

Northwest of Syria Cholera Outbreak

Situation Report No.62

Epidemiological Week - 49 (3 Dec - 9 Dec / 2023)

Date of Onset of Outbreak: 16 September 2022

Reporting Date of outbreak: 17 September 2022

Confirmation Date: 19 September 2022

Suspected Cases: 186297

Confirmed Cases: 1178

Cholera Deaths : 24

Case Fatality Rate: 0.01%

NWS Attack Rate: 4.03%

Key Highlights

Cumulatively, a total of **186297 suspected** cases (**81418** in Aleppo governorate, **104879** in Idlib governorate) including **1178 confirmed** have been reported by EWARN team since 16 September, including **24 deaths** case.

The highest number of cases were reported in Harim district (**50743**) and Idlib district (**38981**) in Idlib governorate, then Azaz district (**23021**), and Afrin district (**19350**) in Aleppo governorate.

35435 total suspected cases (including **612** new cases in Epi week 49 - 2023) were reported from camps. **56.94 %** 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

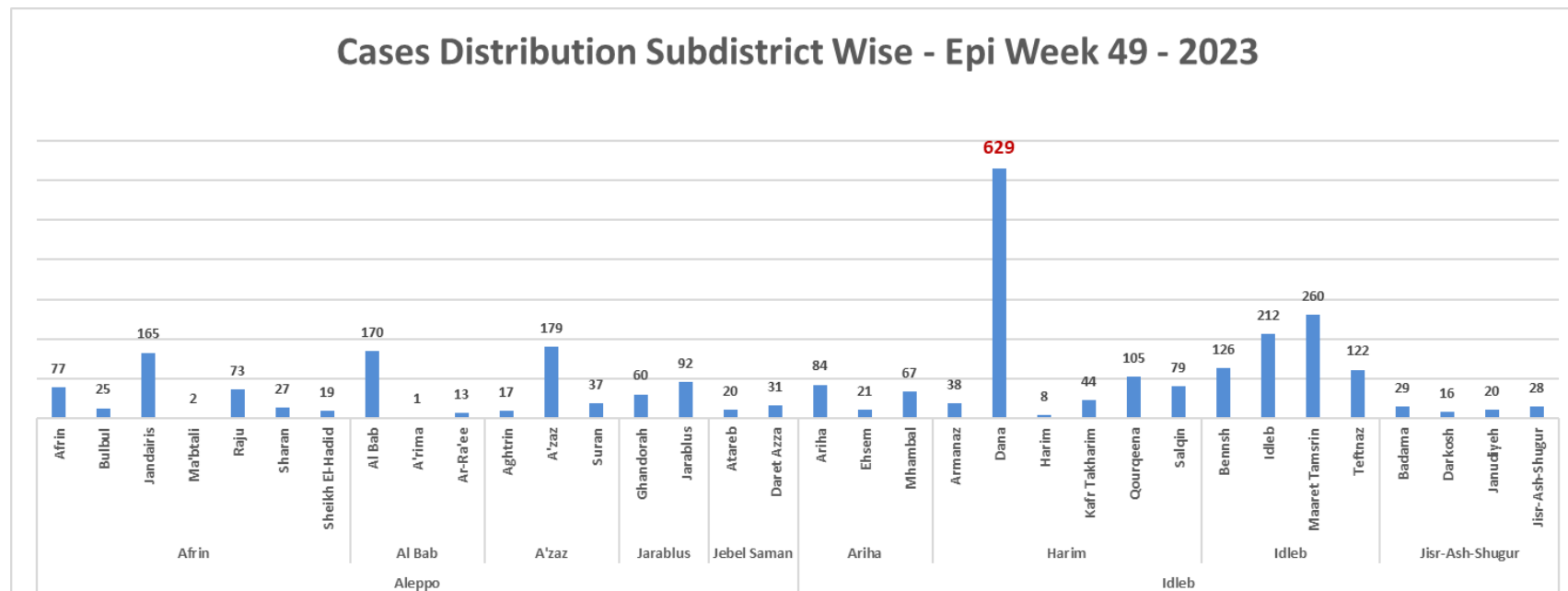
Updated case definition: A resident of outbreak areas with sudden onset of acute watery diarrhea with or without vomiting.

In Epi week 49 - 2023, **2896 suspected cases of cholera were reported**. The affected governorates are Aleppo (1008 suspected cases, 0 confirmed), and Idleb (1888 suspected cases, 2 confirmed). 21% of the total were in the camps

The age group less than 5 reported 59.6 %. Sex distribution of the suspected_cases is 52% Male, and 48% Female

There is no new death in epi week 49

Dana subdistrict in Idled governorate reported the highest number of cases (629), in contract Azaz subdistrict reported the highest number in Aleppo governorate (179).

