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Lassa fever remains a significant public health burden in Taraba State, Nigeria. The disease has *shifted from a seasonal to year-round transmission pattern*. Jalingo and Bali local government areas (LGAs) were particularly affected. The case fatality rate was high, especially in 2022 (15.6%). Improved surveillance, preparedness plans, and diagnostic facilities are urgently needed to control Lassa fever in the region

BACKGROUND

Lassa fever is a viral hemorrhagic fever caused by the Lassa virus, which is endemic in several West African countries, including Nigeria. It is a significant public health issue in Nigeria, with sporadic outbreaks occurring annually.

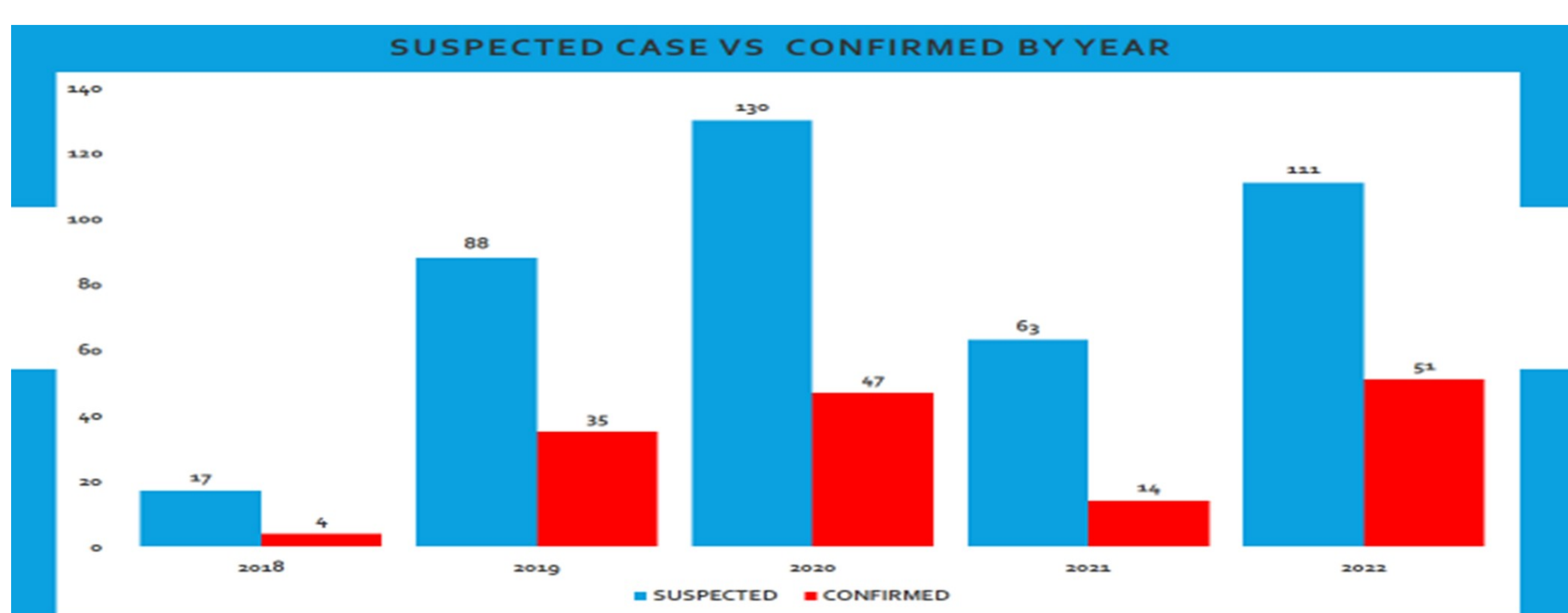
Despite previous studies on Lassa fever outbreaks in Nigeria, there remains a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding the disease's magnitude, transmission patterns, and spatial distribution in Taraba State, Nigeria. This study aimed to address the knowledge gap regarding the magnitude, transmission patterns, and spatial distribution of Lassa fever in Taraba State from 2018 to 2022. By analysing surveillance data, we sought to identify trends and inform effective control measures to mitigate the impact of this health issue.

