World Health Organization
Somalia

EPI watch

Epidemiological Bulletin

Epidemiological Bulletin For epidemic-prone diseases in Somalia for epidemiological Week 12-13 of 2023 (20 March -02 April-2023)

Current situation

Somalia is experiencing worsening drought following five consecutive seasons of failed rainy season. According to the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and Famine Early Warning Network (FEWS NEST), Somalia received suboptimal amount of dyer rains than expected since October 2021. Currently, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) estimates that the number of people affected by extreme drought has risen from 7.8 million in January to 8.3 million in March 2023, with 1.4 million displaced from their homes in search of water, food, and pasture. Some 6.5 million people – 31.3 per cent of the population - are acutely food insecure. For the first time since 2017, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification has confirmed pockets of emergency food insecurity affecting 1.3 million people (IPC 4) and 96150 in catastrophic food insecurity (Phase 5). An estimated 1.8 million children under 5 face acute malnutrition, including 478 000 who are severely malnourished. In addition to drought, an estimated 100,000 people especially in Baardheere districts of Jubaland have been displaced by flash floods resulting from Gu rains with 21 people including six children reported dead due to floods. These floods have also destroyed six health facilities and 200 latrines. It is also estimated that about 8 million people lack access to safe water and proper sanitation. The current situation including the displacement has led to more people being vulnerable to epidemic prone diseases, particularly acute diarrheal disease, and measles.

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED DISTRICTS

An estimated **8.3 million** people in the country in need of water, humanitarian assistance, and protection.[1]

7.8 million people estimated to be affected by the current drought; **1.3 million** have been internally displaced by drought and 50,000 have migrated to Ethiopia and Kenya.[2]

Some **6.5 million** people - **31.3 per cent** of the population - are experiencing acute food insecurity including **3.5 million** in emergency (IPC 3) and **96 150** in catastrophe **(IPC 5). 45 per cent** of children are facing acute malnutrition.[3]

An estimated **100 000** people in Baadheere district of Jubaland state have been affected by flash floods. **20** people including **six** children died, **six** health facilities and **200** latrines destroyed.[4]

Epidemiological weeks 12-13, 20/03/2023-02/04/2023

1052
suspected cholera cases

5828
acute diarrhoeal disease cases

323
suspected measles cases

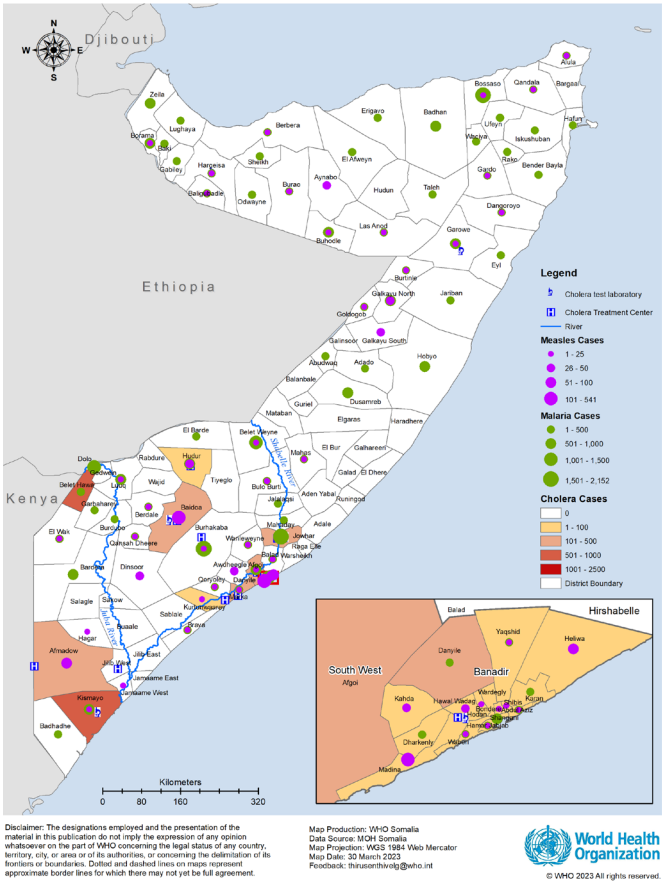
3415
SARI cases

981
confirmed cases of malaria in February 2023

435
health facilities reporting through Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN)[5]

2163
community health workers deployed in high risk areas including in drought affected districts

Reported cases of acute diarrhoeal disease, suspected measles, SARI and clinically diagnosed malaria cases in drought-affected region of Somalia, (epidemiological weeks 1- 13 2023, 2 January to 02 April 2023)



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Map Production: WHO Somalia
Data Source: MOH Somalia
Map Projection: WGS 1984 Web Mercator
Map Date: 30 March 2023
Feedback: thirusenthivelg@who.int

World Health Organization

The Federal Ministry of Health and WHO monitor the trends of epidemic-prone diseases in drought affected districts using data from the electronic-based EWARN, fever and rash surveillance system and community health workers deployed in drought affected districts. With support from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and in collaboration with state ministries of health, WHO is implementing activities aimed at preventing disease outbreaks, including the timely detection and response to alerts of epidemic-prone diseases reported among vulnerable communities in drought affected districts.

