

Northwest of Syria Cholera Outbreak

Situation Report No.57

Epidemiological Week - 44 (29 Oct - 4 Nov/ 2023)

Date of Onset of Outbreak: 16 September 2022

Reporting Date of outbreak: 17 September 2022

Confirmation Date: 19 September 2022

Suspected Cases: 170823

Confirmed Cases: 1133

Cholera Deaths : 24

Case Fatality Rate: 0.01%

NWS Attack Rate: 3.69%

Key Highlights

Cumulatively, a total of **170823 suspected** cases (**75630** in Aleppo governorate, **95193** in Idlib governorate) including **1133 confirmed** have been reported by EWARN team since 16 September, including **24 deaths** case.

The highest number of cases were reported in Harim district (**46147**) and Idlib district (**35304**) in Idlib governorate, then Azaz district (**21248**), and Afrin district (**17148**) in Aleppo governorate.

32555 total suspected cases (including **901** new cases in Epi week 44 - 2023) were reported from camps. **56.77 %** Of the suspected cases are in the age group <5 years. Males are 51% of the total and females are 49%.

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.

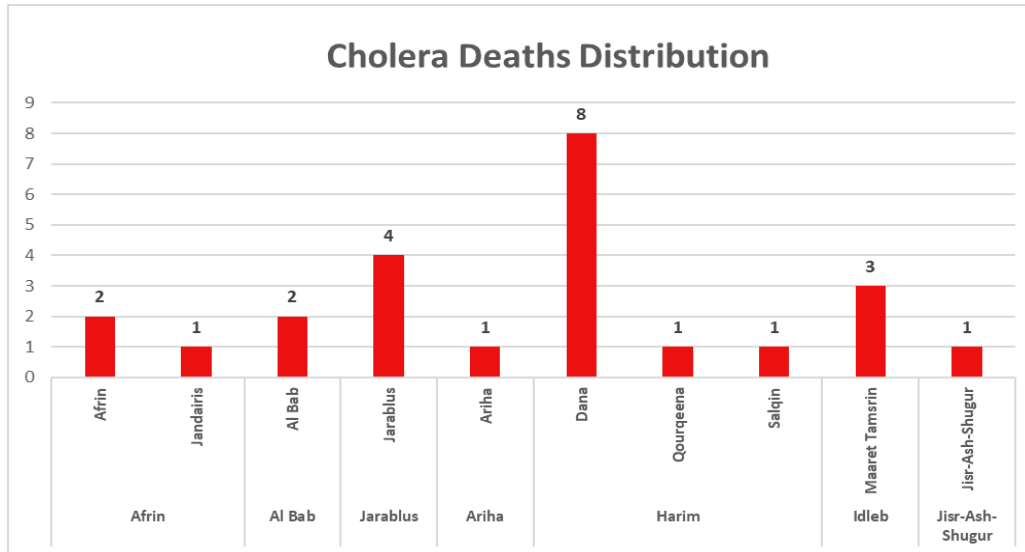
In Epi week 44 - 2023, **3860 suspected cases of cholera were reported**. The affected governorates are Aleppo (1714 suspected cases, 9 confirmed), and Idlib (2146 suspected cases, 2 confirmed). 23% of the total were in the camps

