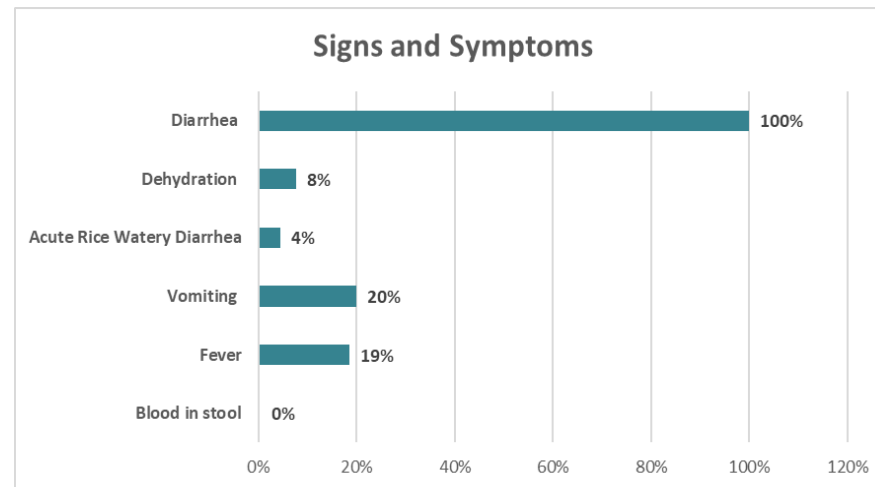
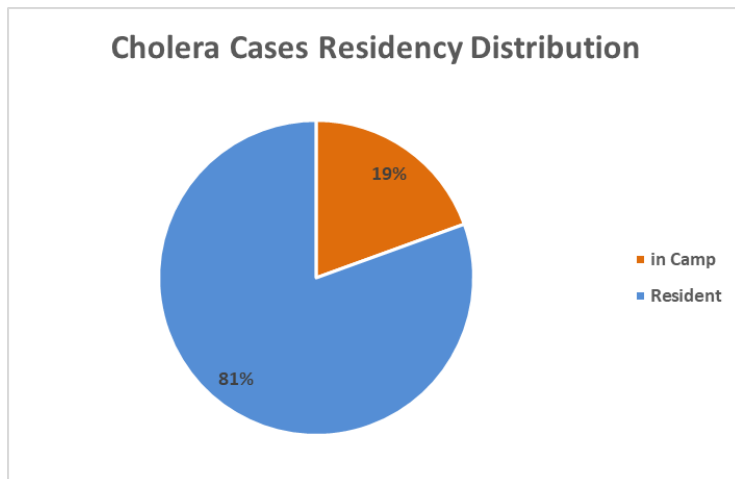
The overall sex distribution of the suspected cases is 52% Male, and 48% Female.

100% of the line listed cases were presented as Acute watery Diarrhea, 20% with vomiting, 4% as rice watery diarrhea, and 8% were dehydrated.

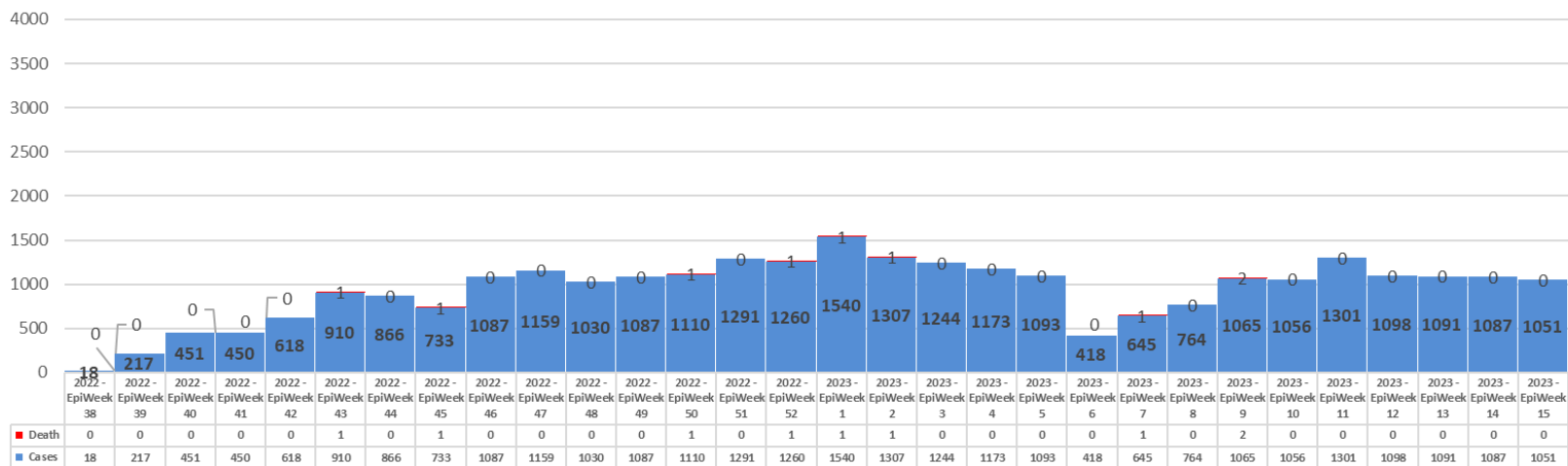
19 % of the total cases live in camps (11347), and 81% out of camps (48157). (7806 of the total line listed cases are unknown)