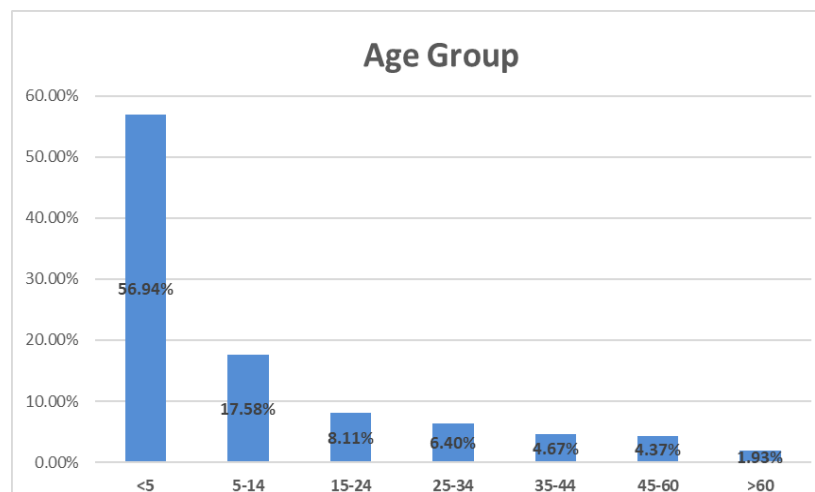
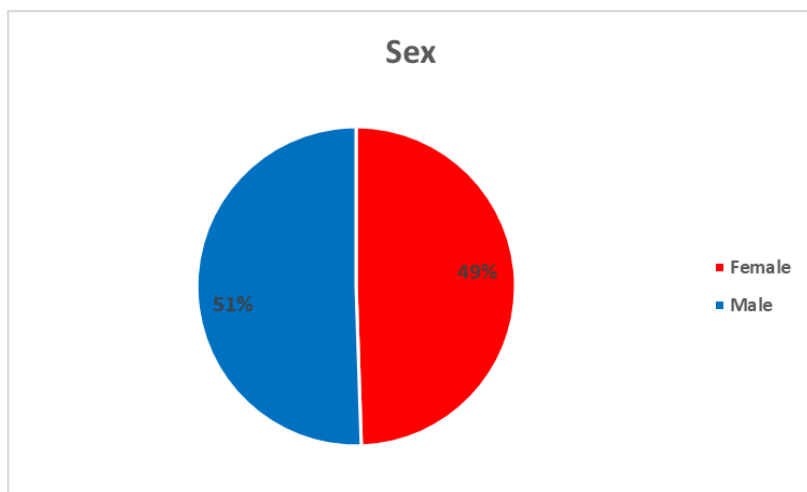


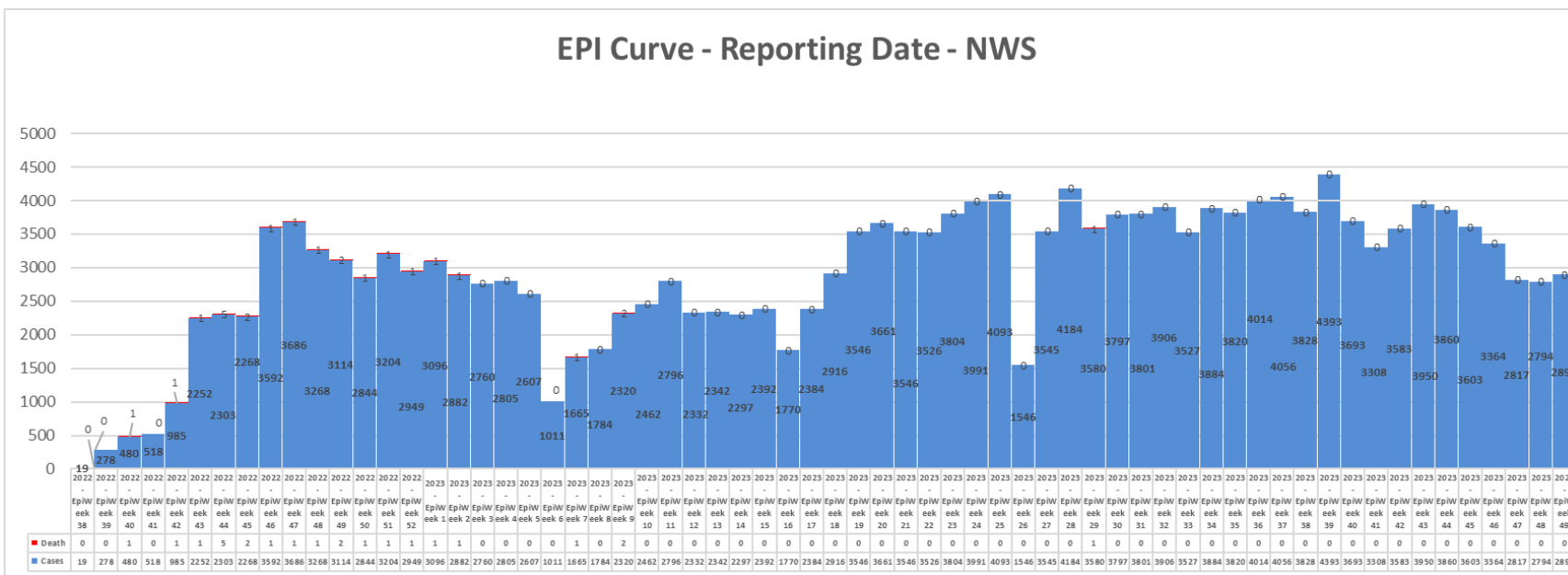
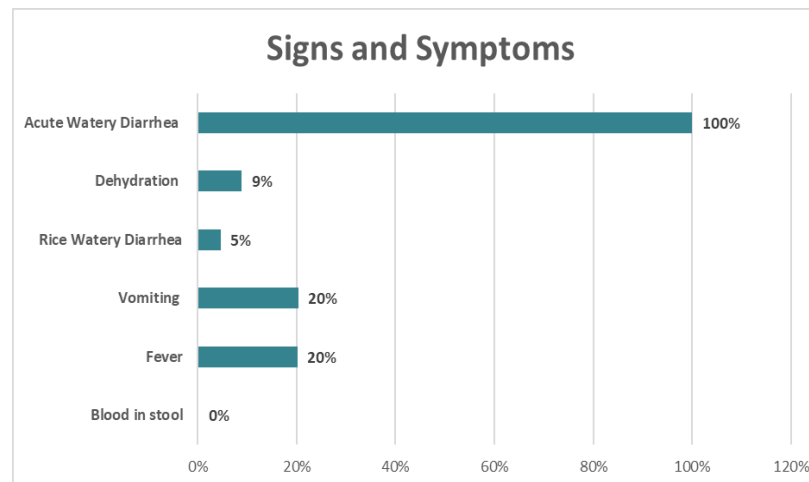
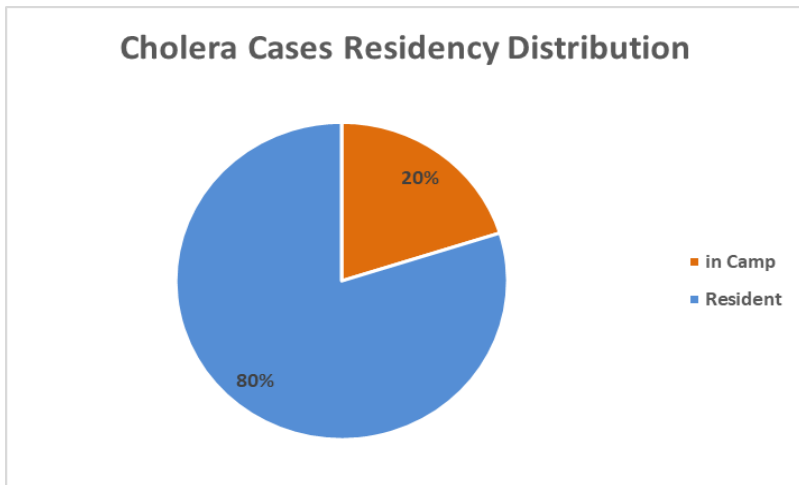
The overall sex distribution of the suspected_cases is 51% Male, and 49% Female.