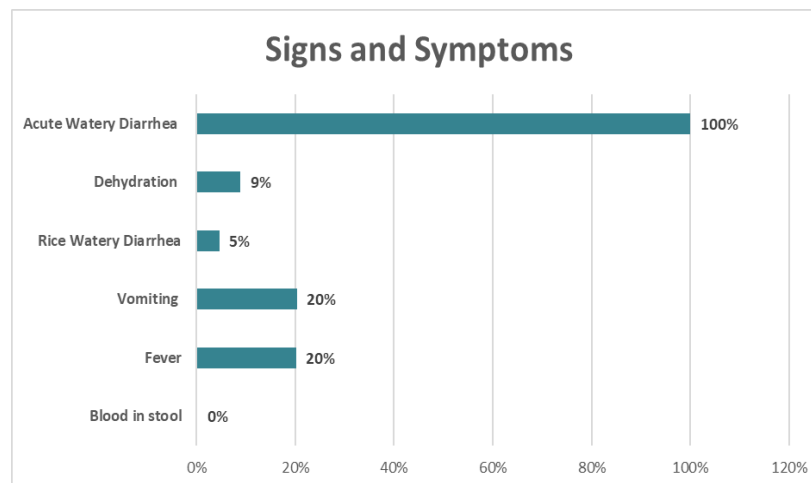
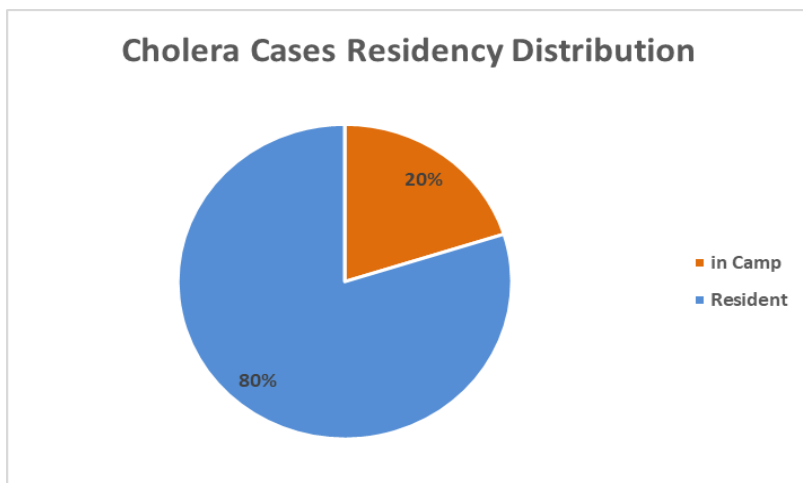
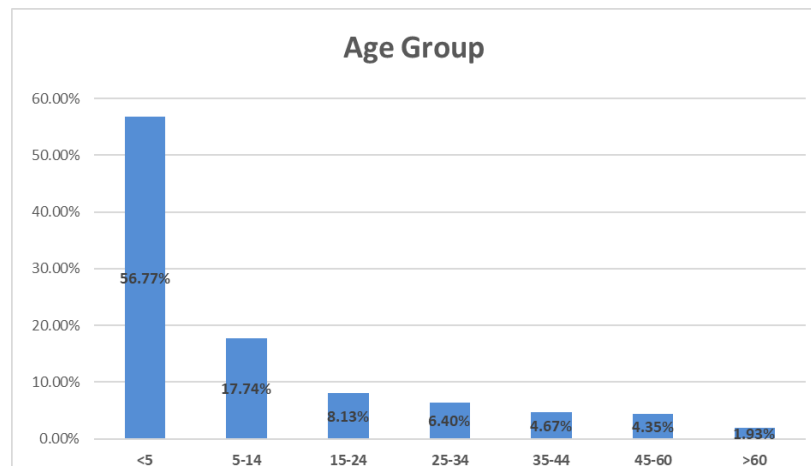
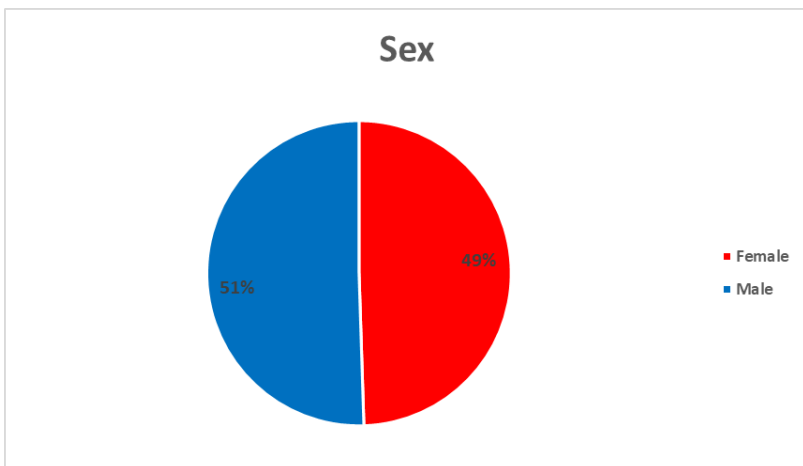
The age group less than 5 reported 60 %.

Sex distribution of the suspected_cases is 49% Male, and 51% Female

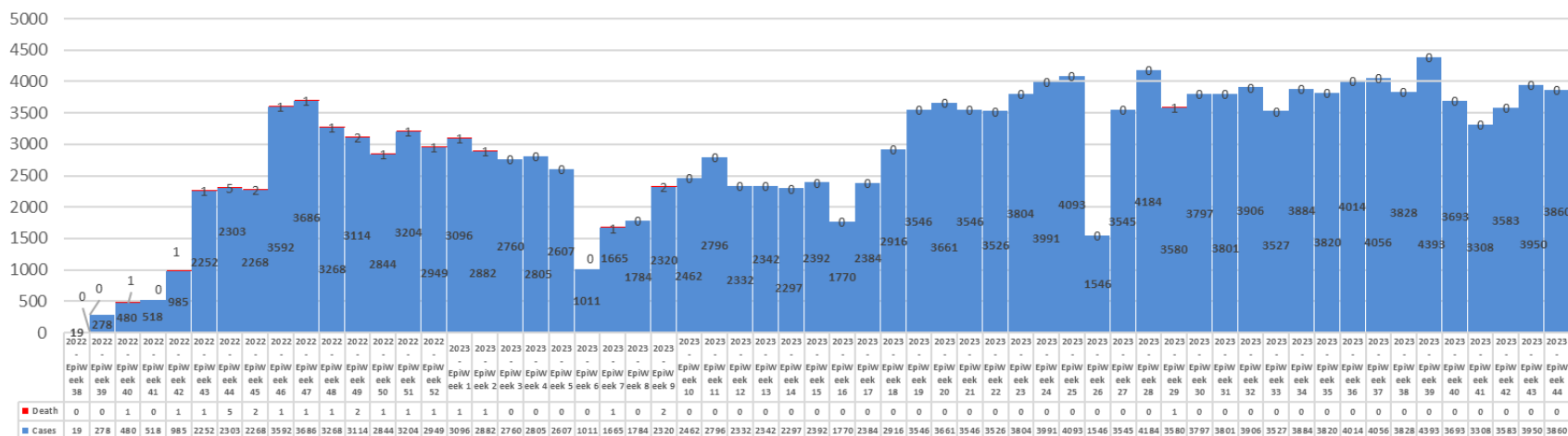
There is no new death in epi week 44,

The WHO expert committee excluded the last two deaths, leaving the total number of deaths at 24.