As the outbreak progresses, sensitivity should be increased by including smaller age groups and mild/moderate symptom groups in order to estimate the burden of the outbreak. According to WHO, in areas where a cholera outbreak has been confirmed, any person presenting with or dying from acute watery diarrhea is considered a suspected cholera case. The age group less than 5 years was 44.71%.

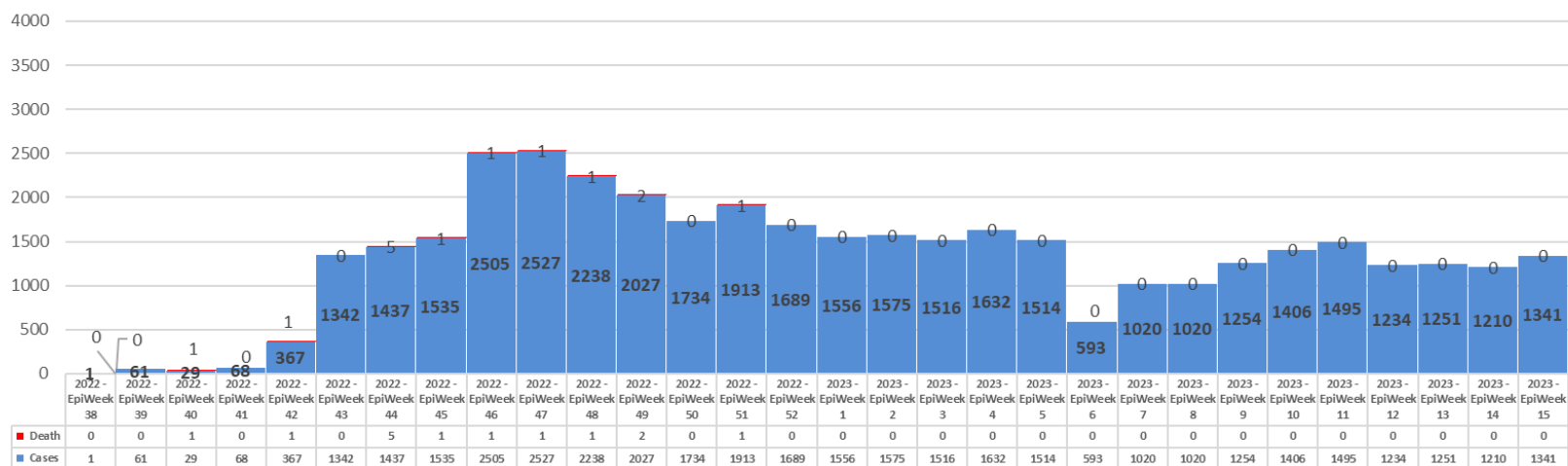




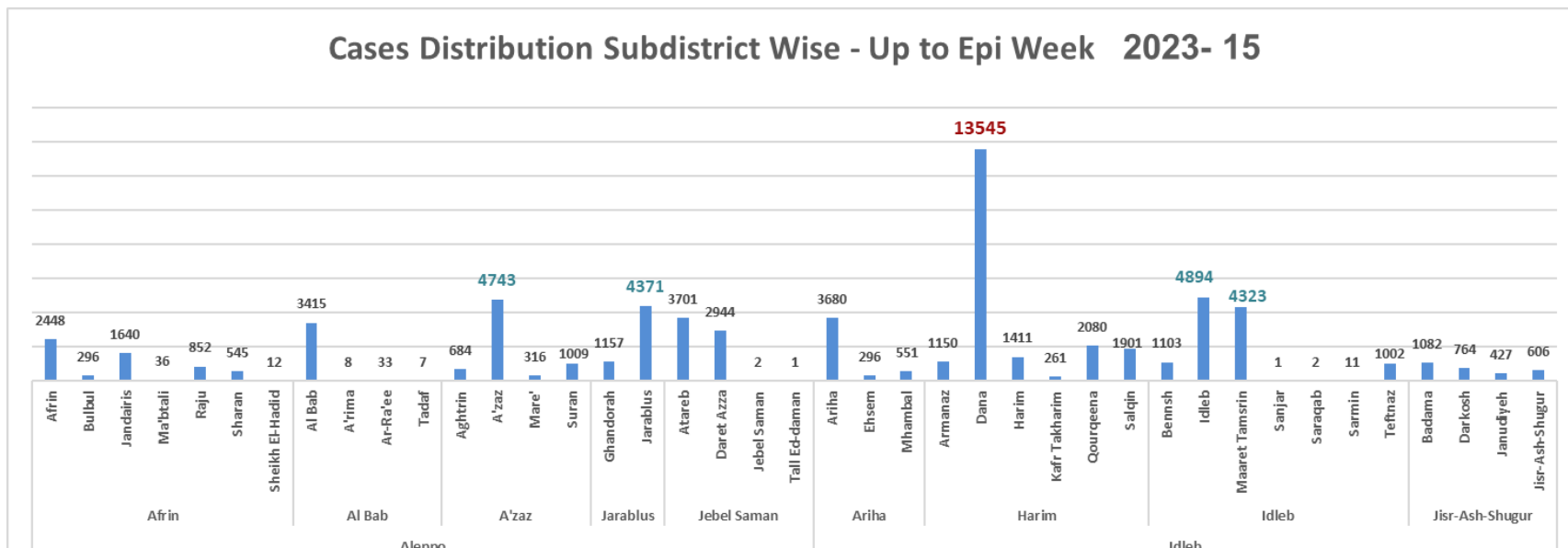
EPI Curve - Reporting Date - Aleppo Governorate



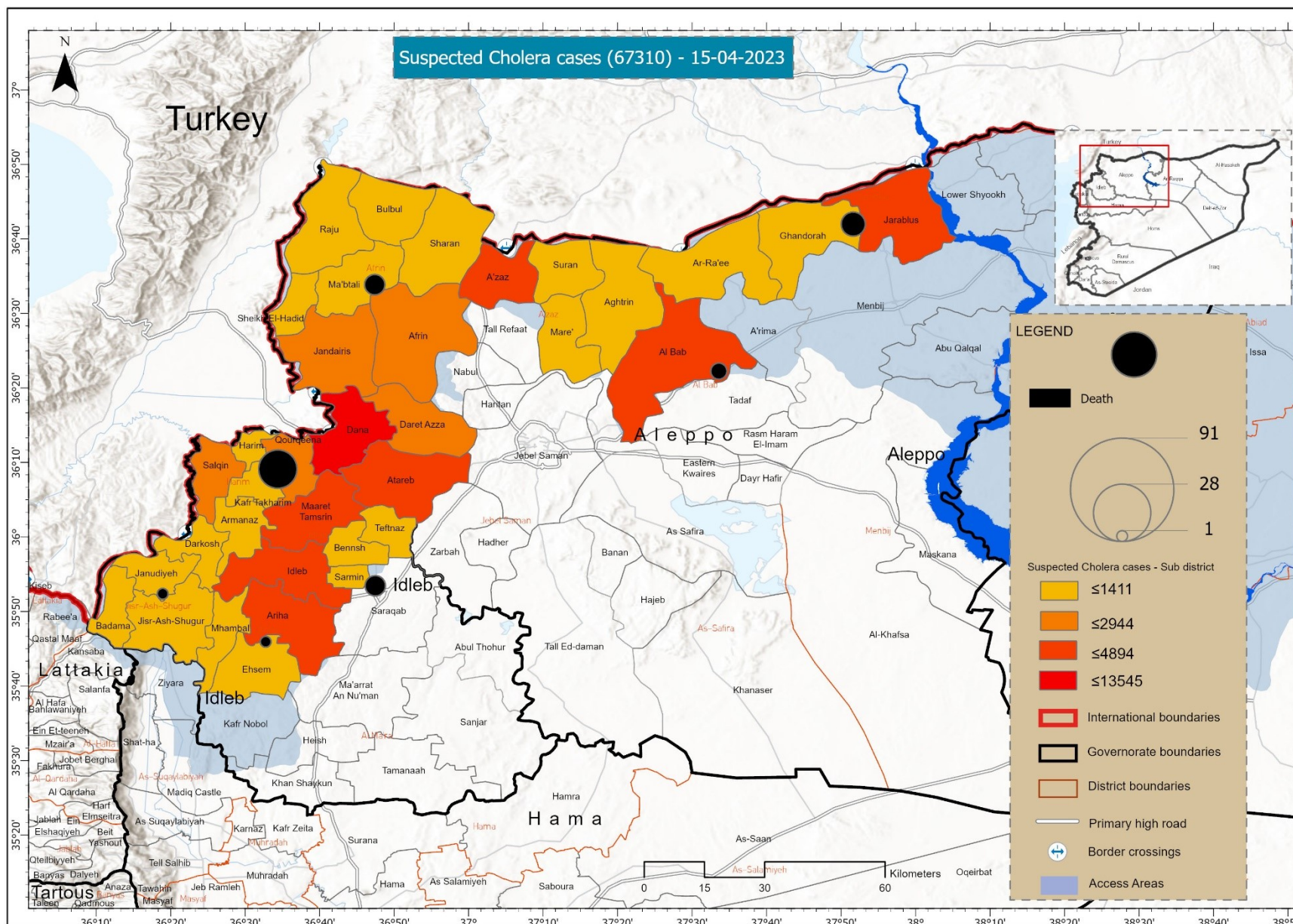
EPI Curve - Reporting Date - Idleb Governorate



