

Northwest of Syria Cholera Outbreak

Situation Report No.65

Epidemiological Week - 52 (24 Dec - 30 Dec / 2023)

Date of Onset of Outbreak: 16 September 2022

Reporting Date of outbreak: 17 September 2022

Confirmation Date: 19 September 2022

Suspected Cases: 194169

Confirmed Cases: 1195

Cholera Deaths : 24

Case Fatality Rate: 0.01%

NWS Attack Rate: 4.20%

Key Highlights

Cumulatively, a total of **194169 suspected** cases (**84109** in Aleppo governorate, **110060** in Idleb governorate) including **1195 confirmed** have been reported by EWARN team since 16 September, including **24 deaths** case.

The highest number of cases were reported in Harim district (**53278**) and Idleb district (**40936**) in Idleb governorate, then Azaz district (**23800**), and Afrin district (**20368**) in Aleppo governorate.

37320 total suspected cases (including **595** new cases in Epi week 52 - 2023) were reported from camps. **56.88 %** Of the suspected cases are in the age group <5 years. Males are 50% of the total and females are 50%.

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

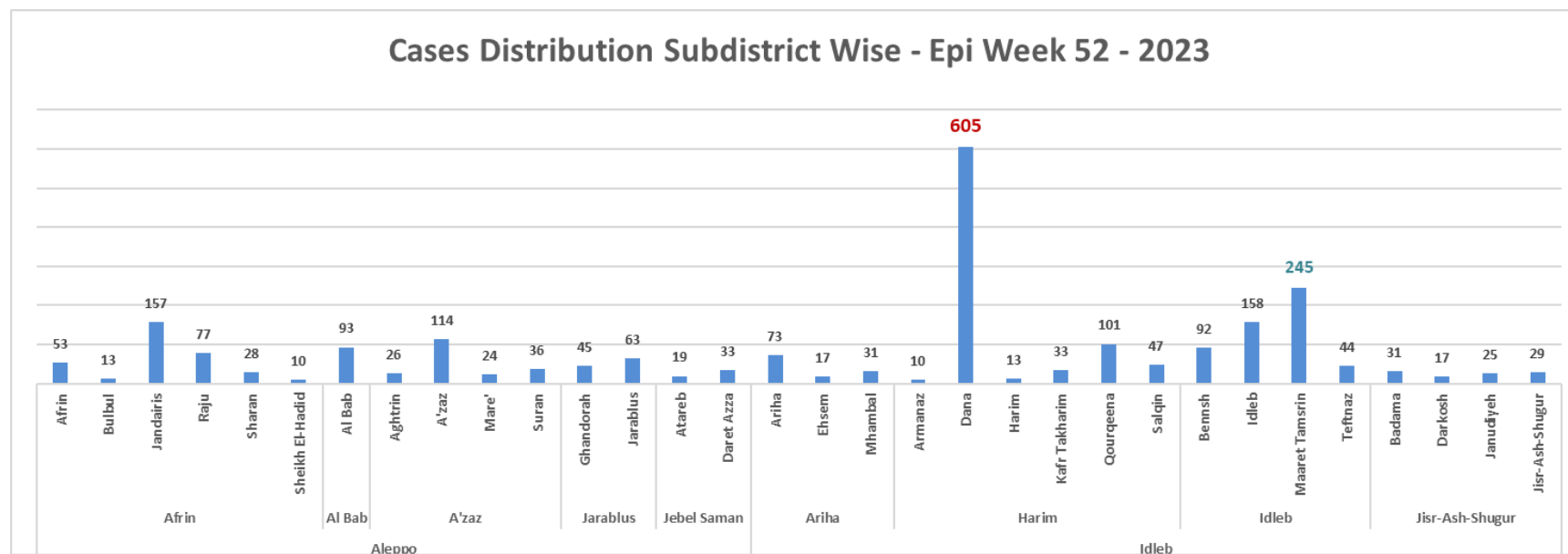
Updated case definition: A resident of outbreak areas with sudden onset of acute watery diarrhea with or without vomiting.

In Epi week 52 - 2023, **2362 suspected cases of cholera were reported**. The affected governorates are Aleppo (791 suspected cases, 3 confirmed), and Idleb (1571 suspected cases, 11 confirmed). 25% of the total were in the camps

The age group less than 5 reported 51.15 %. Sex distribution of the suspected_cases is 48% Male, and 52% Female

There is no new death in epi week 52.

Dana subdistrict in Idled governorate reported the highest number of cases (605), in contract Jandairis subdistrict reported the highest number in Aleppo governorate (157).