1 Somalia: Drought response & famine prevention (15 February - 15 March 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb
2 Somalia: Drought response & famine prevention (15 January - 15 February 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb
3 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Report -February 2023
4 Somalia: Gu rainy season 2023 Flash Floods Update No. 2 (3 April 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb
5 EWARN mobile application was deactivated in February 2023

CHOLERA IN DROUGHT-AFFECTED DISTRICTS

Recurrent cholera outbreaks have been reported in the drought-affected districts of Somalia since 2022, with no interruption in transmission in Banadir region. The number of cholera cases reported in drought affected districts have increased significantly compared to the same time over the past two years (Figure 1). This increase is attributed to a higher proportion of people with limited access to safe water and uncontrolled cross border movement triggered by drought. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, a total of 4032 cases of suspected cholera and ten deaths (Case Fatality Rate 0.3%) were reported in 26 drought affected districts of which 2167(53.7%) cases were children under 5, 2016 (50%) were women and 1278(33.7%) were severe cases. In 2023, the regions reporting most of the cases are Lower Juba (1346), Gedo (813) and Banadir (740) (see Table 1). The number of new cholera cases reported have increased by two-fold compared to the same period last year. The epicenter of the current outbreak is Afmadow, Belethawo and Kismayo districts bordering Kenya where a cholera outbreak was reported. Risk factors for the current outbreak include limited access to safe water, poor sanitation due to open defecation in camps and uncontrolled border movement between Somalia and Kenya.

Since January 2023, total of 679 stool samples were collected from suspected cased admitted in eight treatment facilities supported by WHO and analyzed in the national public health laboratory in Mogadishu, out of which 13(1.9%) samples tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae* 01 serotype Ogawa. Culture and sensitivity studies conducted showed that the *Vibrio cholera* serotypes isolate is sensitive to chloramphenicol and tetracycline but resistant to ampicillin and nalidixic acid.

ACUTE DIARRHOEAL DISEASES[6]

The number of new acute diarrhoeal disease cases reported in the Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) and from the communities in drought affected districts increased by two-fold compared to the same period in last year. The increase in cases is attributed to the negative impact of drought that has led to displacement and limited access to safe water and proper sanitation among displaced communities. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 19 943 cases of acute diarrhoeal disease were reported of which 14 643 (73%) were children under five. The regions reporting most of the cases are Banadir (5 506), Bari (3 074), and Lower Shabelle (2 222) (Table 1). WHO conducts sentinel-based surveillance for rotavirus in Banadir region which is the most common case of acute diarrhoeal disease among children aged under 5 years worldwide. Of the 282 stool samples collected from three sentinel centers in Banadir region for children aged under 5 years in 2023, 130 (46.3%) were tested positive for rotavirus infections.

INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE[7]

The trends of cases of severe acute respiratory illness (SARI) increased by two-fold in 2023 compared to the same time in the past two years. This increase may be attributed to increased displaced people who have poor shelter which resulted in people living in overcrowded conditions in camps (Figure 3). Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 10,347 cases of SARI were reported from the drought affected districts of which 7058(68%) are children under five. The regions reporting most of the cases are Galgadud (3658), Banadir (1783), and South Mudug (1256), (Table 1).

6 Number of AOD cases reported as of epidemiologic week 7- 2023
7 Cases of SARI reported are as of epidemiologic week 7-2023

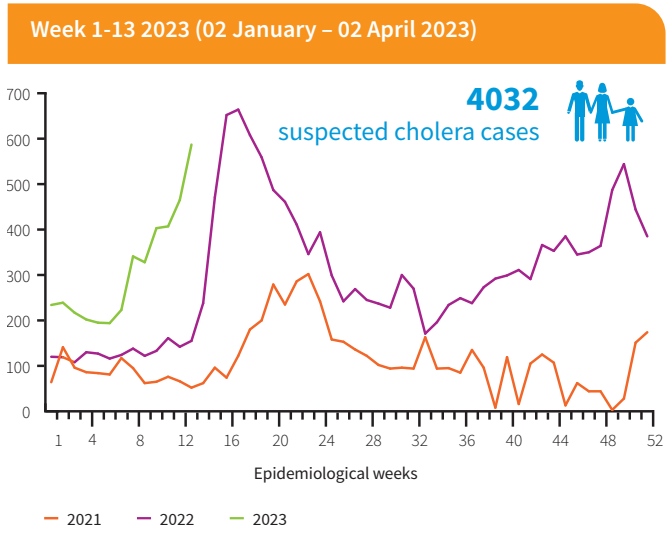

Figure 1. Trends of suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhoea cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