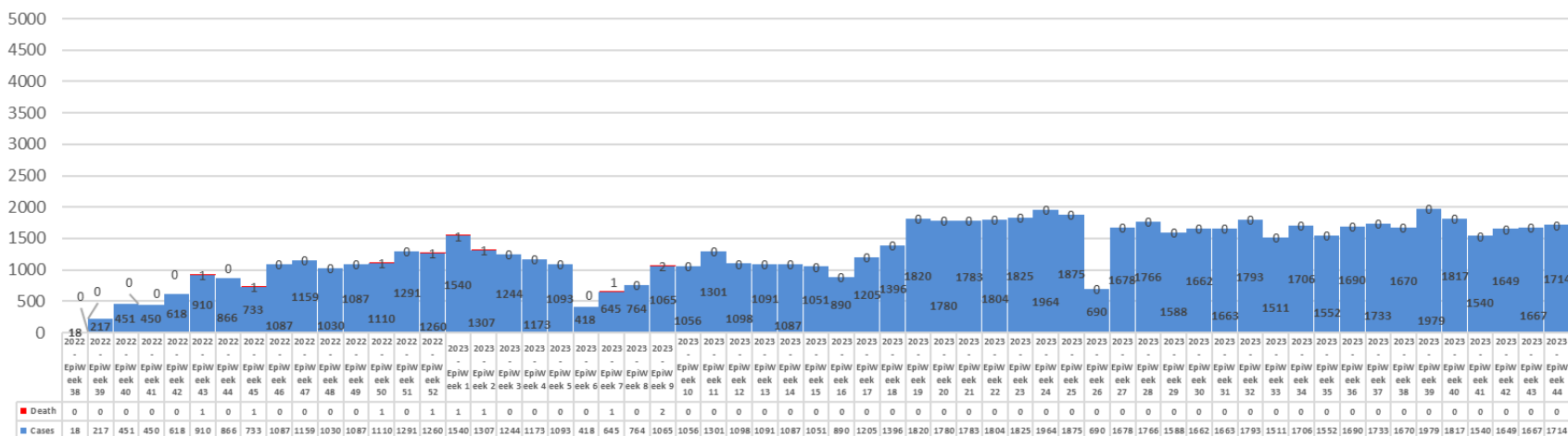




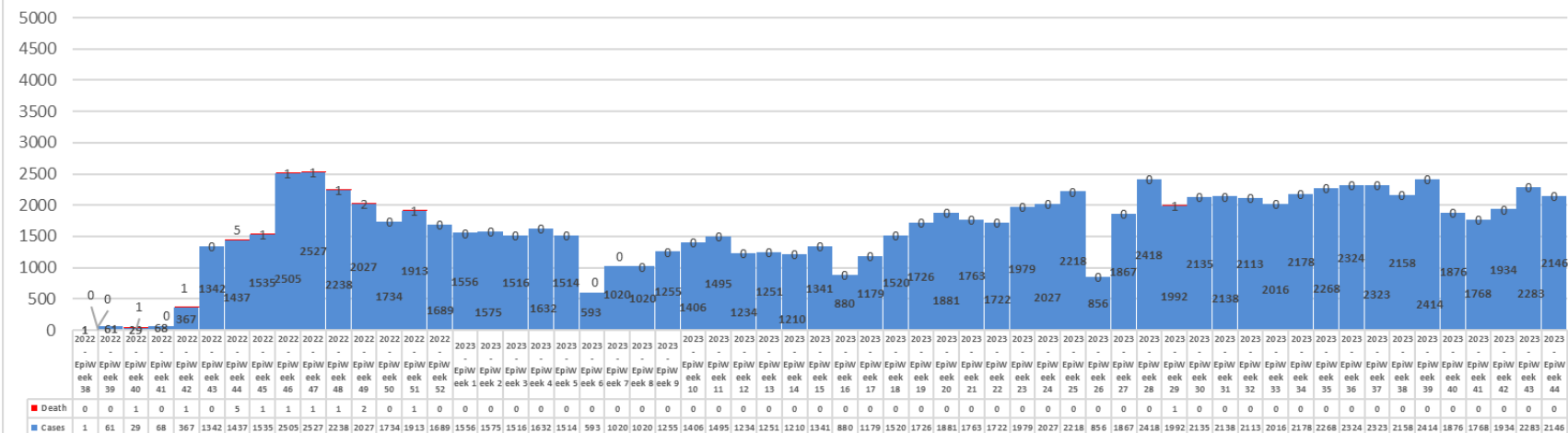
EPI Curve - Reporting Date - NWS



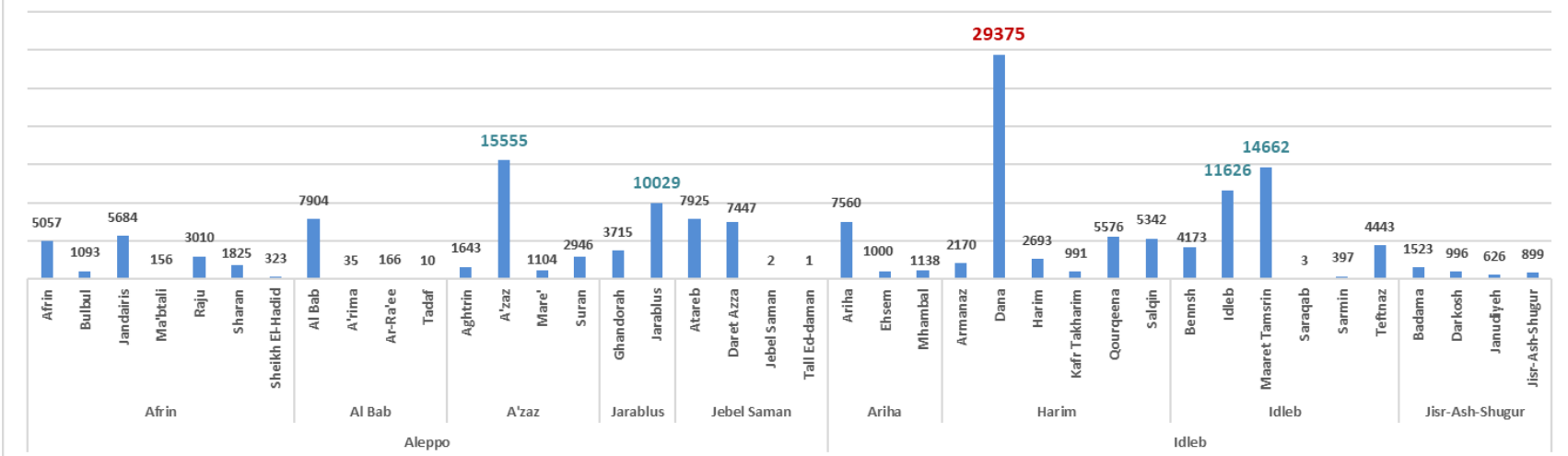
EPI Curve - Reporting Date - Aleppo Governorate