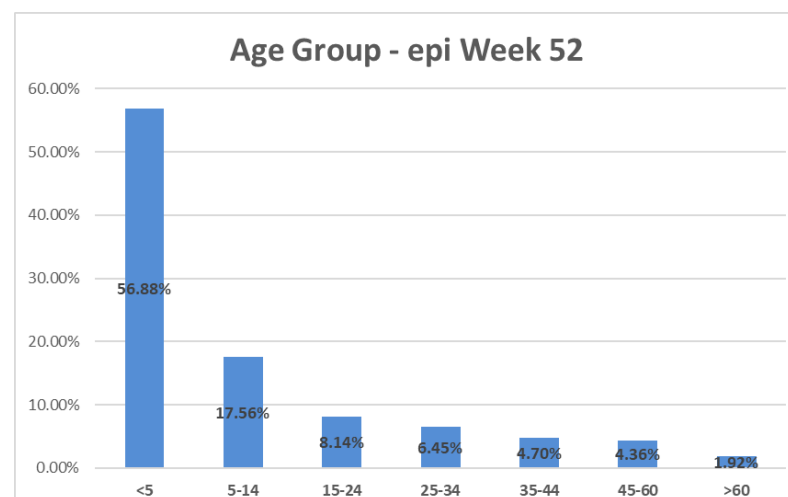
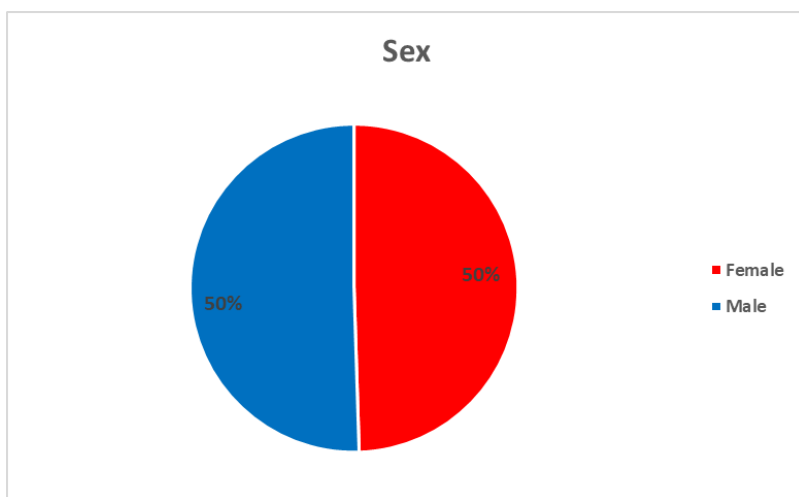


The overall sex distribution of the suspected cases is 50% Male, and 50% Female.

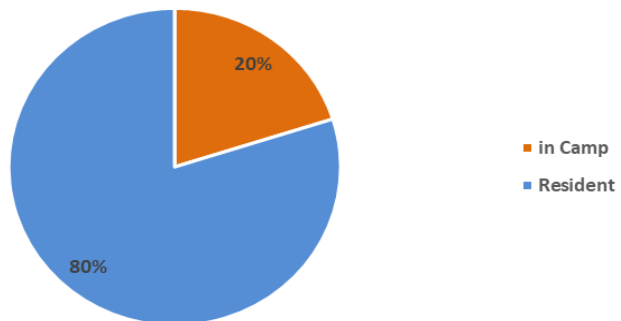
100% of the line listed cases were presented as Acute watery Diarrhea, 20% with vomiting, 5% as rice watery diarrhea, and 10% were dehydrated.

20% of the total cases live in camps (37320).

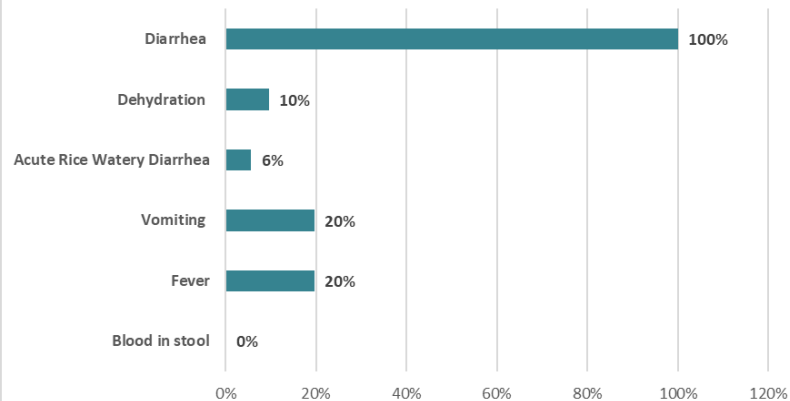
As the outbreak progresses, sensitivity should be increased by including smaller age groups and mild/moderate symptom groups in order to estimate the burden of the outbreak. According to WHO, in areas where a cholera outbreak has been confirmed, any person presenting with or dying from acute watery diarrhea is considered a suspected cholera case. The age group less than 5 years was 56.88%.