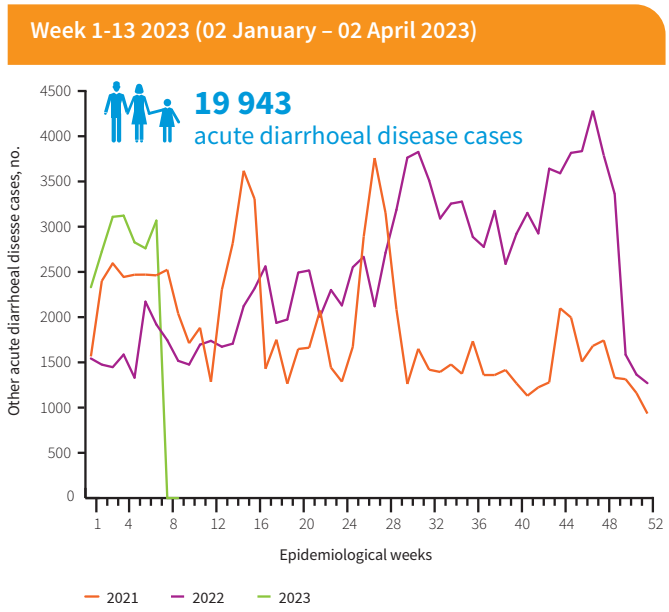

Figure 2. Trends of acute diarrhoeal disease cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2020–2023

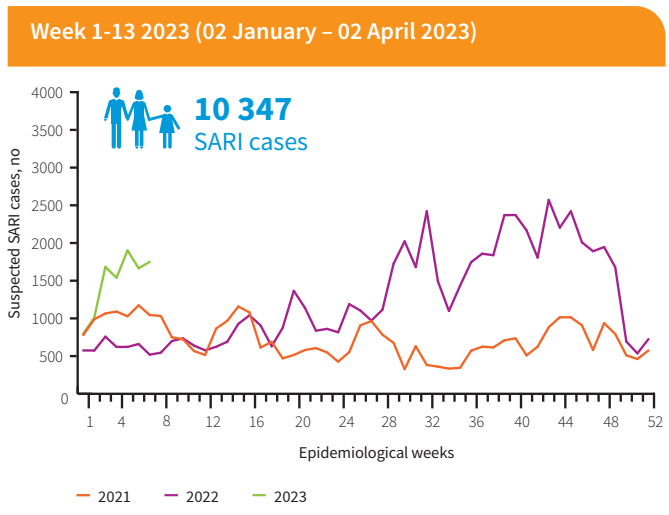

Figure 3. Trends of severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) reported from drought affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2020-2023

WHO, in collaboration with United States Center for Disease Control (US-CDC) and the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Framework supports Ministry of Health to implement sentinel-based surveillance for seasonal influenza in three sites-two located in Banadir region and one in Puntland.

In 2023, a total of 987 suspected cases of seasonal influenza were enrolled at three sentinel sites and were reported in the platform of Eastern Mediterranean Flu (EMFLU) network. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 879 influenza cases were tested at the National Public Health Laboratory of which 38 (4.3%) were tested positive for influenza; 0 (0.0%) were positive for seasonal influenza A (H1N1); 7 (18.4%) were positive for influenza A (H1N1) pdm09,1 (2.6%) positive for H3N2 9 (1.0%)) were positive for influenza B Victoria Lineage. 5 (0.7%) cases were positive for Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) while 7 (0.9%) were positive for COVID-19.

MEASLES UPDATES

The number of suspected cases of measles reported in 2023 decreased by three-fold compared to the same period in 2022. This reduction in cases is linked to an increase in the number of children vaccinated mainly in IDP camps by WHO supported outreach teams that have scaled up the provision of integrated primary health care services including vaccination services to these camps. (Figure 4). A total of 2 078 cases of measles were reported through the AFP/ Polio surveillance system from week 1 to week 13 of 2023 of which 1433(69%) are children under 5. Over the past two weeks, the number of new cases of measles reported have reduced by 22% compared to the same period last year. The regions reporting most cases are Bay (742), Banadir (633) and Lower Shabelle (132). Of the 719 blood samples collected from cases of fever and rash,585 (81%) were tested positive for measles specific Immunoglobulin M(IgM).