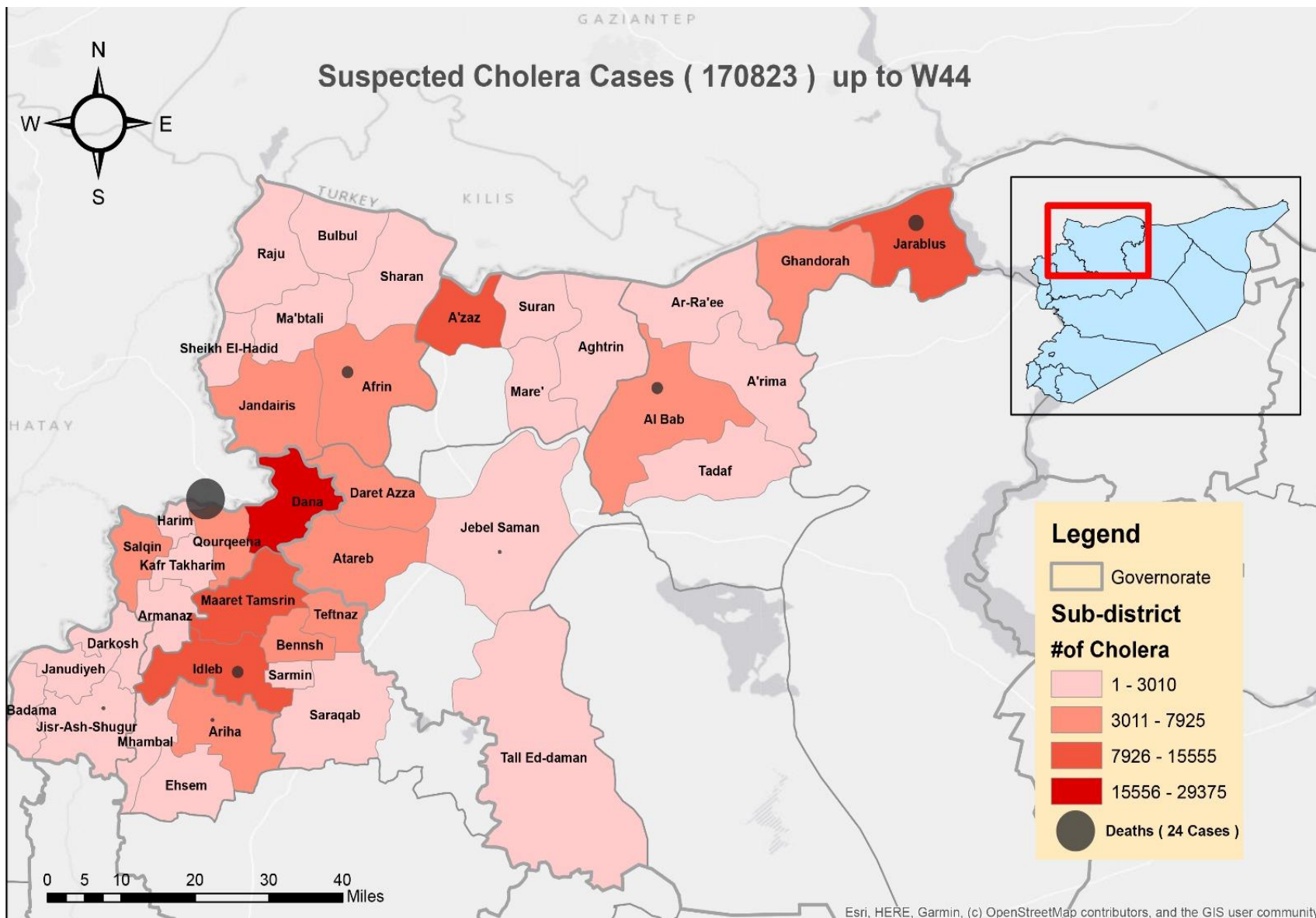
EPI Curve - Reporting Date - Idleb Governorate