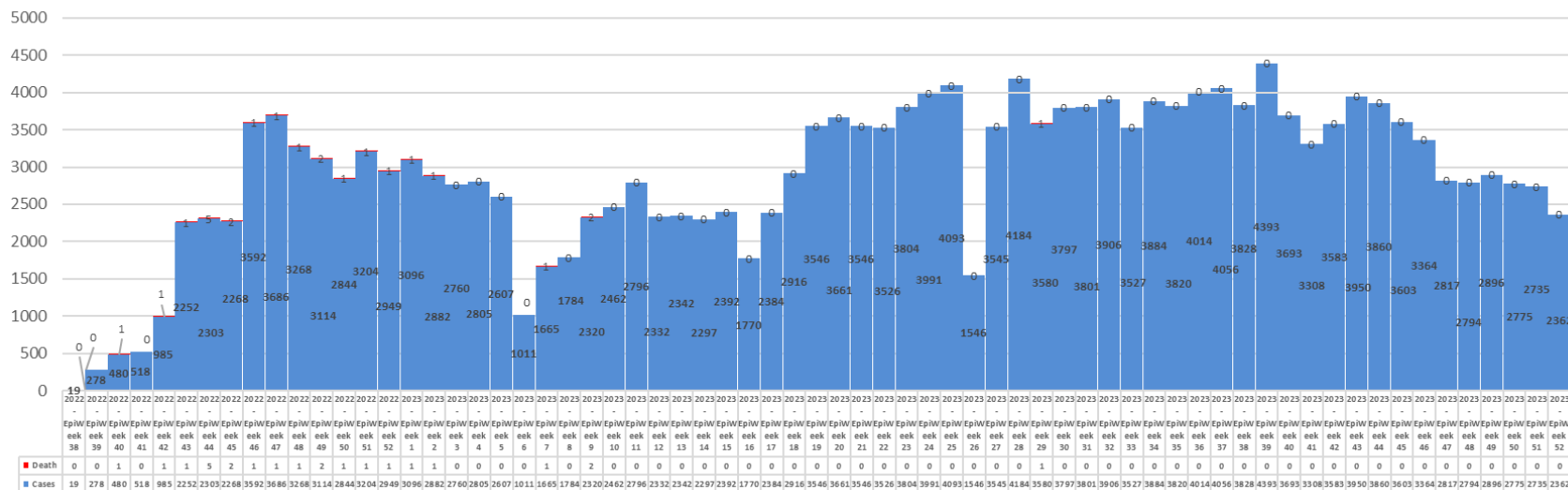
Cholera Cases Residency Distribution



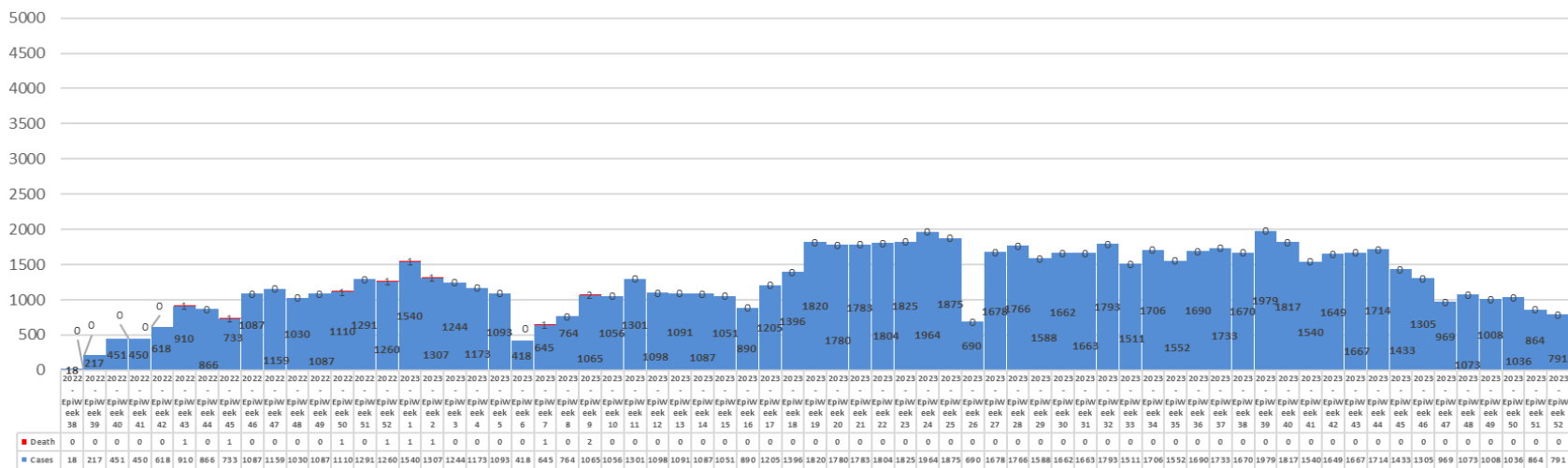
Signs and Symptoms



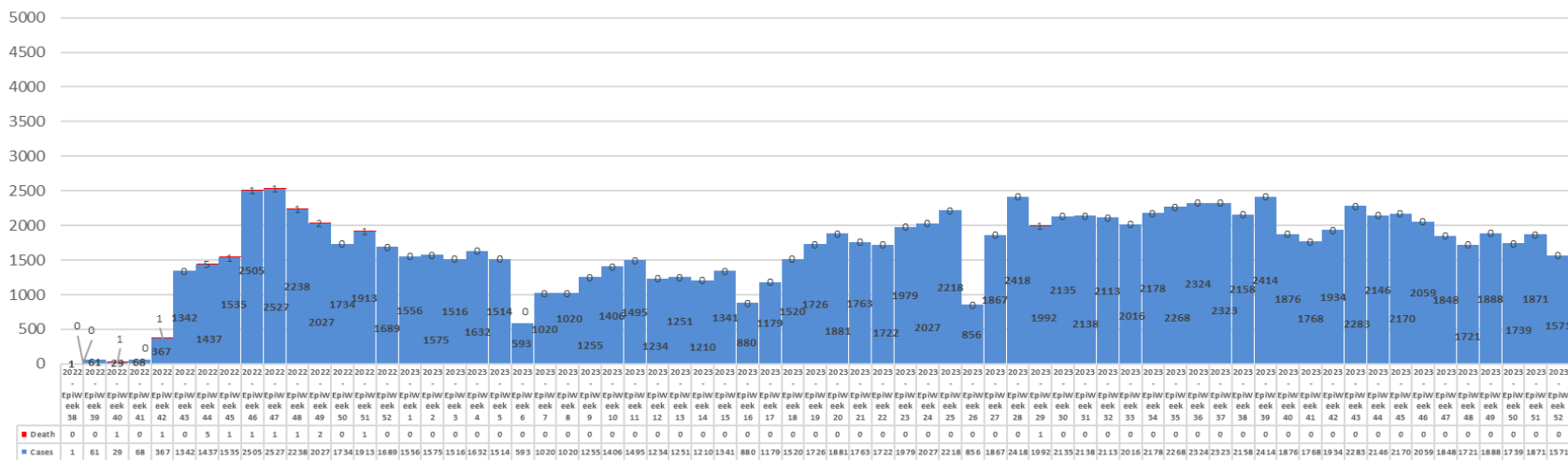
EPI Curve - Reporting Date - NWS

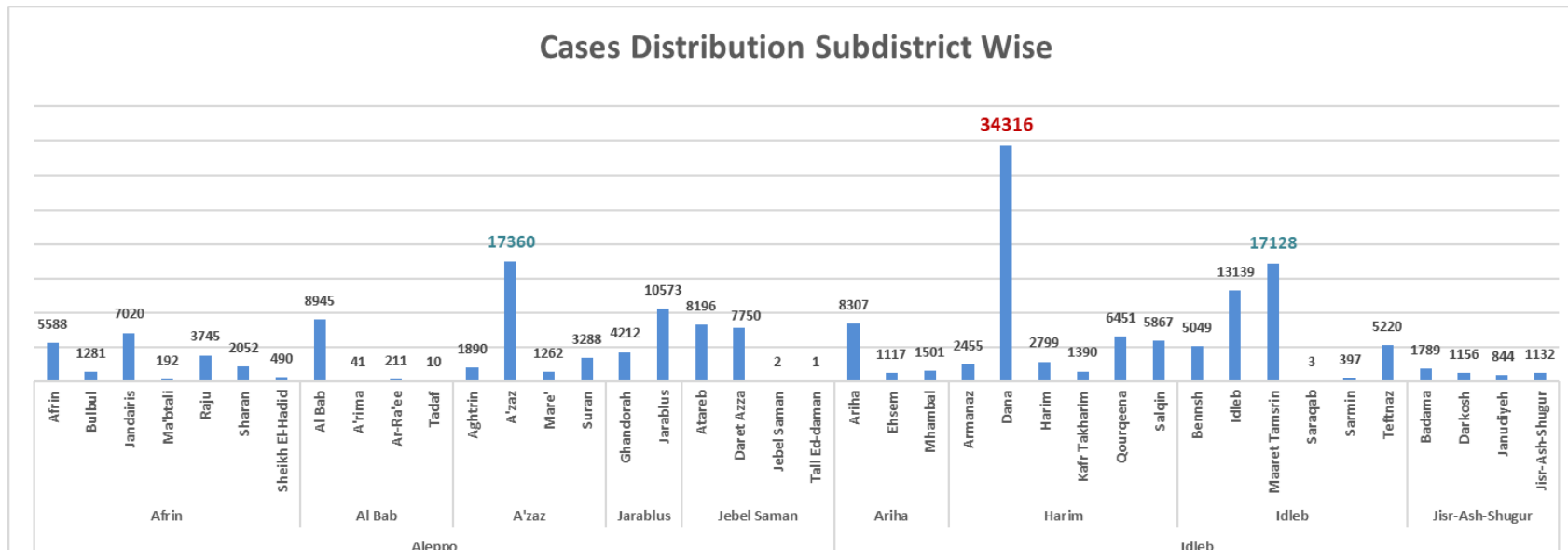


EPI Curve - Reporting Date - Aleppo Governorate

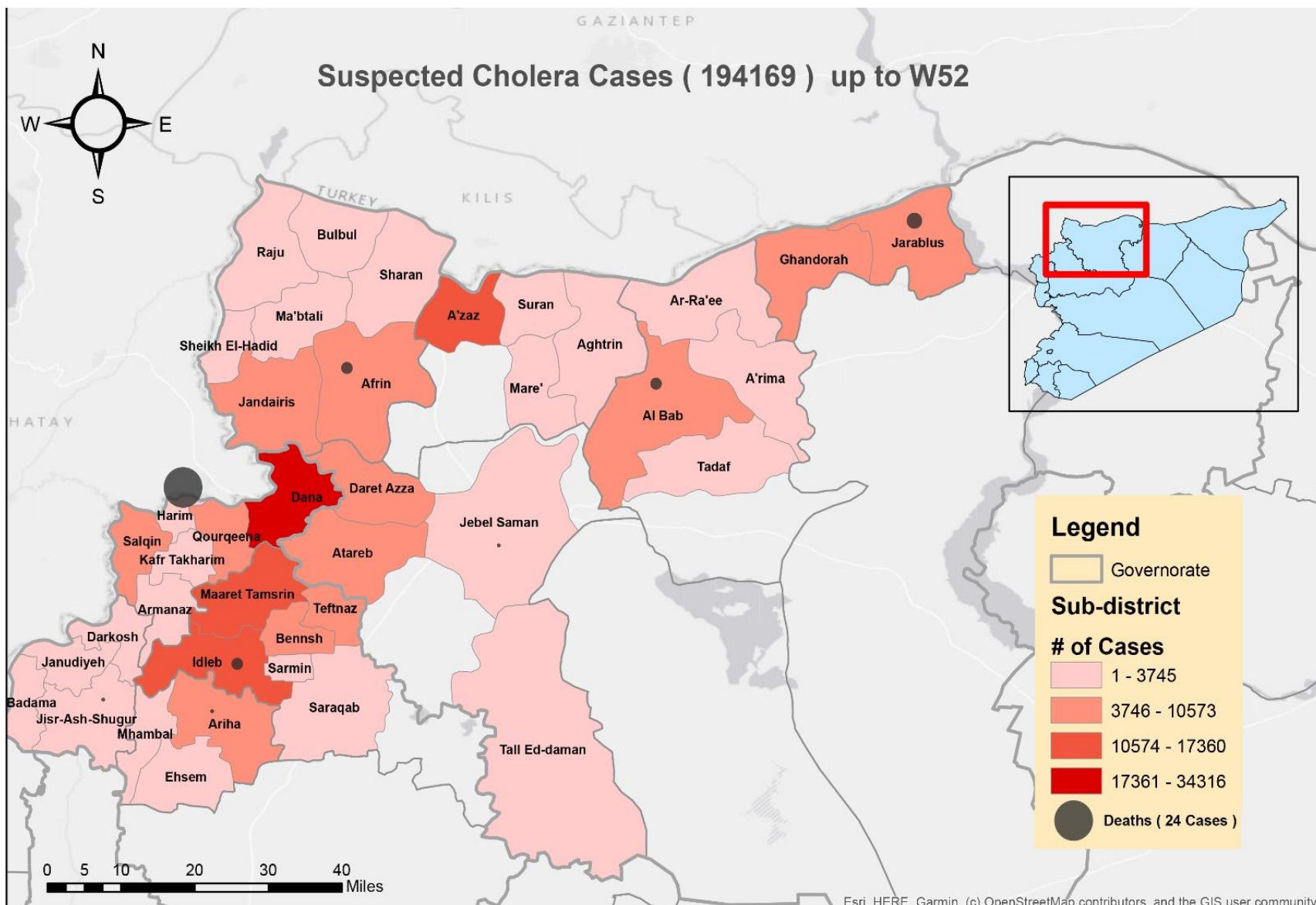


EPI Curve - Reporting Date - Idleb Governorate



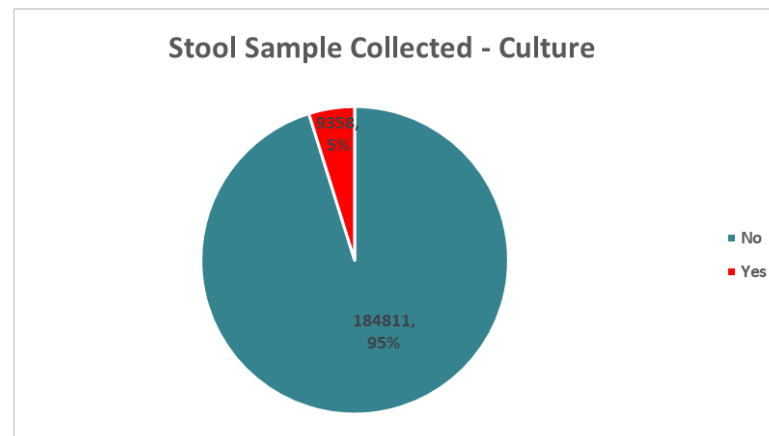


Week	Governorate	District	Date of Onset	Population	New cases	Cumulative Cases	New Death	Cumulative Deaths	Case Fatality Rate	Incidence Rate	Attack Rate
