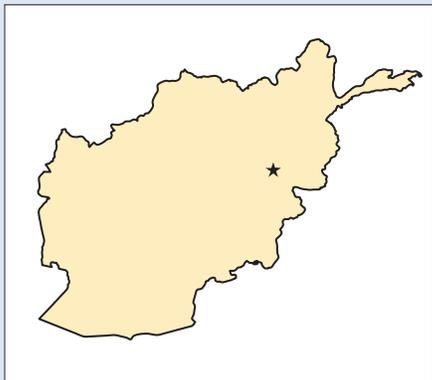


Afghanistan



- **Capital:** Kabul
- **Area:** 652,230 sq km
- **Population:** 30,419,928 (July 2012 est.)
- **Age Structure:** 0-14 years: 42.3% (male 6,464,070/female 6,149,468); 15-64 years: 55.3% (male 8,460,486/female 8,031,968); 65 years and over: 2.4% (male 349,349/female 380,051) (2011 est.)
- **Life Expectancy at Birth:** Total population: 49.72 years; male: 48.45 years; female: 51.05 years (2012 est.)
- **Infant Mortality Rate:** Total: 121.63 deaths/1,000 live births; male: 129.51 deaths/1,000 live births; female: 113.36 deaths/1,000 live births (2012 est.)
- **Literacy Rate:** Total population: 28.1%; male: 43.1%; female: 12.6% (2000 est.)
- **GDP:** \$29.99 billion (2011 est.)
- **GDP per Capita:** \$1,000 (2011 est.)

U.S. CDC Direct Country Support

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for capacity building in surveillance and response to avian and pandemic influenza in 2006. Fiscal Year 2011 was the last year of that cooperative agreement. This bilateral collaboration has supported the Afghan Public Health Institute (APHI), a division of the MOPH, in a number of activities, including: planning and conducting pandemic preparedness and response activities, establishing surveillance for influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI), building laboratory capacity for testing of influenza specimens, health education, and training activities.

Surveillance

The Disease Early Warning System (DEWS) is Afghanistan's primary disease surveillance system. It was established in 2006, with funding from WHO and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Influenza is one of 15 reportable diseases for which DEWS collects weekly data. Influenza surveillance includes routine specimen collection for both ILI and SARI from ten countrywide sentinel sites. Specimens are also collected during suspected outbreaks. DEWS officers submit data weekly to APHI from over 296 sentinel surveillance sites, located across all 34 provinces in the country.

Surveillance Activities

- Ten ILI and SARI surveillance sites have been established in Afghanistan and integrated into the DEWS system. Data from these sites are included in a weekly DEWS report.
- Weekly reporting by regional DEWS officers has been very successful, with a reporting rate greater than 99.9%.

- The existing Codan radio network communication system in the MOPH collects information on cases of acute respiratory illness (ARI) and ARI-related deaths from all 34 provinces.

Laboratory

The virology department of the Central Public Health Laboratory (CPHL) was accredited as a WHO National Influenza Center (NIC) in 2009. The NIC is capable of performing RT-PCR, virus isolation and sub-typing using hemagglutination inhibition (HAI) tests.

Laboratory Activities

- Processed 515 ILI and SARI specimens; 11 were positive for 2010/2011 H1N1.

Preparedness

In FY 2011, Afghanistan has detected and responded to 319 disease outbreaks, including several outbreaks of ARI cough and cold, and ARI pneumonia. Additionally, the MOPH has established 30 sentinel preparedness sites across the country. Daily morbidity and mortality reports for ARI, diarrhea, and injury are collected from all 34 provinces through the Codan communication system. This system enhances preparedness by allowing timely dissemination of information.

Preparedness Activities

- Refresher training on outbreak investigation and response was conducted for all regional response teams.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) kits and viral transport media (VTM) were procured and readily available for use during outbreak investigations.

Training

Afghanistan hosted the following training activities in 2011:

- A three day geographic information system (GIS) workshop for all field coordinators and central staff.
- Six coordination meetings were held in 2011.
- A seven day workshop on H1N1 and ARI for regional surveillance officers and other key stakeholders.
- A one day workshop on internal project evaluation.
- Surveillance directorate staff participated in the International Health Regulations 2005 (IHR) training in France.
- DEWS regional coordinators may pursue a Master's of Public Health (MPH) degree through a new distance learning program that has been introduced.

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