METHODS

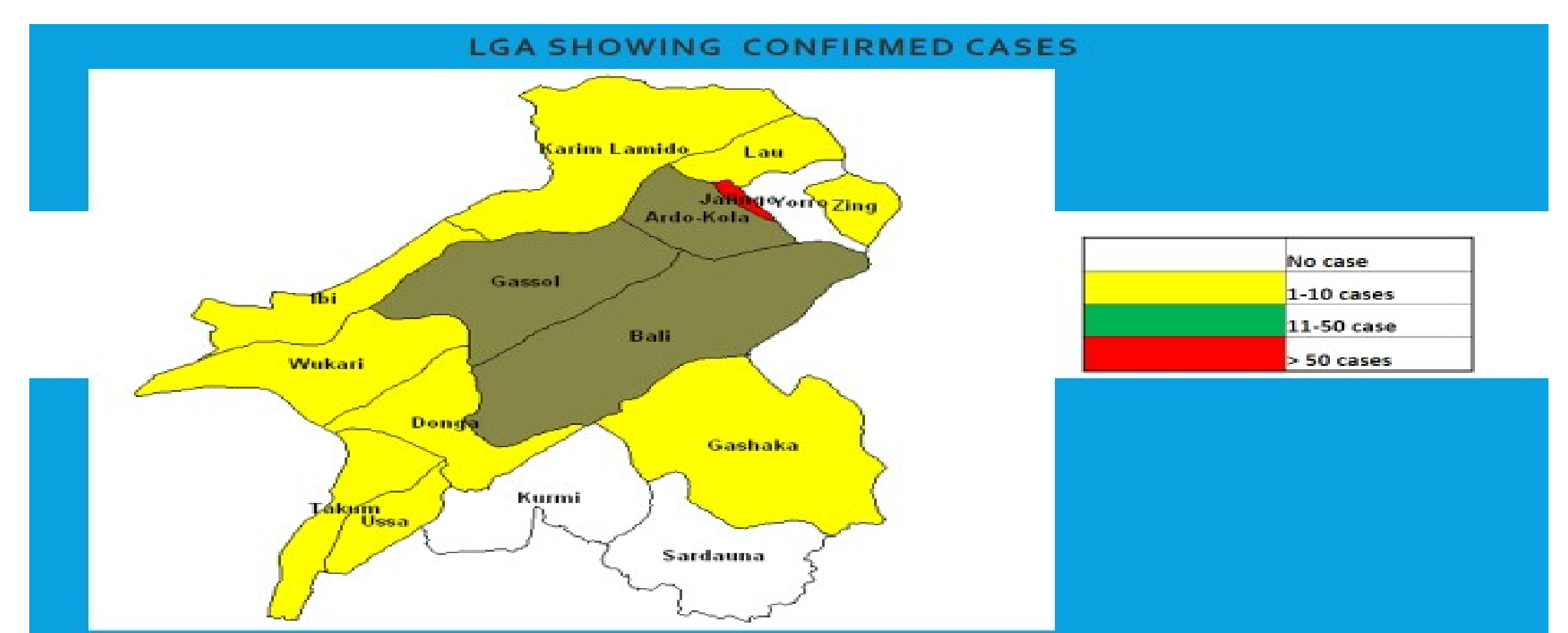
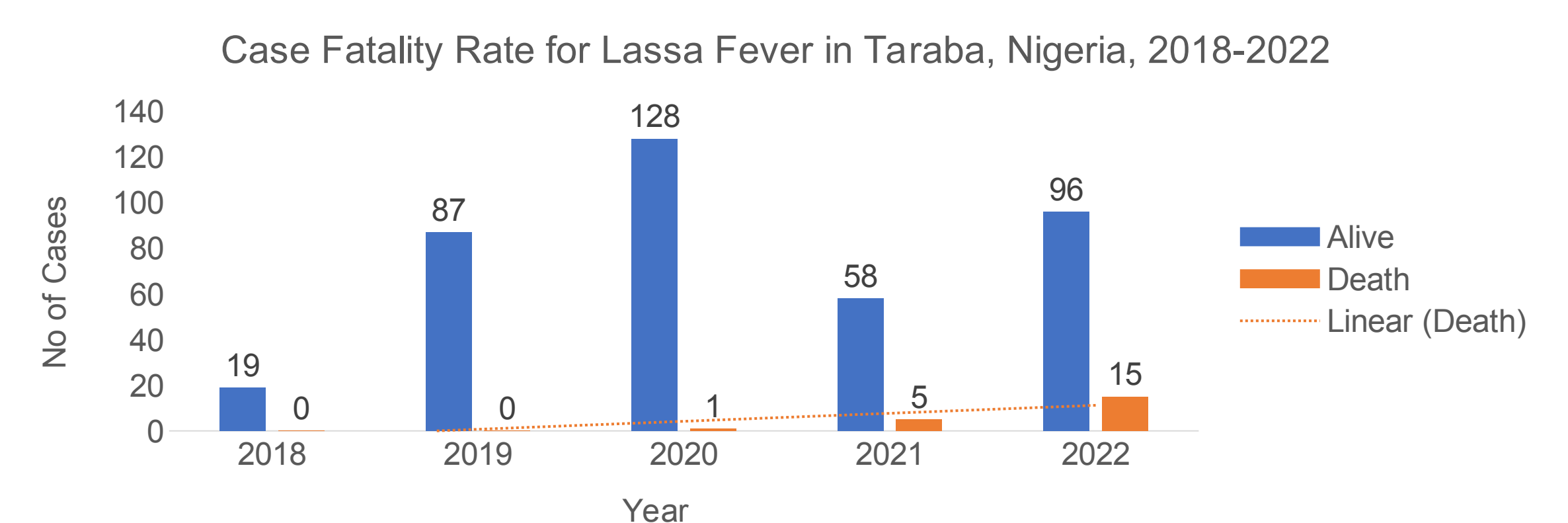
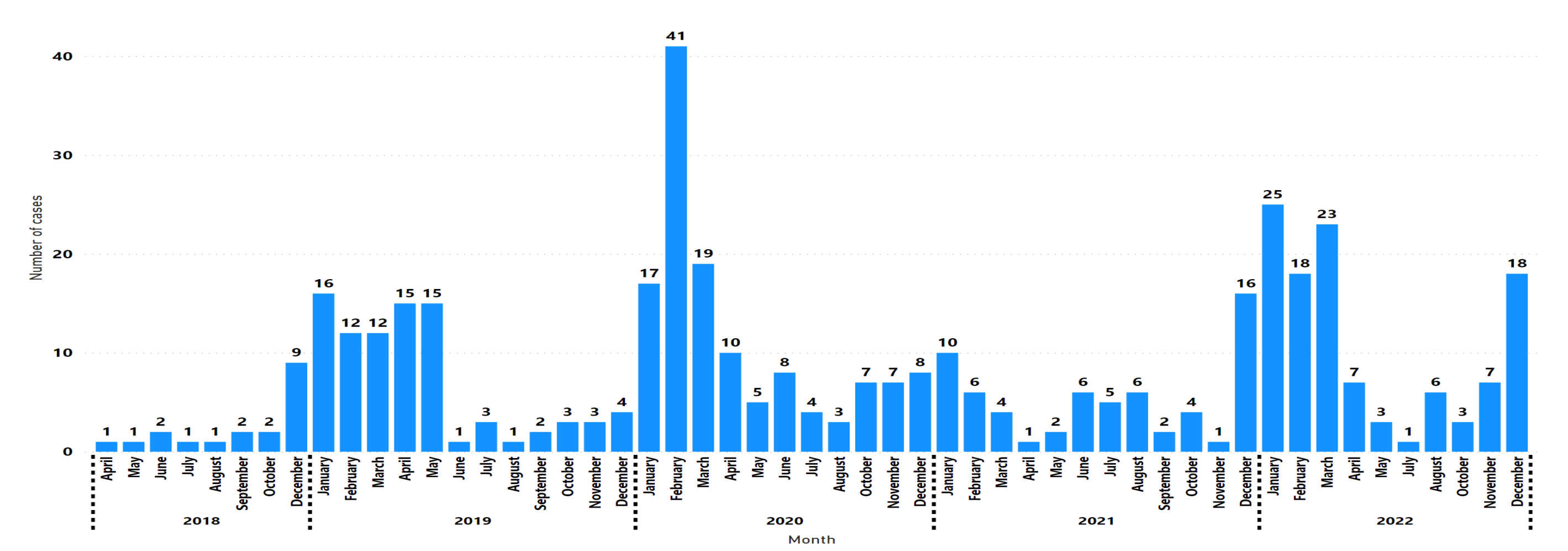
- Secondary data analysis was conducted for Lassa fever Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) record from 2018–2022
- The data was representative of all LGAs (districts) in Taraba State and contained relevant variables like LGA of residence, date of onset, case classifications and laboratory test results
- We included 409 reported cases found on the line lists for the period and examined the data for completeness
- Univariate analysis was performed to show frequencies and proportions while spatial analysis was done using the QGIS

RESULTS

- 409 suspected cases were reported, of which 59% were males and 151 (36.9%) were confirmed cases
- Most confirmed cases were among individuals aged 21-30 years, with a slightly higher proportion of male cases
- The case fatality rate was highest in 2022 (15.6%)
- Jalingo and Bali local government areas were most affected, with higher incidence rates compared to other areas
- The highest number of cases was recorded in 2022
- Cases were observed throughout the year, with peaks between January and March.



RESULTS CONTINUED



CONCLUSIONS

- Lassa fever remains a significant public health threat in Taraba State. This study highlights increasing incidence, year-round transmission, and a rising case fatality rate, emphasising the urgent need for improved prevention, diagnosis, and treatment strategies.
- Strengthening surveillance systems and implementing comprehensive preparedness plans are essential to control and ultimately mitigate the impact of Lassa fever in the region.

ADDITIONAL KEY INFORMATION

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Funding Source: Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention

Conflicts of Interest: Nil conflict of interest

Acknowledgements: Taraba State Ministry of Health and WHO Taraba State Office