Up to W52 - 2023	Idleb	Ariha	20-Sep	185,668	121	10925	0	1	0.01%	65.2	5.88%
		Harim	6-Sep	1,586,820	809	53278	0	10	0.02%	51.0	3.36%
		Idleb	14-Sep	713,933	539	40936	0	3	0.01%	75.5	5.73%
		Jisr-Ash-Shugur	25-Sep	310,973	102	4921	0	1	0.02%	32.8	1.58%
	Aleppo	A'zaz	9-Sep	648,600	200	23800	0	0	0.00%	30.8	3.67%
		Afrin	21-Sep	467,090	338	20368	0	3	0.01%	72.4	4.36%
		Al Bab	17-Sep	339,812	93	9207	0	2	0.02%	27.4	2.71%
		Jarablus	12-Sep	121,938	108	14785	0	4	0.03%	88.6	12.13%
	Jebel Saman	10-Sep	251,785	52	15949	0	0	0.00%	20.7	6.33%	
	Total				4,626,619	2362	194169	0	24	0.01%	51.1

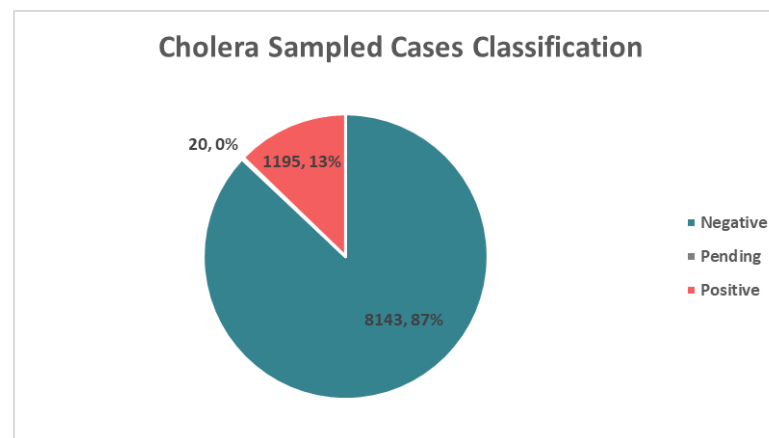


Laboratory:

- In Epi week 52- 2023, the total number of stool specimens or rectal swabs is 57, (24 in Aleppo – 3 confirmed), (33 in Idleb – 11 confirmed).
- A cumulative of 9358 samples were collected since the start of the outbreak (5 % of overall line listed cases), of which 1195 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 8143, and the remaining 20 are still pending.