Cases Distribution Subdistrict Wise

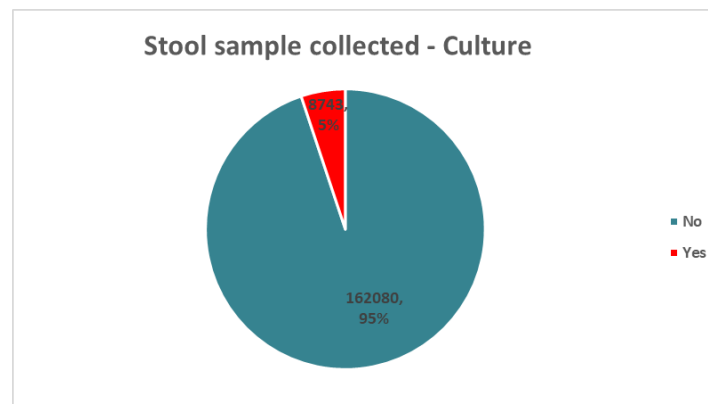


Week	Governorate	District	Date of Onset	Population	New cases	Cumulative Cases	New Death	Cumulative Deaths	Case Fatality Rate	Incidence Rate	Attack Rate	
Up to W44 - 2023	Idleb	Ariha	20-Sep	185,668	129	9698	0	1	0.01%	69.5	5.22%	
		Harim	6-Sep	1,586,820	986	46147	0	10	0.02%	62.1	2.91%	
		Idleb	14-Sep	713,933	889	35304	0	3	0.01%	124.5	4.95%	
		Jisr-Ash-Shugur	25-Sep	310,973	142	4044	0	1	0.02%	45.7	1.30%	
	Aleppo	A'zaz	9-Sep	648,600	570	21248	0	0	0.00%	87.9	3.28%	
		Afrin	21-Sep	467,090	592	17148	0	3	0.02%	126.7	3.67%	
		Al Bab	17-Sep	339,812	205	8115	0	2	0.02%	60.3	2.39%	
		Jarablus	12-Sep	121,938	169	13744	0	4	0.03%	138.6	11.27%	
		Jebel Saman	10-Sep	251,785	178	15375	0	0	0.00%	70.7	6.11%	
	Total				4,626,619	3860	170823	0	24	0.01%	83.4	3.69%

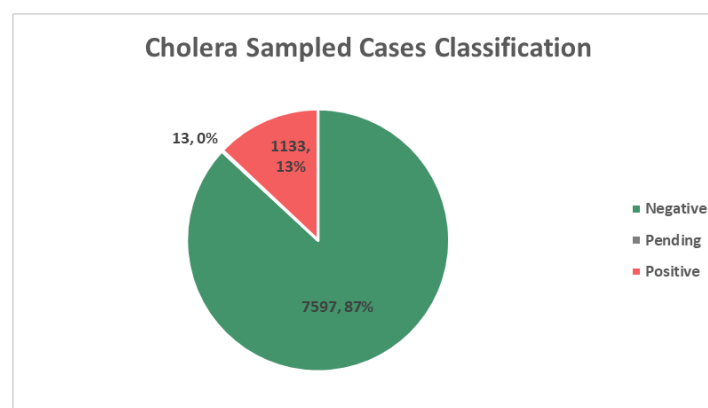


Laboratory:

- In Epi week 44- 2023, the total number of stool specimens or rectal swabs is **101**, (48 in Aleppo –9 confirmed), (53 in Idleb – 2 confirmed).
- A **cumulative of 8743 samples were collected** since the start of the outbreak (5 % of overall line listed cases), **of which 1133 have tested positive by stool culture. The total positivity rate in NWS is 13 %**
- The Total number of negative cases by stool culture is 7597, and the remaining 13 are still pending.