Cases Distribution Subdistrict Wise - Up to Epi Week 2023- 15

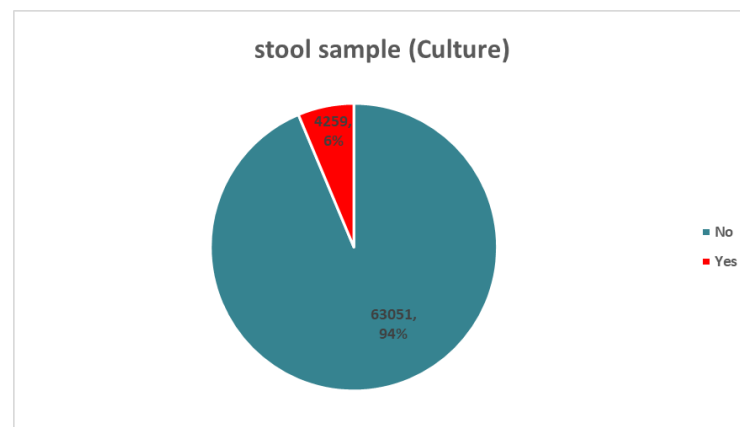


Epi Week	Governorate	District	Date of Onset	Population	New cases	Cumulative Cases	New Death	Cumulative Deaths	Case Fatality Rate	Incidence Rate	Attack Rate
Up to W15 - 2023	Idleb	Ariha	20-Sep	185,668	185	4527	0	1	0.02%	99.6	2.44%
		Harim	6-Sep	1,586,820	783	20348	0	9	0.04%	49.3	1.28%
		Idleb	14-Sep	713,933	356	11336	0	3	0.03%	49.9	1.59%
		Jisr-Ash-Shugur	25-Sep	310,973	17	2879	0	1	0.03%	5.5	0.93%
	Aleppo	A'zaz	9-Sep	648,600	267	6752	0	0	0.00%	41.2	1.04%
		Afrin	21-Sep	467,090	214	5829	0	3	0.05%	45.8	1.25%
		Al Bab	17-Sep	339,812	127	3463	0	2	0.06%	37.4	1.02%
		Jarablus	12-Sep	121,938	171	5528	0	4	0.07%	140.2	4.53%
	Jebel Saman	10-Sep	251,785	272	6648	0	0	0.00%	108.0	2.64%	
	Total				4,626,619	2392	67310	0	23	0.03%	51.7

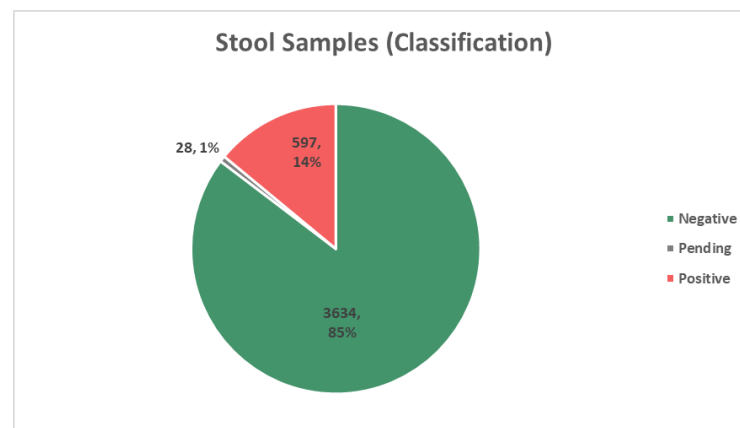


Laboratory:

- In Epi week 15- 2023, the total number of stool specimens or rectal swabs is **93**, (53 in Aleppo – 5 confirmed), (40 in Idleb – 0 confirmed).
- A **cumulative of 4259 samples were collected** since the start of the outbreak (6 % of overall line listed cases), **of which 597 have tested positive by stool culture. The total positivity rate in NWS is 14.1 %.**
- The Total number of negative cases by stool culture is 3634, and the remaining 28 are still pending.