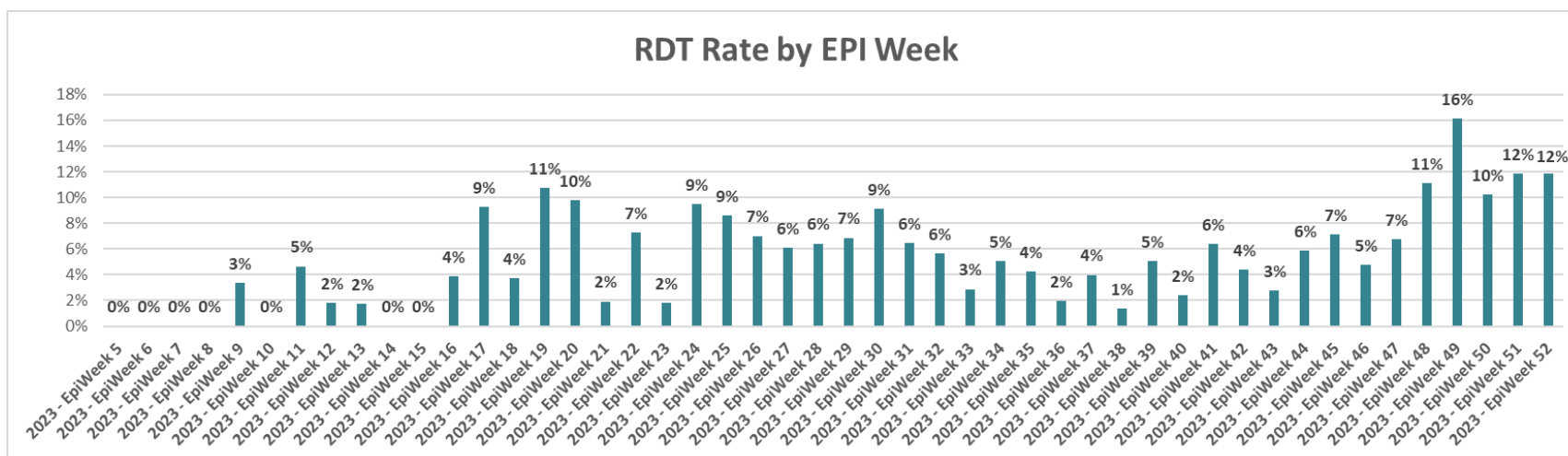
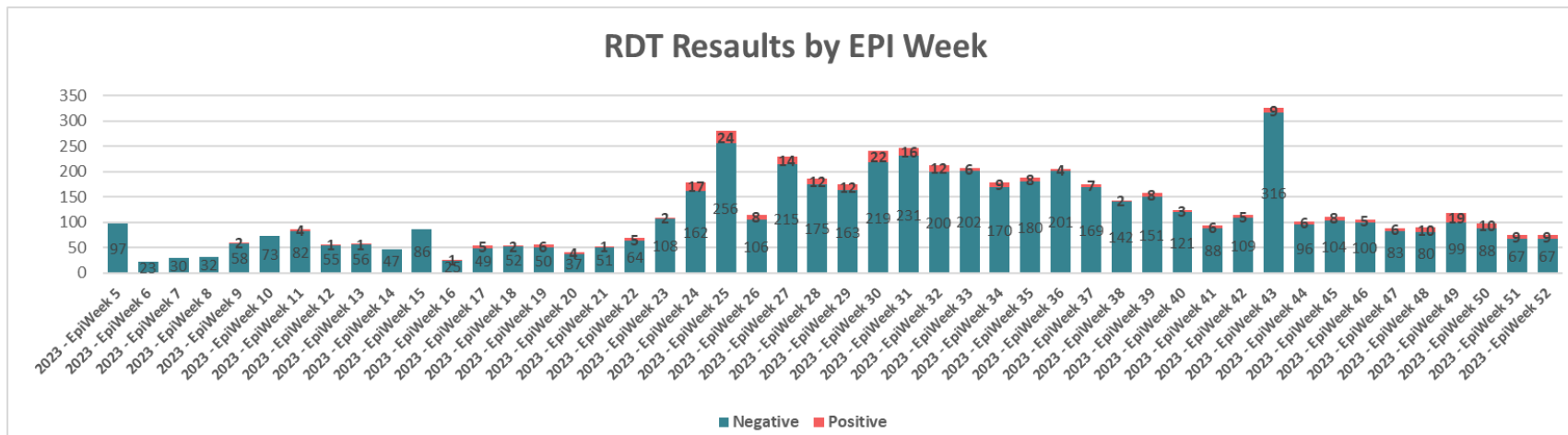
- Isolation and identification of V. cholera serogroup O1 or O139 by a culture of a stool specimen remain the gold standard for laboratory diagnosis.
- Currently, at EWARN laboratories (Idleb, Afrin, Jarablus, and Tal-Abiad) Fecal specimens are subcultured onto selective and nonselective media, including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



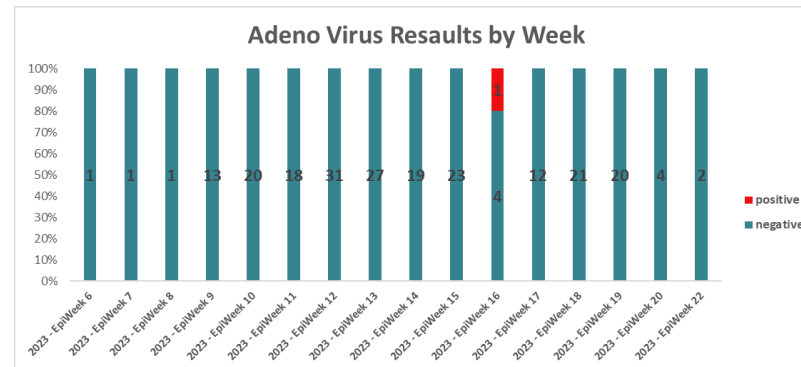
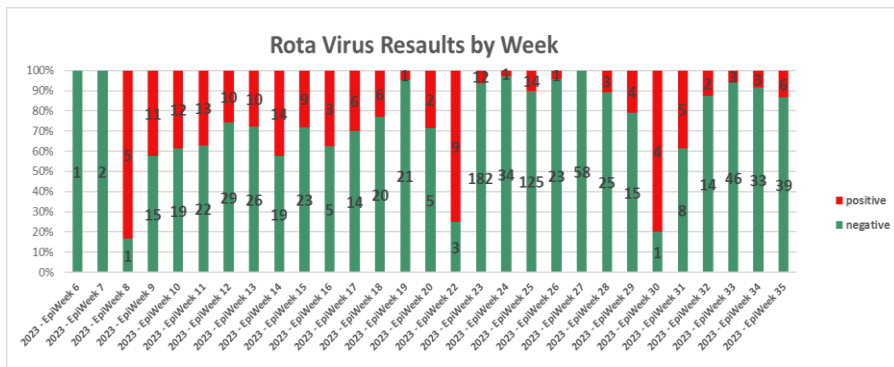
During epi week 51, EWARN received 76 RDT results from the HFs, 9 of them were positive for Cholera.

