



# World Health Organization

Country Office for Sri Lanka

Situation Report: 01

Date: 11 July 2017

Emergency type: Sri Lanka Dengue Outbreak



82 543 cases

250 deaths

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- There is an increase in the number of dengue cases in Sri Lanka this year. Since January until 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017, as many as 82,543 dengue cases, including 250 deaths, have been reported by the Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine.
- The number of cases this year is three-and-a-half times more than the average number of cases for the same period between 2010 and 2016.
- Based on surveillance data, dengue cases peaked in June 2017, coinciding with the South-West monsoon rains which commenced in late May.

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

### Situation update

- Approximately 43% of cases were reported from the Western Province.
- The most affected areas are the Colombo district, 18,761 cases; Gampaha, 12,121 cases; Kurunegala, 5,065 cases; Kalutara, 4,589 cases and Kandy, 4,209 cases.
- Preliminary laboratory results have identified dengue virus serotype 2 (DENV-2) as the circulating strain in this outbreak.

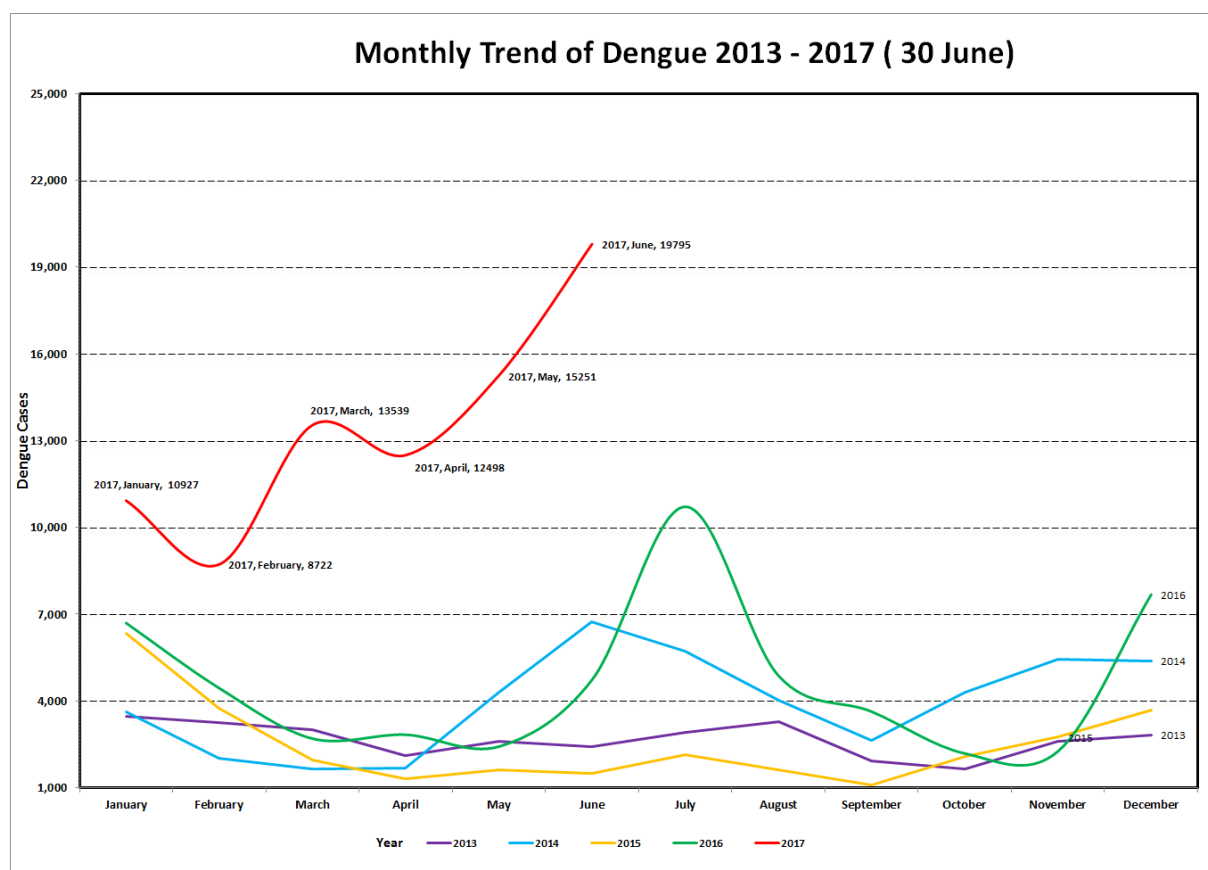
### Public health concerns

- The current dengue outbreak follows heavy rains and subsequent flooding and landslides, which affected 600 000 people in 15 of the 25 districts in the country.
- Heavy monsoon rains have led to standing water pools, leading to a delay / failure in clearing of waste and other potential breeding grounds for mosquito larvae.
- The numbers of dengue cases are higher in urban and suburban areas.