100% of the line listed cases were presented as Acute watery Diarrhea, 20% with vomiting, 5% as rice watery diarrhea, and 9% were dehydrated.

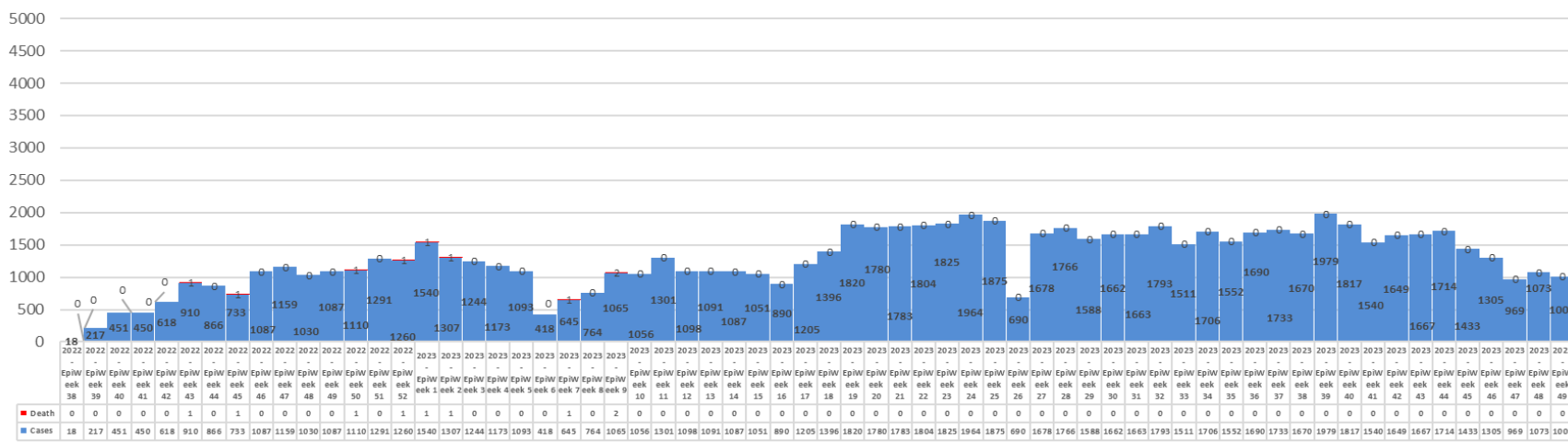
20% of the total cases live in camps (34276), and 80% out of camps (136188).

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 56.94%.