The total of RDT tests between epi weeks (5 - 51) reached 5679, and the total positive is 311.

The positivity rate of RDTs, from epi week 5 – 2023 up to epi week 51 – 2023 is 5.47 %. But the positivity rate since the beginning of cholera outbreak up to epi week 51 – 2023 is 5.8%.

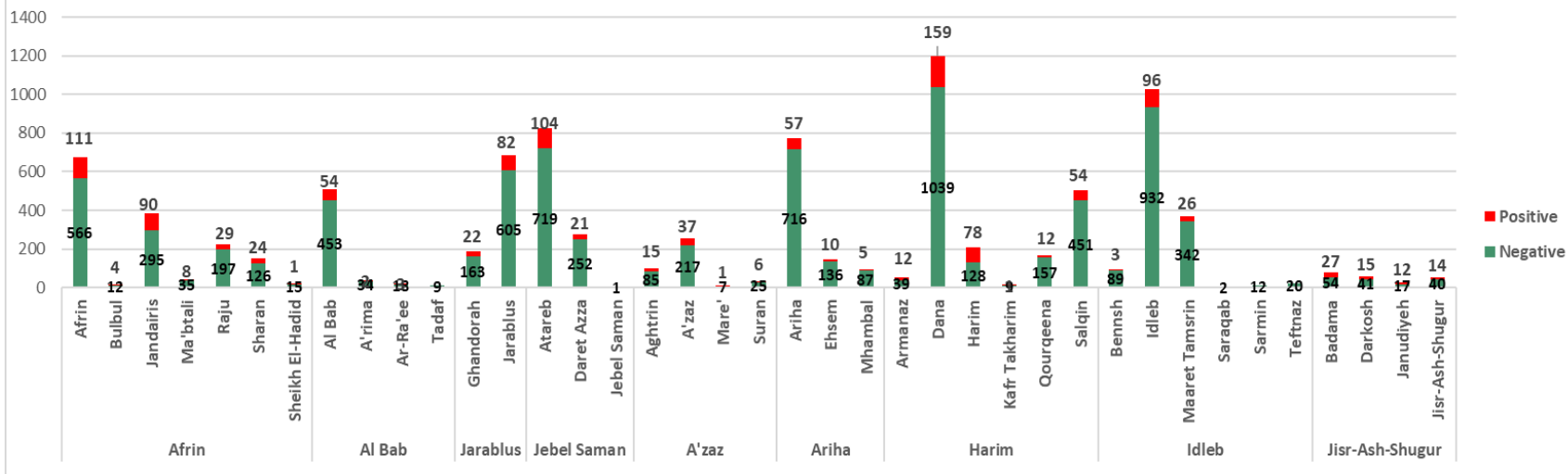


- For children under 5 years of age with a stool culture negative for cholera:
The total samples collected between (epi week 6 and epi week 35) for Rotavirus reached 997 (169 were positive), while the total samples for Adenovirus were 218 (one positive)
The EWARN labs ran out of Rotavirus tests in epi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