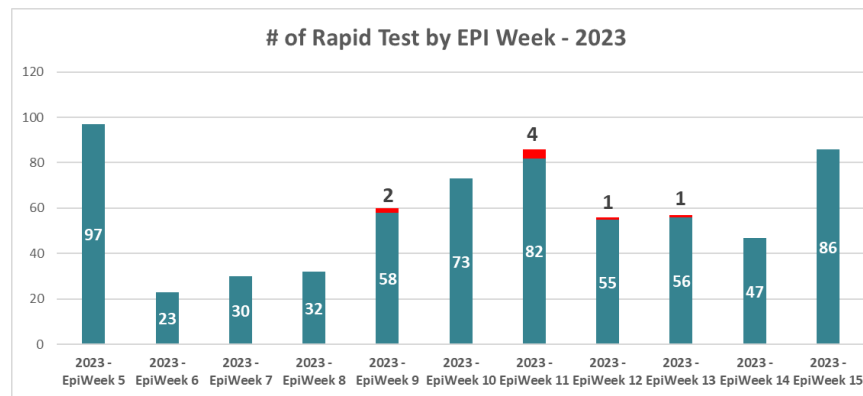
- Isolation and identification of V. cholera serogroup O1 or O139 by a culture of a stool specimen remain the gold standard for laboratory diagnosis.
- Currently, at EWARN laboratories (Idleb, Afrin, Jarabulus, Raqqa, and Tal-Abiad) Fecal specimens are subcultured onto selective and nonselective media, including Nutrient agar and TCBS agar, for detection of V. cholera O1.
- Suspicious, oxidase-positive isolates are serotyped in polyvalent antisera raised against the O1 Antigen.
- Antimicrobial-sensitivity testing is performed to detect resistance.
- The culture sensitivity results came sensitive for the following antibiotics: Azithromycin, Imipenem, Chloramphenicol, Ciprofloxacin, and Norfloxacin.
- The resistance is to Tetracycline, Doxycycline, and Sulfamethoxazole Trimethoprim.
- The laboratory team handles the specimens and waste management according to infection control standards.
- The sample collection protocol is to collect stool samples in 7% of the total suspected cholera cases per subdistrict and 5 samples from the admitted cholera suspected cases in the CTC /CTU per week.



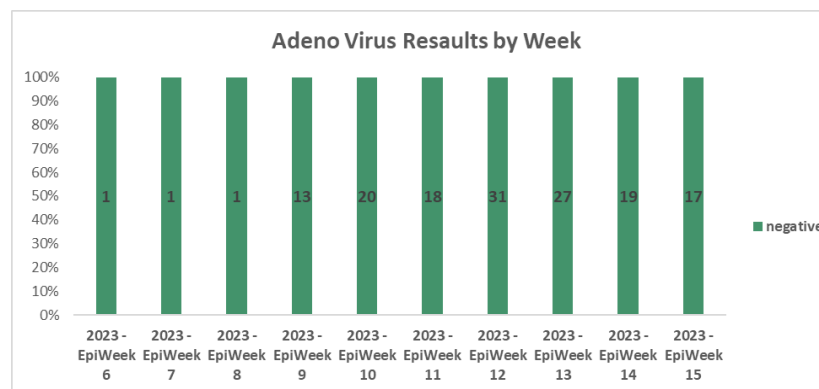
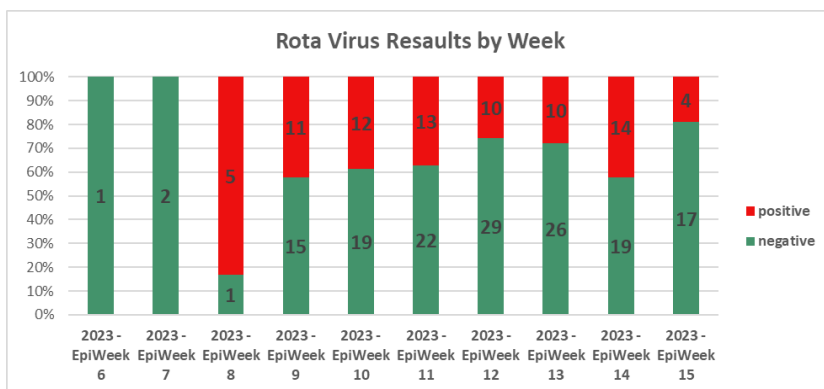
During epi week 15, EWARN received 86 RDT results from the CTC/CTUs, all of them were negative for Cholera.