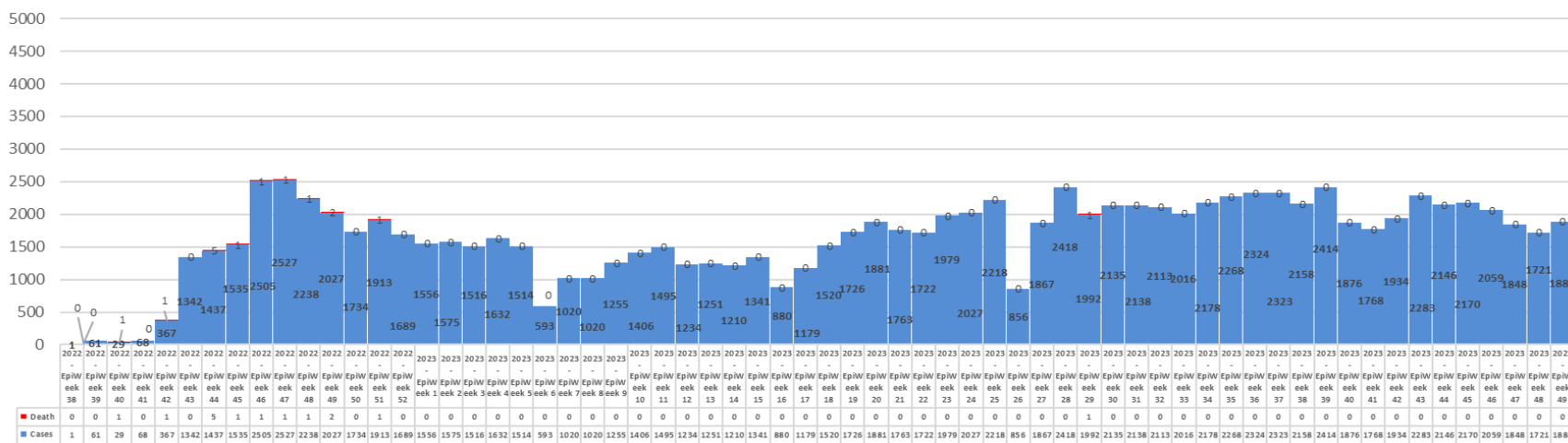




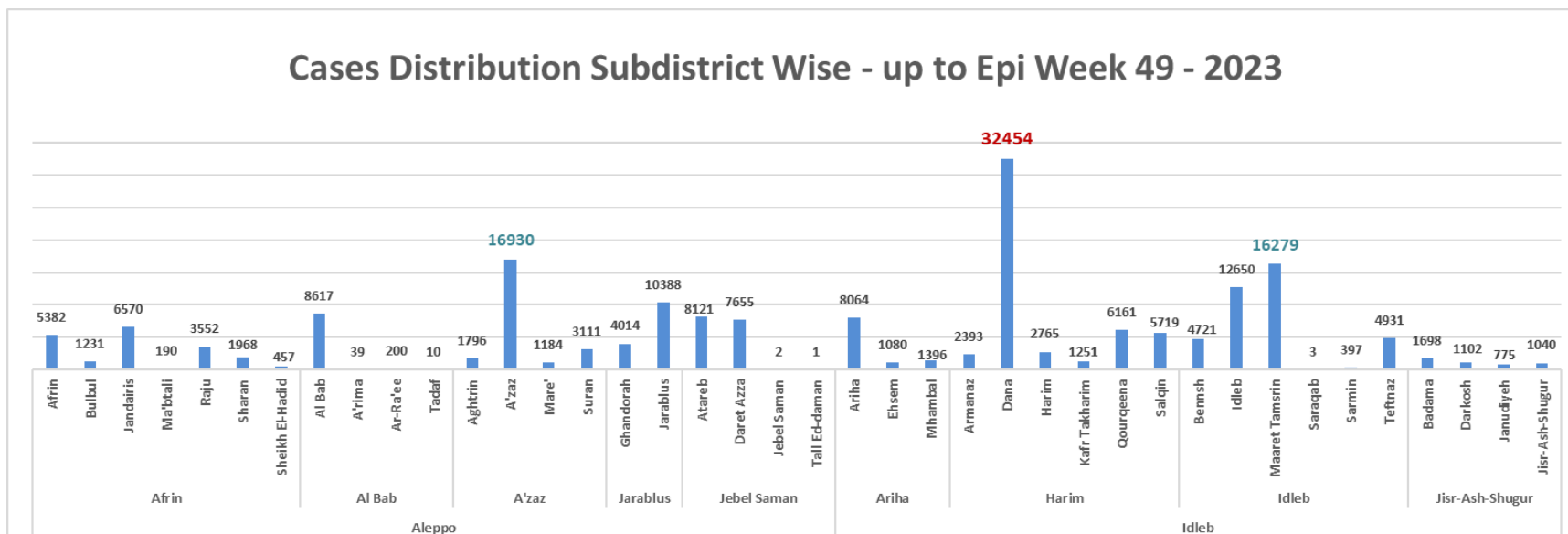
EPI Curve - Reporting Date - Aleppo Governorate



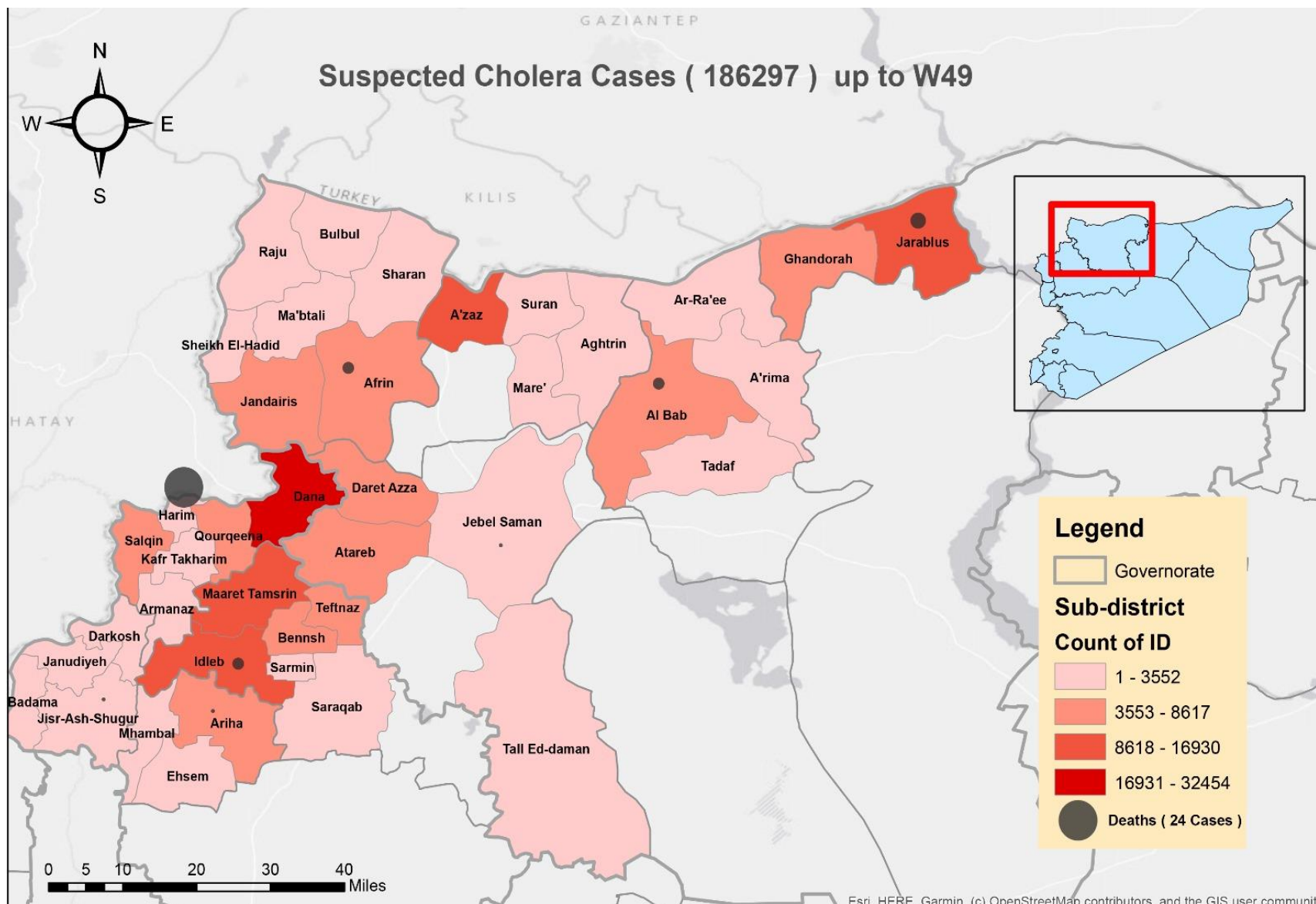
EPI Curve - Reporting Date - Idlib Governorate