Figure 1: Number of deaths by province as at 07 July 2017

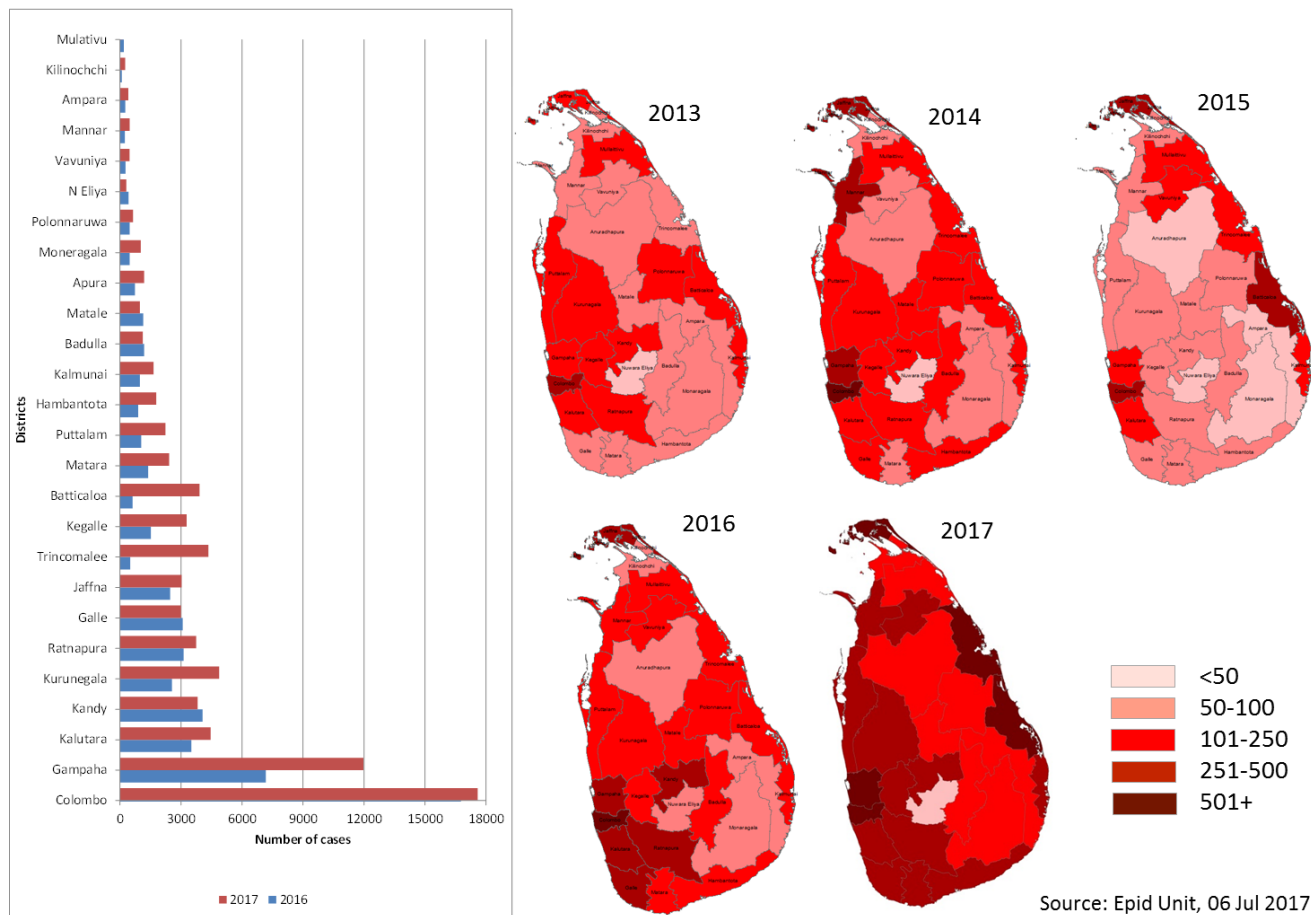
Province	Deaths
Western province	128
Eastern province	24
Southern province	17
Northern province	02
Sabaragamuwa province	22
North western province	15
Central province	15
Uva province	05
North central province	08

Figure 2: Reported Dengue Cases by Year and Month, Jul 2013 to Jun 2017, Sri Lanka



Source: Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health.

Figure 3: Dengue cases and incidence rate per 100,000 by District, Sri Lanka



### Health needs, priorities and gaps

- Vector control activities are needed to reduce the number of potential mosquito breeding sites in the affected areas.
- There is a need to strengthen capacity in hospitals to diagnose and manage dengue patients.

### Ministry of Health response and WHO action

- The MoH has launched an emergency response to address the dengue outbreak.
- Doctors, nurses and medical laboratory technologists have been mobilized and medical equipment has been provided to hospitals catering to high caseloads.
- As health care facilities become increasingly overwhelmed, military support has been sought to increase the number of beds and to build two temporary wards in the Negombo Hospital, one of the leading hospitals managing the increased caseload.
- Vector control measures have been strengthened in the affected areas. WHO has purchased 50 fogging machines to support vector control activities.
- The Sri Lanka Army, Navy and Air Force together with the police and civil defense have been mobilized to do house-to-house visits in the high-risk areas with health staff to clear breeding sites.
- The triage protocol, the process of screening dengue patients according to severity, was updated in June to cope with the outbreak.

- WHO supported the deployment of two dengue experts from Thailand to train clinicians on case management and to support the public health response.
- WHO South-East Asia Regional Office has also deployed an epidemiologist and an entomologist to Sri Lanka.
- The Ministry of Health is mobilizing nearly 100 entomologists from low risk areas to high-risk areas to conduct an entomological survey.
- Based on the advice of the Health Minister, WHO provided technical assistance to MOH to develop a plan to address the dengue outbreak, bring down the caseload and reduce the case fatality. The plan was discussed with the Ministry of Health on 10 July. It was subsequently shared with the Cabinet of Ministers in a meeting chaired by His Excellency, President Maithripala Sirisena, held at the Presidential Secretariat on 11 July.

#### **Resource mobilization**

- Government of Sri Lanka
- WHO Country Office, SEARO, HQ

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