The total of RDT tests starting from epi week 5 reached 647, and the total positive is 8.

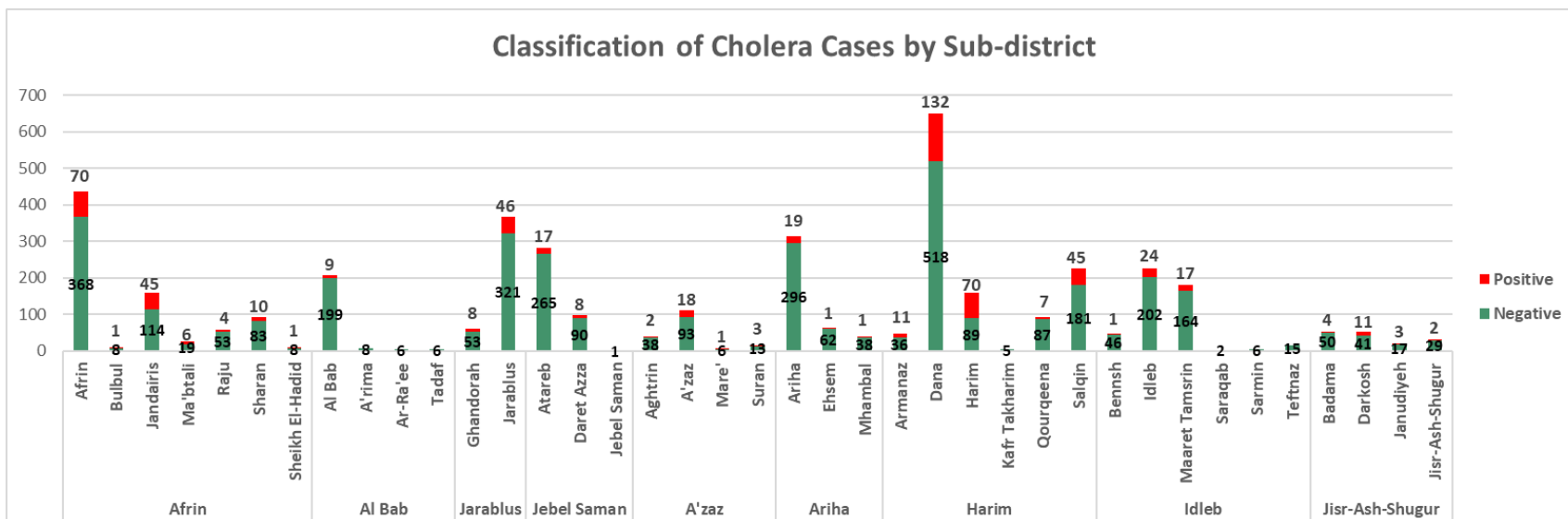
The positivity rate of RDTs, from epi week 5 – 2023 up to epi week 15 – 2023 is 1.23 %. But the positivity rate from the beginning of cholera outbreak up to epi week 15 – 2023 is 4.6 %.