Cases Distribution Subdistrict Wise - up to Epi Week 49 - 2023

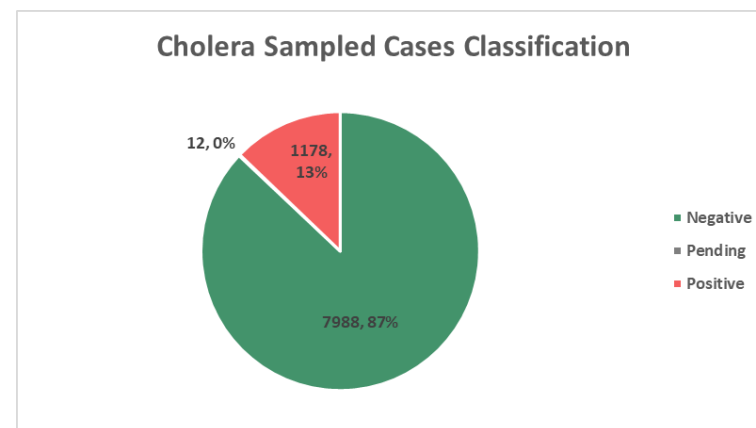
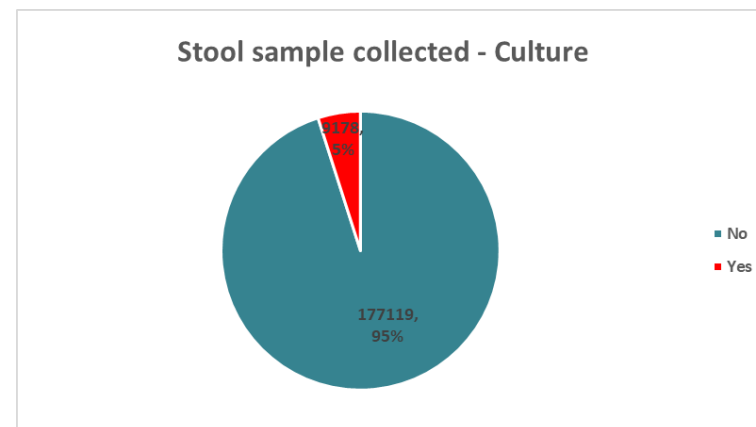


Epi Week	Governorate	District	Date of Onset	Population	New cases	Cumulative Cases	New Death	Cumulative Deaths	Case Fatality Rate	Incidence Rate	Attack Rate
Up to W49 - 2023	Idleb	Ariha	20-Sep	185,668	172	10540	0	1	0.01%	92.6	5.68%
		Harim	6-Sep	1,586,820	903	50743	0	10	0.02%	56.9	3.20%
		Idleb	14-Sep	713,933	720	38981	0	3	0.01%	100.8	5.46%
		Jisr-Ash-Shugur	25-Sep	310,973	93	4615	0	1	0.02%	29.9	1.48%
	Aleppo	A'zaz	9-Sep	648,600	233	23021	0	0	0.00%	35.9	3.55%
		Afrin	21-Sep	467,090	388	19350	0	3	0.02%	83.1	4.14%
		Al Bab	17-Sep	339,812	184	8866	0	2	0.02%	54.1	2.61%
		Jarablus	12-Sep	121,938	152	14402	0	4	0.03%	124.7	11.81%
	Jebel Saman	10-Sep	251,785	51	15779	0	0	0.00%	20.3	6.27%	
	Total				4,626,619	2896	186297	0	24	0.01%	62.6



Laboratory:

