

Abstract

Leishmaniases are vector-borne parasitic diseases that remain major neglected tropical diseases of the world. Both cutaneous and visceral leishmaniasis is endemic in the Middle East, with several countries reporting increasing incidence in recent years. The Middle East is a region of great political instability and the escalating conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Iraq have led to collapses of local healthcare systems. These countries have consequently seen many outbreaks of leishmaniasis. War is associated with refugee crisis that enables further spread of the disease to previously non-endemic areas. *L. major* and *L. tropica* are the main causative agents of cutaneous leishmaniasis and species of the *L. donovani* complex are the causative agents of visceral leishmaniasis in this region. Many species of the genus *Phlebotomus* occur here, with *P. papatasi* and *P. sergenti* being among the most abundant proven local vectors. Rodents and dogs are considered to be the main reservoir hosts of the infection. The aim of this bachelor thesis is to summarize the occurrence of leishmaniases in the Middle Eastern countries in the context of the current situation in this region.