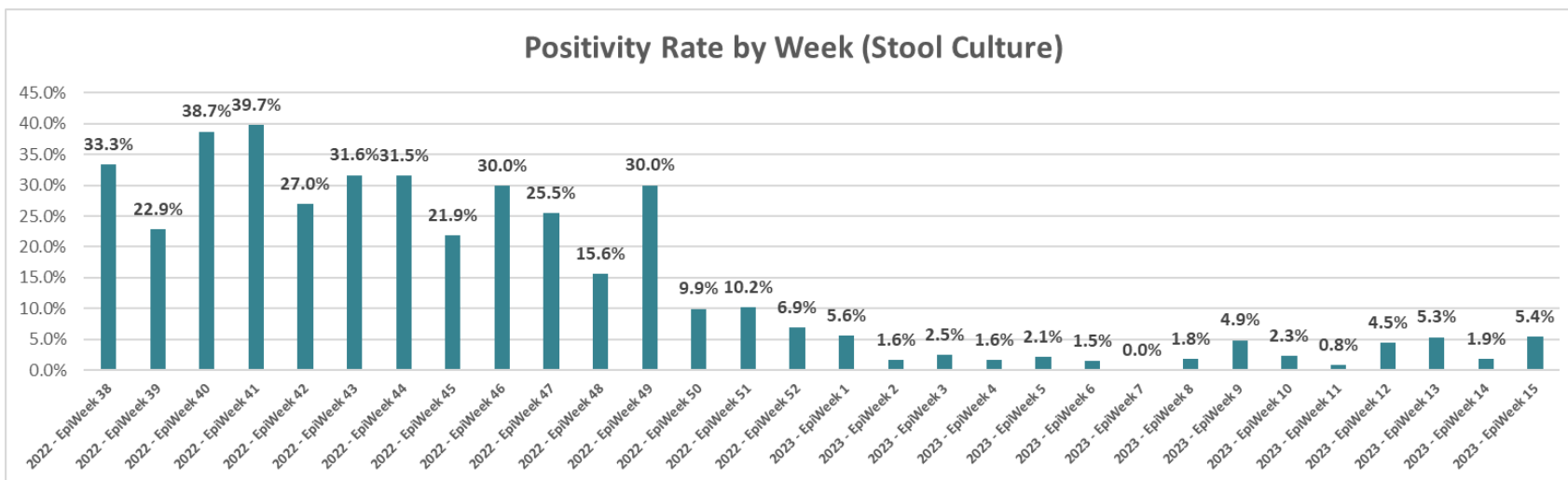
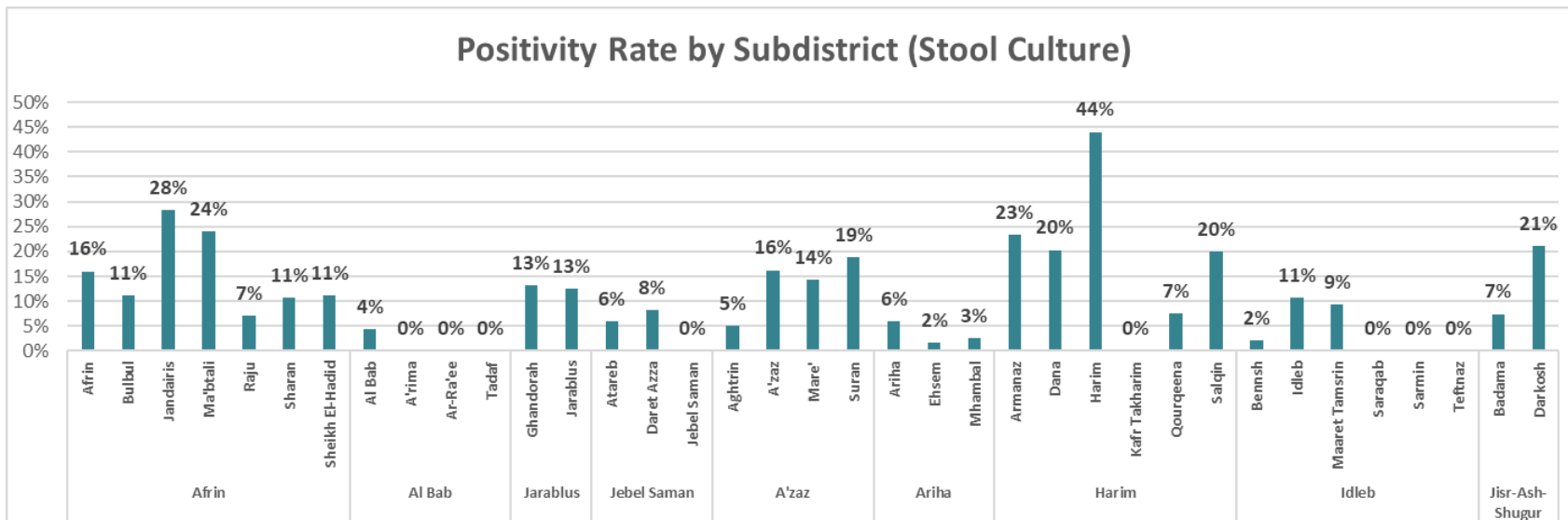


- For children under 5 years of age with a stool culture negative for cholera: In epi week 15, 21 tests were carried out to detect Rotavirus (4 of them were positive), and 17 tests to detect Adenovirus (all of them were negative).
- The total number of collected samples for Rotavirus reached 230 (79 of them were positive), while all of the collected samples for Adenovirus (148) were negative



Epi Week	Governorate	District	RDT+	RDT-	Postivity Rate for RDT	Stool Culture Positive	Stool Culture Negative	Postivity Rate for Culture
Up to W15 - 2023	Aleppo	Afrin	25	74	25.3%	137	653	17.3%
		Al Bab	0	6	0.0%	9	219	3.9%
		A'zaz	0	15	0.0%	24	150	13.8%
		Jarablus	2	41	4.7%	54	374	12.6%
		Jebel Saman	3	112	2.6%	25	356	6.6%
	Idleb	Ariha	0	65	0.0%	21	396	5.0%
		Harim	12	449	2.6%	265	916	22.4%
		Idleb	2	119	1.7%	42	435	8.8%
		Jisr-Ash-Shugur	0	28	0.0%	20	137	12.7%
	Total		44	909	4.6%	597	3636	14.1%





2. WASH:

The WASH team works closely and in high coordination with RRT (Rapid Response Team), formed from staff working in EWARN (DLOs, FLOs...).