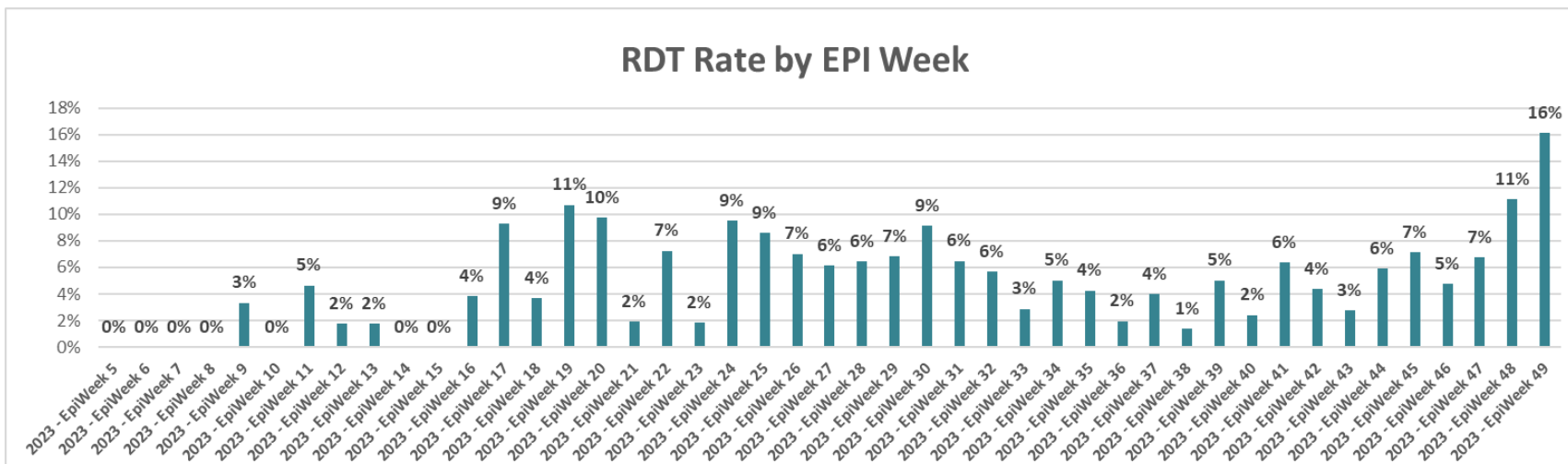
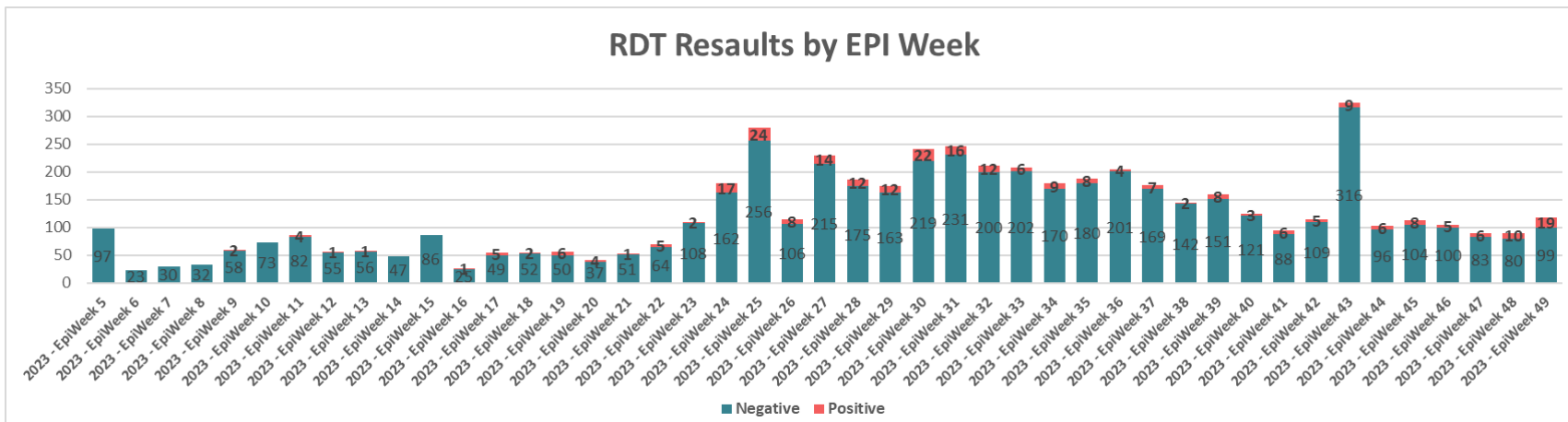
- In Epi week 49- 2023, the total number of stool specimens or rectal swabs is 76, (30 in Aleppo – 0 confirmed), (46 in Idleb – 2 confirmed).
- A cumulative of 9178 samples were collected since the start of the outbreak (5 % of overall line listed cases), of which 1178 have tested positive by stool culture. The total positivity rate in NWS is 12.8 %
- The Total number of negative cases by stool culture is 7988, and the remaining 12 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.



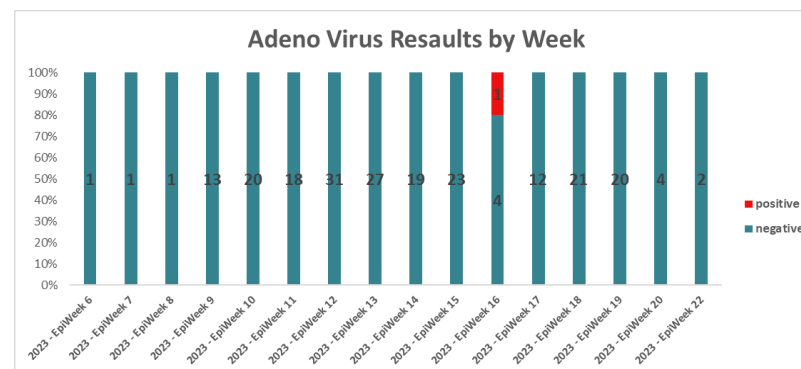
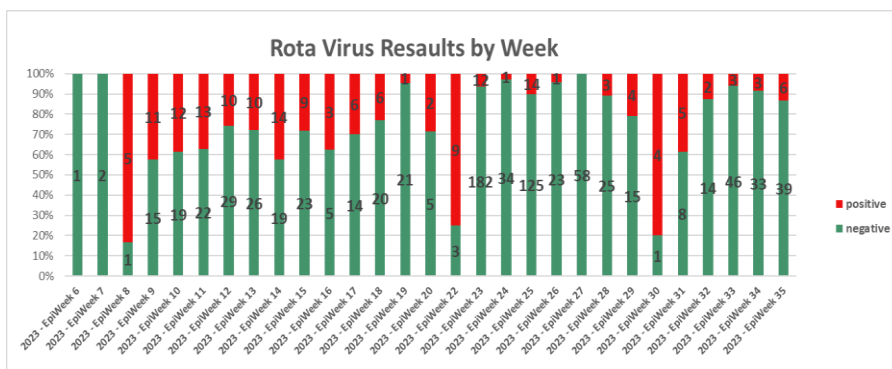
During epi week 49, EWARN received 118 RDT results from the HFs, 19 of them were positive for Cholera.