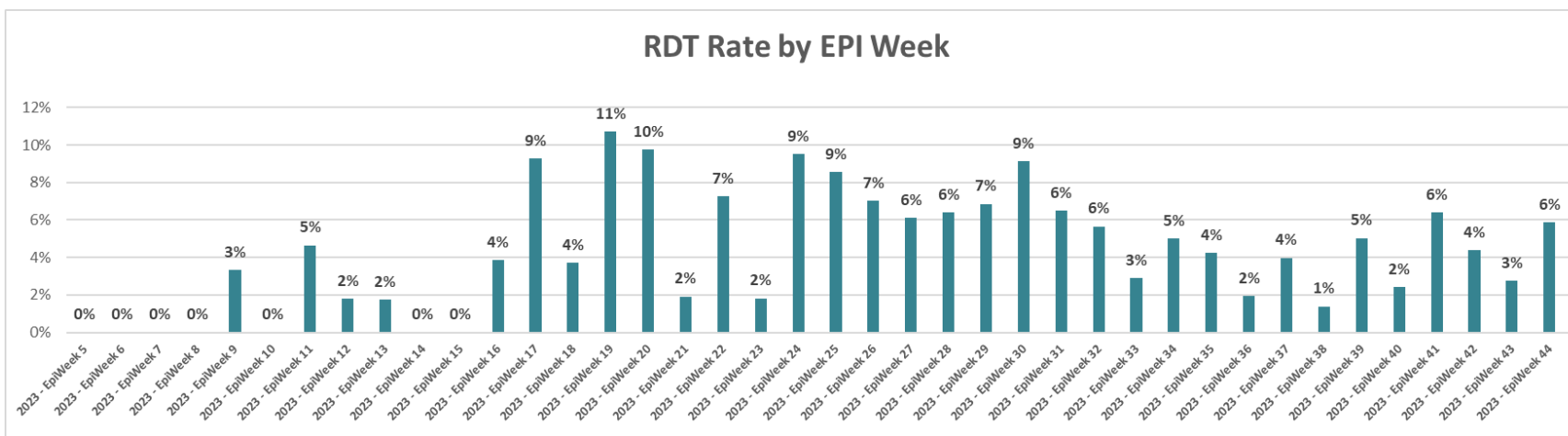
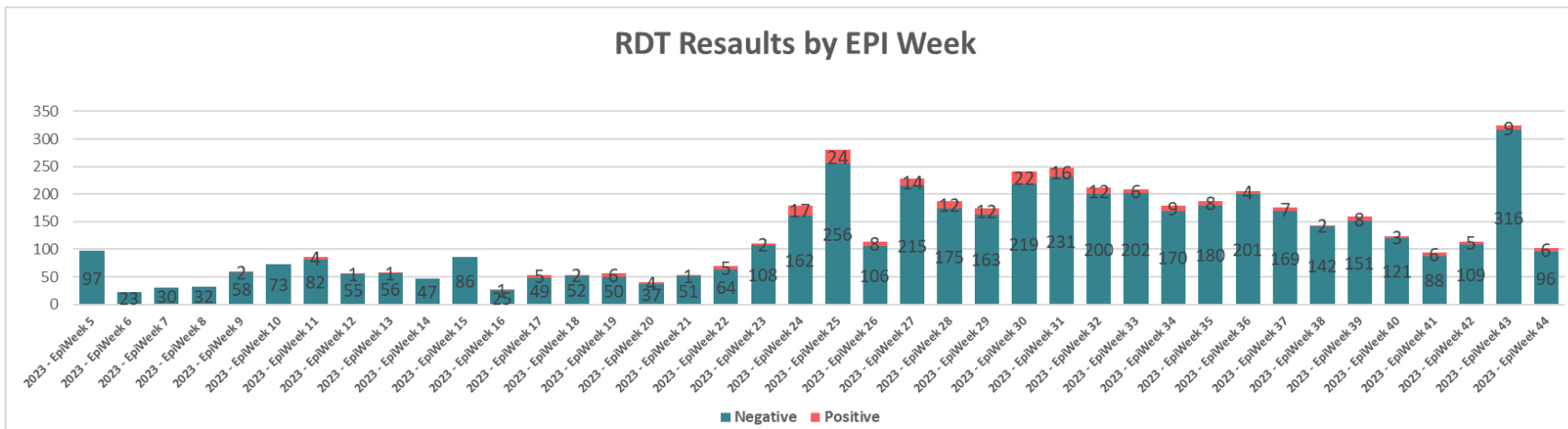
- Isolation and identification of V. cholera serogroup O1 or O139 by a culture of a stool specimen remain the gold standard for laboratory diagnosis.
- Currently, at EWARN laboratories (Idleb, Afrin, Jarablus, and Tal-Abiad) Fecal specimens are subcultured onto selective and nonselective media, including 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, Ciprofloxacin, and Norfloxacin.
- The resistance is to Tetracycline, Doxycycline, Chloramphenicol, 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 5-6 % of the total suspected cholera cases per subdistrict and 5 samples from the admitted cholera suspected cases in the CTC /CTU per week.



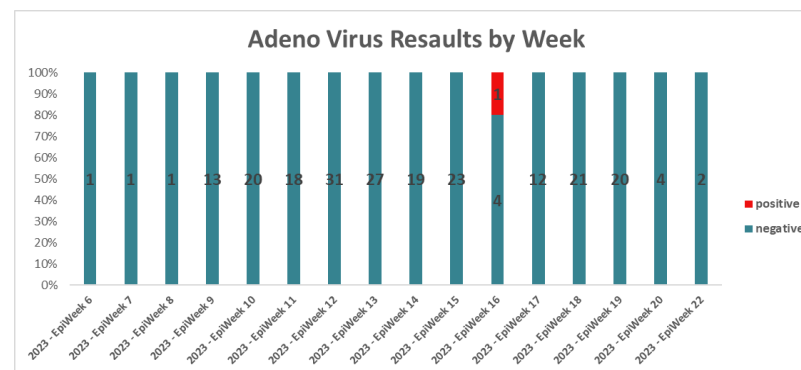
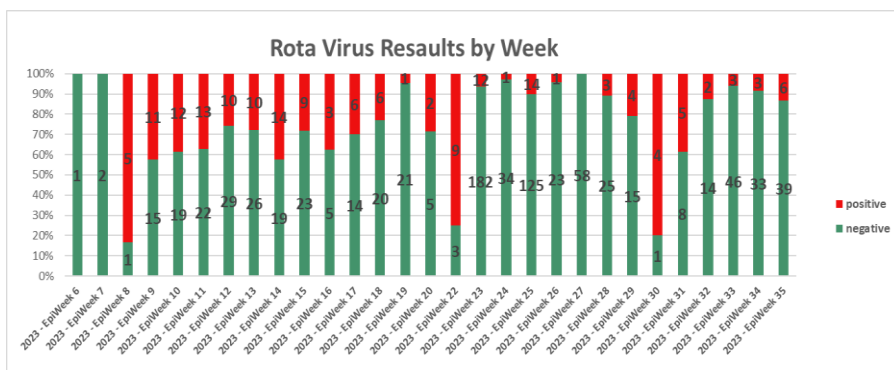
During epi week 44, EWARN received 102 RDT results from the HFIs, 6 of them were positive for Cholera.

The total of RDT tests between epi weeks (5 - 44) reached 4991, and the total positive is 244.

The positivity rate of RDTs, from epi week 5 – 2023 up to epi week 44 – 2023 is 4.88 %. But the positivity rate since the beginning of cholera outbreak up to epi week 44 – 2023 is 5.3 %.