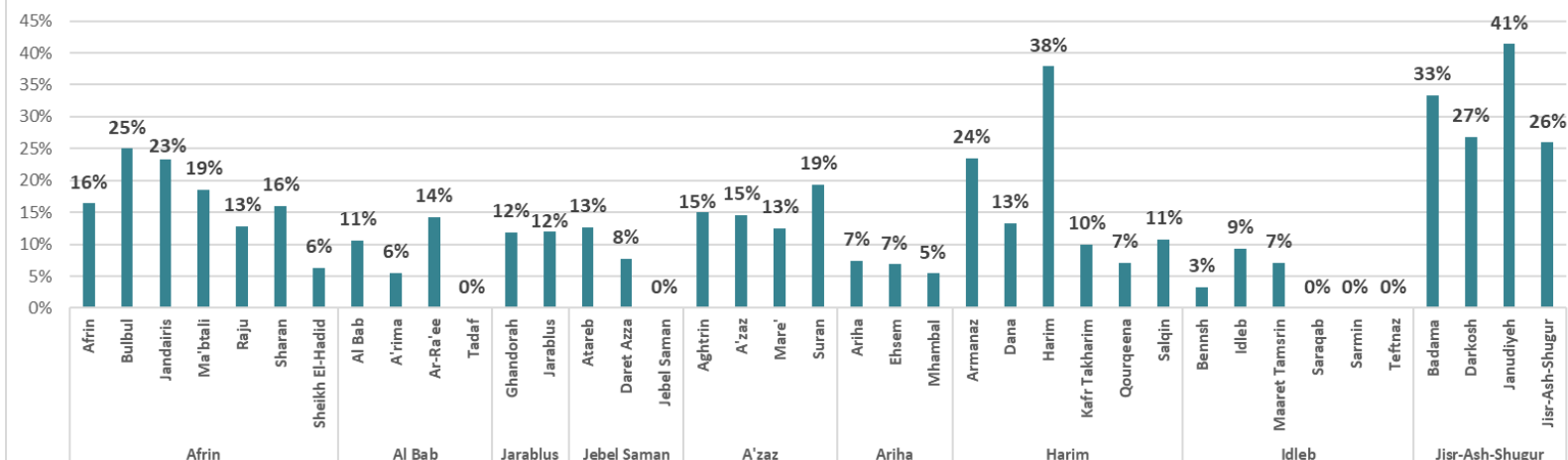


Epi Week	Governorate	District	RDT+	RDT-	Postivity Rate for RDT	Stool Culture Positive	Stool Culture Negative	Postivity Rate for Culture
Up to 52 - 2023	Aleppo	Afrin	134	774	14.8%	267	1246	17.6%
		Al Bab	34	462	6.9%	59	514	10.3%
		A'zaz	31	231	11.8%	59	334	15.0%
		Jarablus	15	307	4.7%	104	768	11.9%
		Jebel Saman	14	304	4.4%	125	972	11.4%
	Idleb	Ariha	5	292	1.7%	72	939	7.1%
		Harim	96	1371	6.5%	316	1823	14.8%
		Idleb	23	1434	1.6%	125	1397	8.2%
		Jisr-Ash-Shugur	4	530	0.7%	68	152	30.9%
		Total		356	5705	5.9%	1195	8145

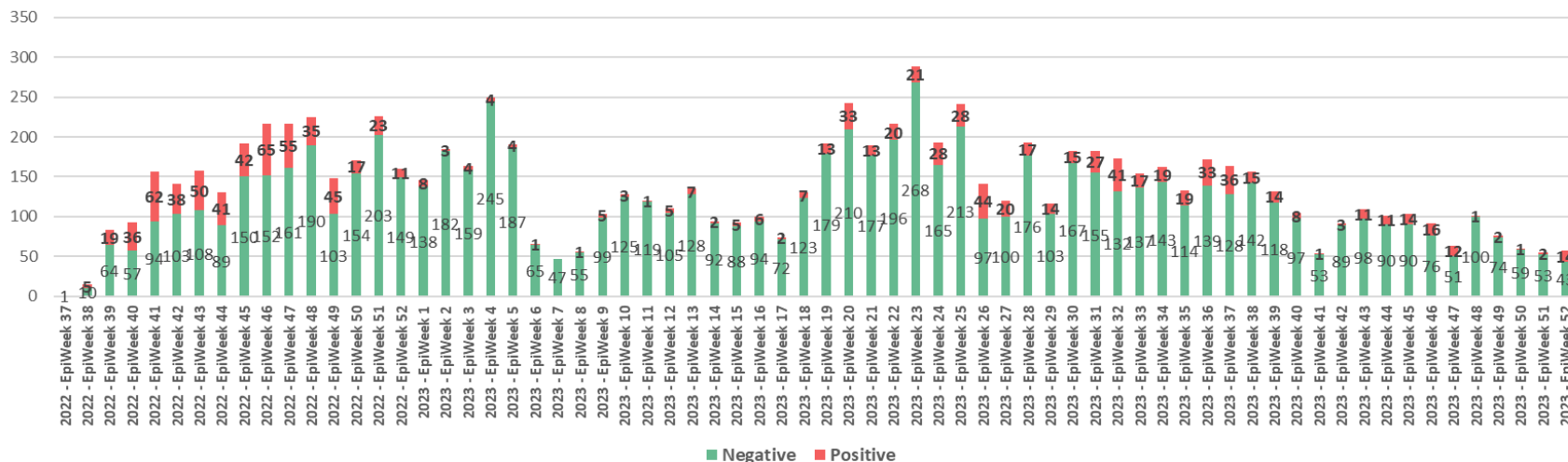
Classification of Cholera Cases by Sub-district



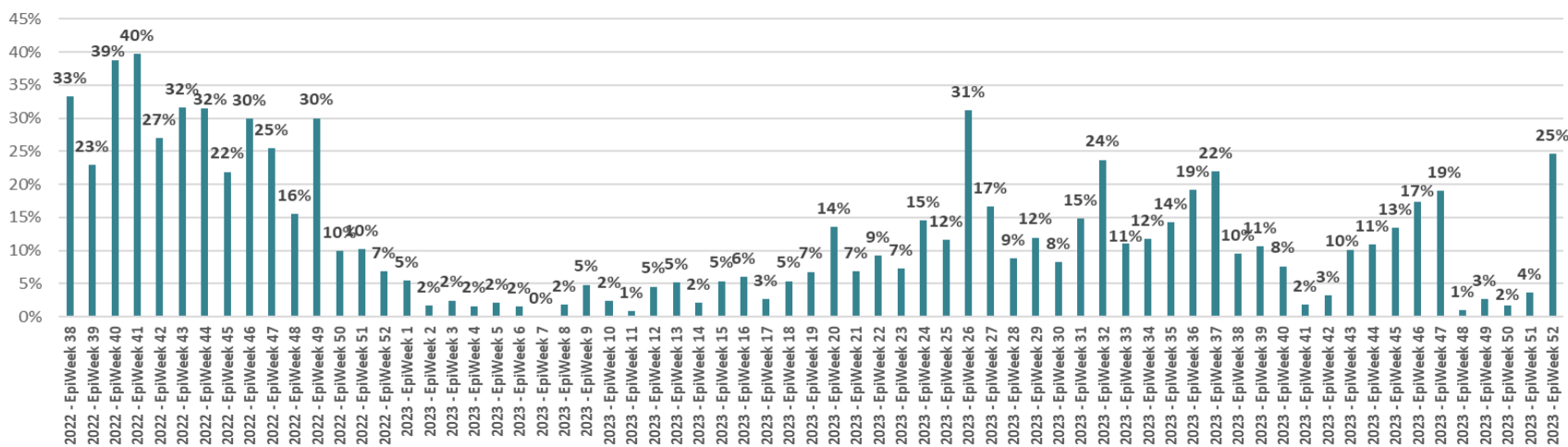
Positivity Rate by Subdistrict



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.