The total of RDT tests between epi weeks (5 - 49) reached 5505, and the total positive is 292.

The positivity rate of RDTs, from epi week 5 – 2023 up to epi week 49 – 2023 is 5.3 %. But the positivity rate since the beginning of cholera outbreak up to epi week 49 – 2023 is 5.6%.

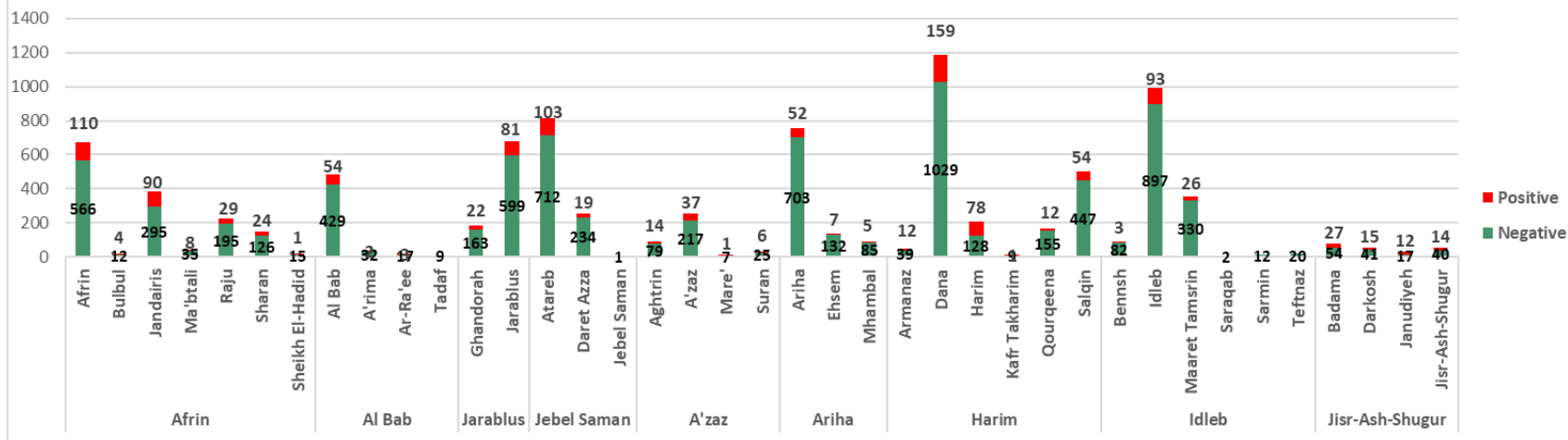


- For children under 5 years of age with a stool culture negative for cholera:
 The total samples collected between (epi week 6 and epi week 35) for Rotavirus reached 997 (169 were positive), while the total samples for Adenovirus were 218 (one positive)
The EWARN labs ran out of Rotavirus tests in epi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

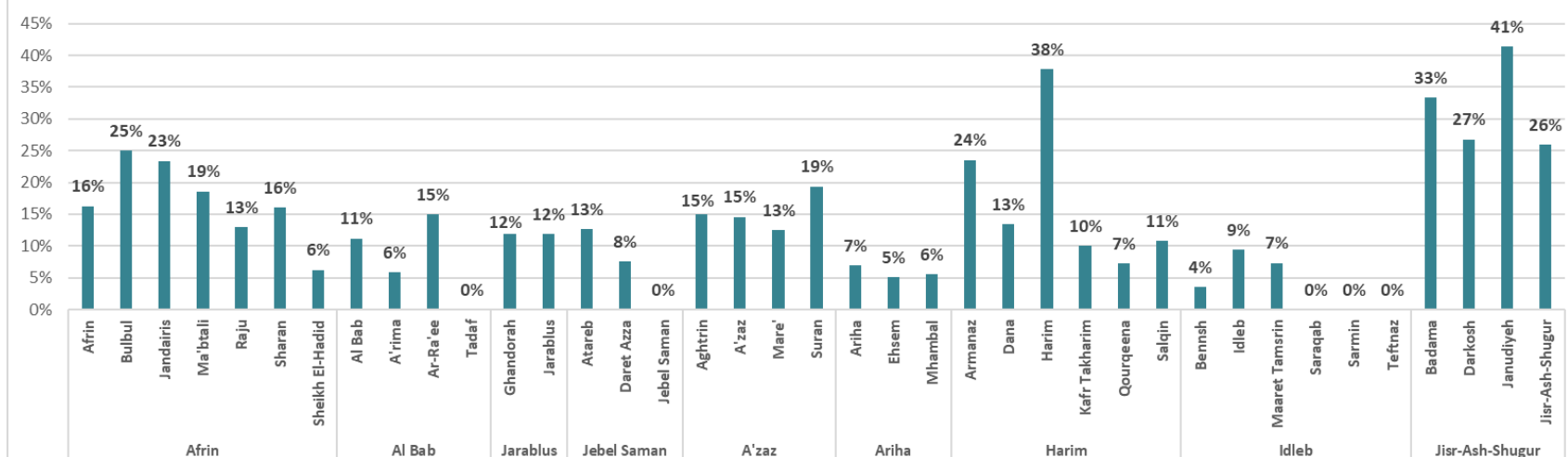


Epi Week	Governorate	District	RDT+	RDT-	Postivity Rate for RDT	Stool Culture Positive	Stool Culture Negative	Postivity Rate for Culture
Up to 49 - 2023	Aleppo	Afrin	110	719	13.3%	266	1244	17.6%
		Al Bab	32	437	6.8%	59	487	10.8%
		A'zaz	31	220	12.4%	58	328	15.0%
		Jarablus	15	300	4.8%	103	762	11.9%
		Jebel Saman	14	302	4.4%	122	947	11.4%
	Idleb	Ariha	5	292	1.7%	64	920	6.5%
		Harim	94	1356	6.5%	316	1807	14.9%
		Idleb	23	1342	1.7%	122	1343	8.3%
		Jisr-Ash-Shugur	4	515	0.8%	68	152	30.9%
		Total		328	5483	5.6%	1178	7990