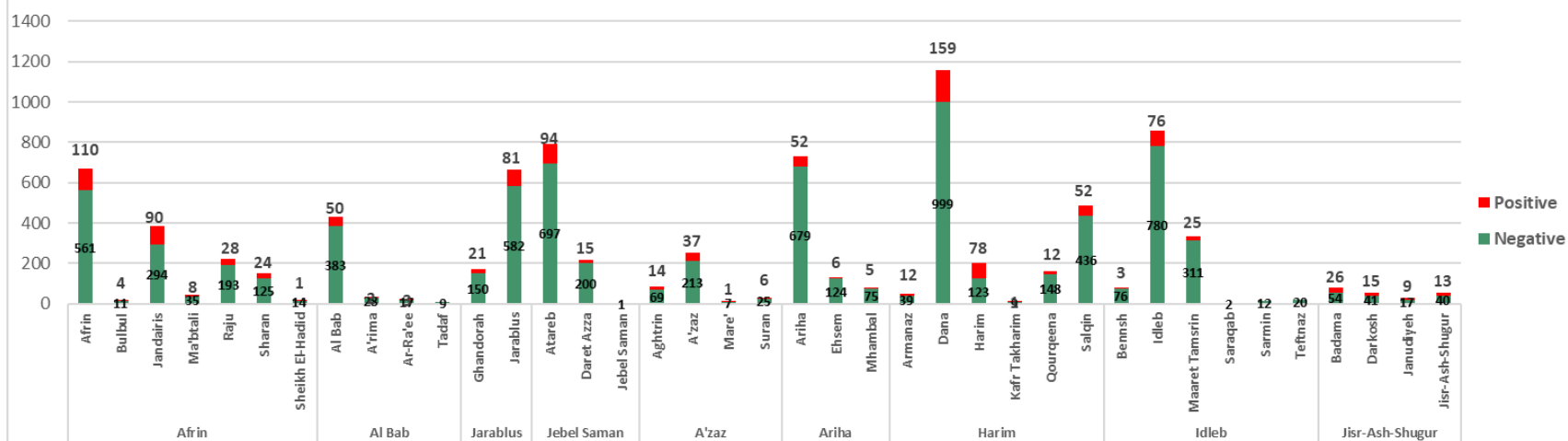


- For children under 5 years of age with a stool culture negative for cholera:
 The total samples collected between (epi week 6 and epi week 35) for Rotavirus reached 997 (169 were positive), while the total samples for Adenovirus were 218 (one positive)
 The EWARN labs ran out of Rotavirus tests in epi week 36.

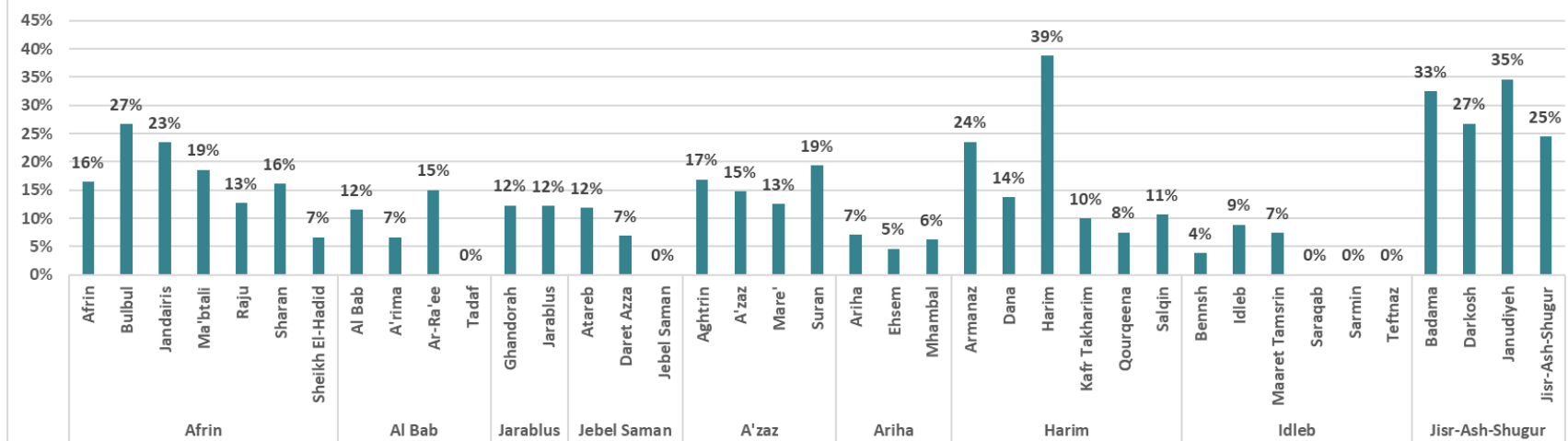


Epi Week	Governorate	District	RDT+	RDT-	Postivity Rate for RDT	Stool Culture Positive	Stool Culture Negative	Postivity Rate for Culture
Up to W44 - 2023	Aleppo	Afrin	81	675	10.7%	265	1233	17.7%
		Al Bab	25	391	6.0%	55	437	11.2%
		A'zaz	28	211	11.7%	58	314	15.6%
		Jarablus	14	272	4.9%	102	732	12.2%
		Jebel Saman	14	295	4.5%	109	898	10.8%
	Idleb	Ariha	4	287	1.4%	63	878	6.7%
		Harim	87	1294	6.3%	314	1754	15.2%
		Idleb	23	1108	2.0%	104	1201	8.0%
		Jisr-Ash-Shugur	4	484	0.8%	63	152	29.3%
		Total		280	5017	5.3%	1133	7599