The team, after receiving any alert, focuses on the investigation of WASH services in the hotspot areas.

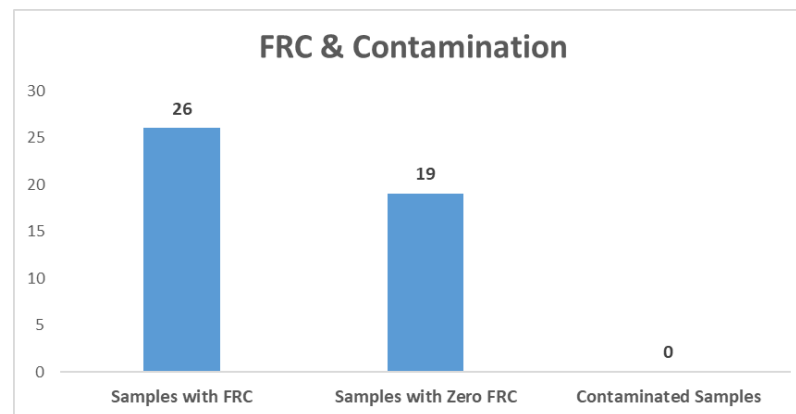
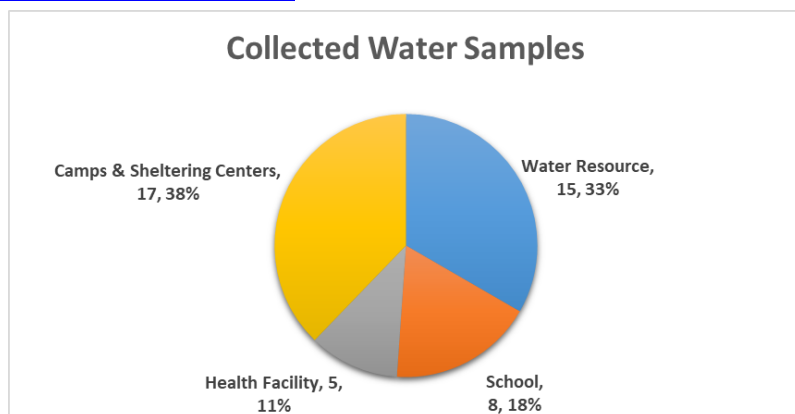
The investigation includes:

1. Taking samples from drinking water resources (main stations, wells, water trucks, water taps.... etc.).
2. Investigate sewage networks and septic tanks' locations and other sanitation services.
3. Identify Hygienic practices.... etc.
4. Assessing agriculture markets (Identify irrigation water and resource of agricultural products if applicable).

ACU team conducted 4 investigations included taking 45 samples from different points:

- **Azaz community / Azaz subdistrict / Azaz district / Aleppo governorate:**
10 samples were taken, all samples were not contaminated.
- **Jarablus community /Jarablus subdistrict / Jarablus district / Aleppo governorate:**
20 samples were taken, all samples were not contaminated.
- **Ariha community / Ariha subdistrict / Ariha district / Idleb governorate:**
7 samples taken; all samples were not contaminated.
- **Jisr-Ash-Shugur community / Jisr-Ash-Shugur subdistrict/ Jisr-Ash-Shugur district / Idleb governorate:**
8 samples taken; all samples were not contaminated.

[Full Investigation Reports](#)



Actions taken

- The EWARN team is currently conducting active surveillance in the most important health facilities in northwest Syria (25 HFs). During the visit, the team reviews with the health facility staff the records to ensure the reported cases, also discusses the challenges, and recommendations, and collaborates to treat the problems.
- The EWARN team is currently receiving the RDT results from CTC/CTUs, and sharing them
- To determine the causes of acute watery diarrhea in children under 5 years (the children have a negative cholera result), the EWARN lab is conducting Rotavirus and Adenovirus rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs).
- The response teams conducted an expanded investigation of the deaths that occurred since the beginning of the outbreak (23 deaths), where some possible causes were identified, and the teams made appropriate recommendations.
- ACU teams conduct regular awareness sessions about Cholera, prevention, and control measures for local authorities and affected people during the investigation. Besides, the result of investigations is shared with the WASH cluster and acting organization in the area to take immediate action.