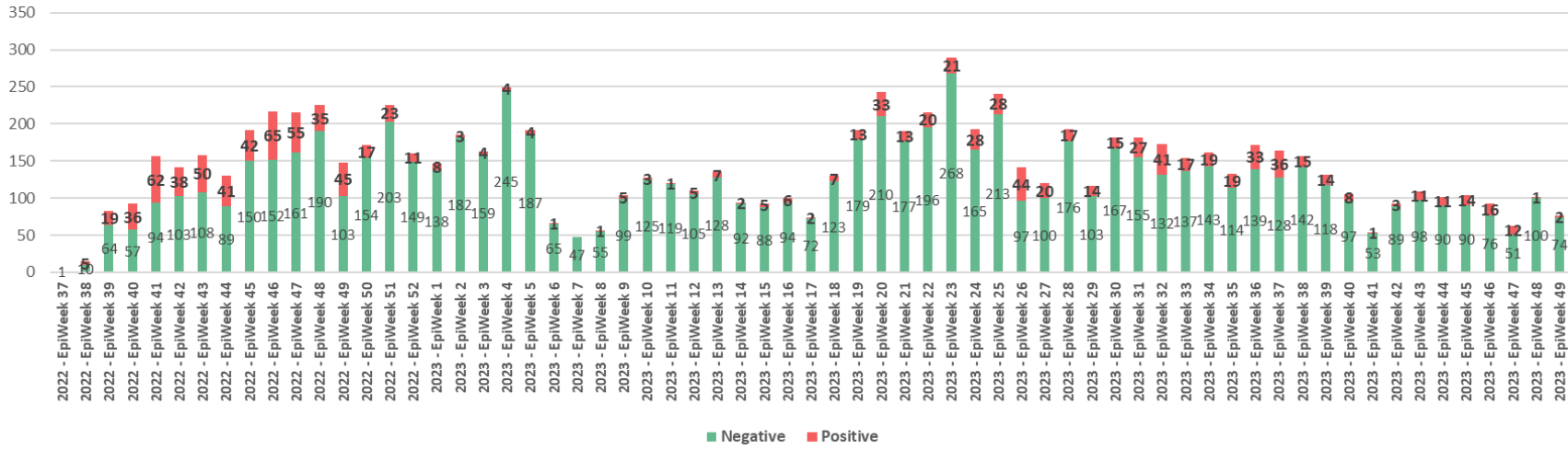
Classification of Cholera Cases by Sub-district



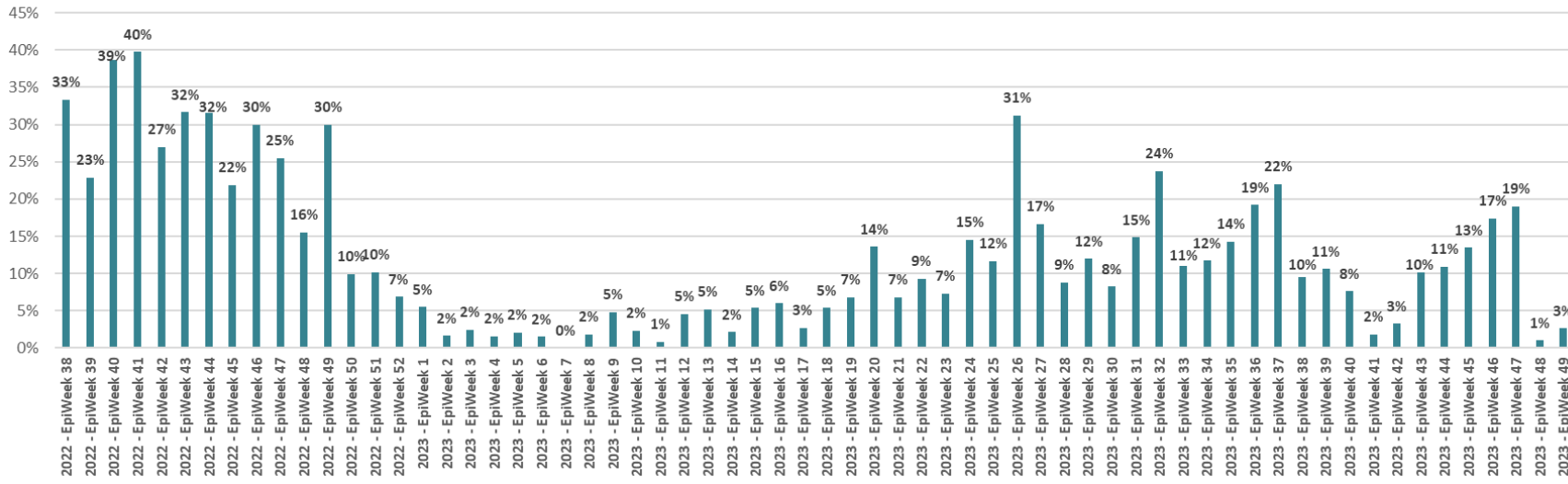
Positivity Rate by Subdistrict



Sample Collected by Week - Culture



Positivity Rate by Week - Culture



WASH:

Cholera Investigation:

ACU had to suspend water quality monitoring practice due to shortcomings in the fund, where the previous grand ended by first of Oct and ACU covered the team up to end of the month.

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 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.
- ACU's WASH team is conducting a joint IPC/WASH assessment targeting the Health Facilities that will function as an alternative CTC in NWS. 15 health facilities out of 19 have been visited and assessed. The assessment launched in mid of Nov and is planned to be finalized on the first of Dec.

Challenges

- The closure of the cholera treatment center negatively affected the number of cholera rapid test results and the number of samples drawn for culture.
- The stock of Rotavirus tests in EWARN labs ran out in week 36.