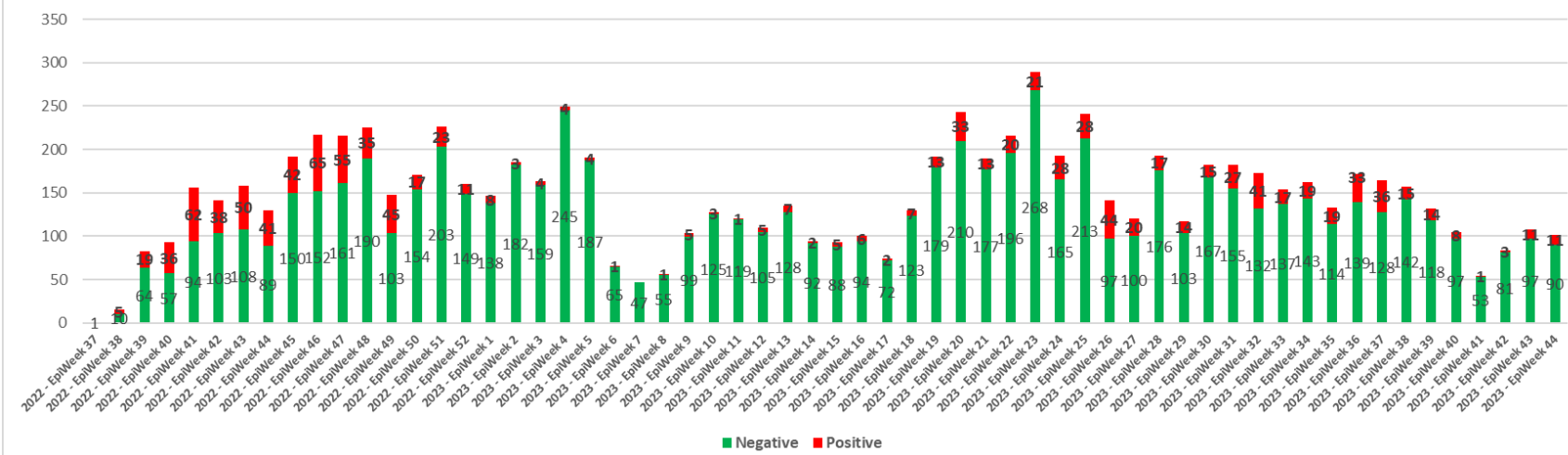
Classification of Cholera Cases by Sub-district



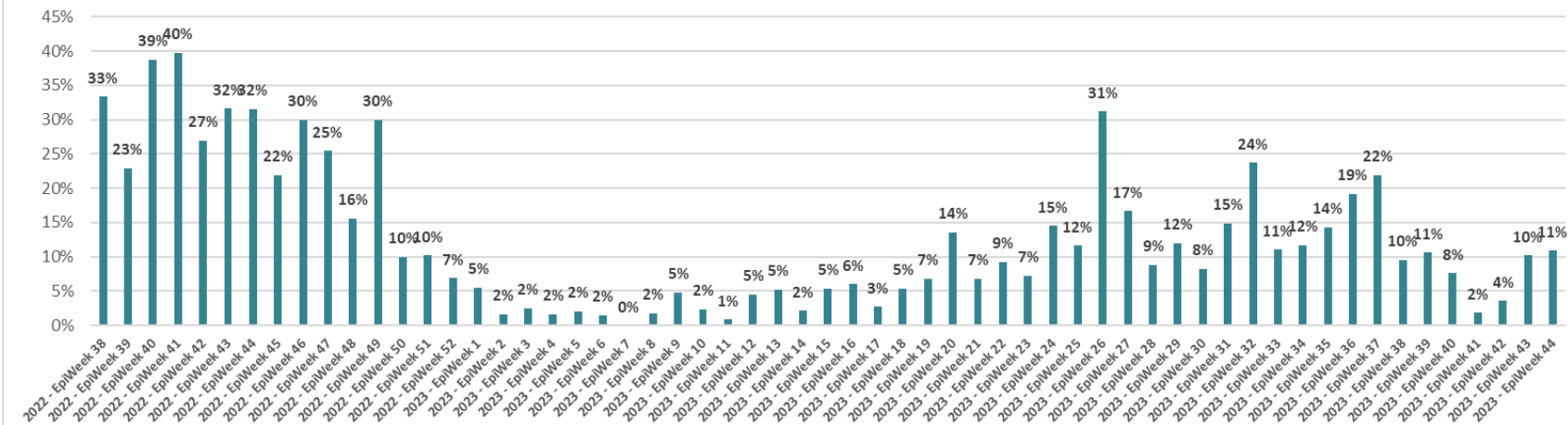
Positivity Rate by Subdistrict



Sample Collected by Week - Culture



Positivity Rate by Week - Culture



2. WASH:

Reporting period: (14 Oct – 20 Oct)

Since 12 of August, ACU in consultation with WHO team has shifted the regular approach of WASH investigation to a new approach focused on water quality monitoring in hotspot communities across NWS.

The monitoring of the quality includes taking samples at different levels to test FRC values, as follows:

1. Samples at HH level from water taps connected to network (water pumped through water stations).
2. Camps exist inside or near the hotspot communities.
3. Schools.
4. Tankers.
5. HFs (including CTUs and CTCs)

ACU team conducted 1 investigation, including taking 4 samples at different points:

Sarmada community (Al-qalaa1 camp) / Dana sub-district/ Harim district/ Idleb governorate: 4 samples were taken; all were not contaminated

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 receiving the RDT results from health facilities and CTC/CTUs and sharing them.
- The response teams conducted an expanded investigation of the deaths that occurred since the beginning of the outbreak (24 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.

Challenges

- The stock of Rotavirus tests in EWARN labs ran out in week 36.