MEASLES VACCINE UPDATES

A total of 45,183(80%) out of the targeted 56,482 children under one year received the first dose of measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) in drought-affected districts in February 2023 according to data from district health Information software 2 (DHIS2) (Figure 5). From 2019 to 2023, the measles vaccination coverage ranged between 84% and 80% per month compared to the national target of 95%.

MALARIA UPDATES

The number of laboratory-confirmed cases of malaria reported through DHIS2 has gradually decreased since January 2021 which might be linked scaling up of implementation of additional malaria control interventions in drought affected districts (Fig 6). Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, a total of 52 804 cases of suspected malaria have been reported of which 1 890 (3.5%) have been confirmed positive by Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) and blood smear. However, the number of confirmed cases of malaria increased from 909 cases in January to 981 cases in February which represents an increase of eight per cent. Of the 1890 confirmed cases, 532 (28%) are children under 5. Regions reporting most of the suspected malaria cases in 2023 are Gedo (5302), Bari (5048) and Bay (4859) (Table 1).

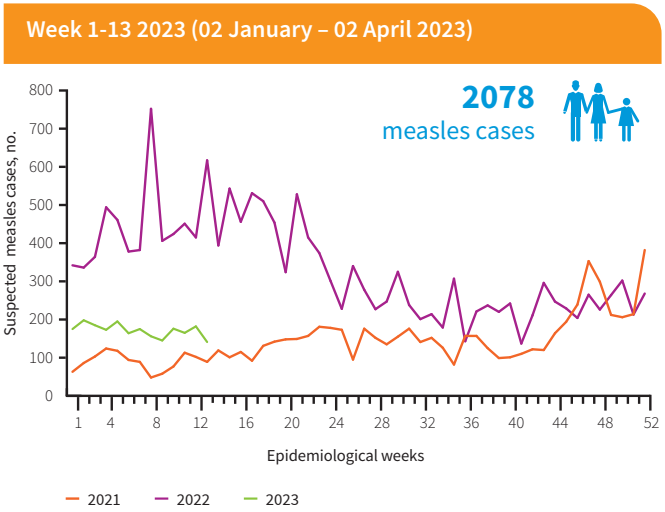

Figure 4. Trends of measles cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2020–2022

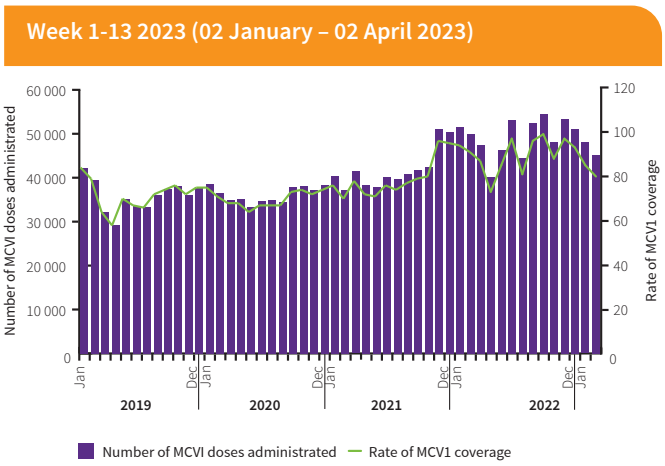

Figure 5. Number of children under 1 year vaccinated against measles by month, 2019-2022

*The measles vaccination data for November and December 2022 is not yet available

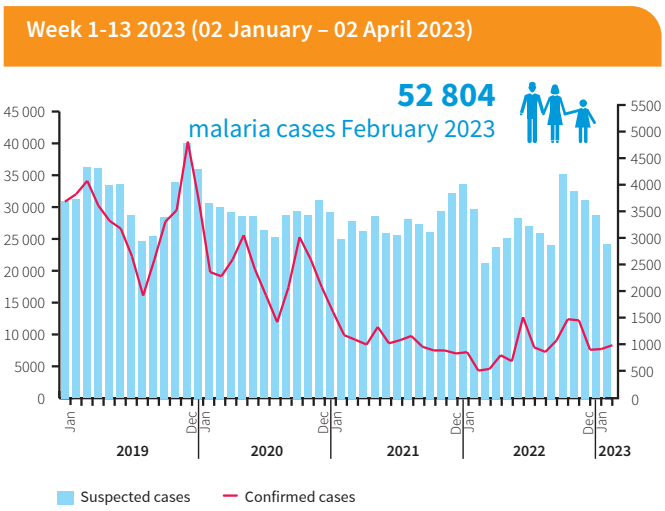

Figure 6. Trends of malaria cases reported in drought-affected regions, 2019-2022

Polio update

- A total of 94 cases of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) were reported in 2023, of whom 39(41.5%) case were female and 55(58.5%) were male. Of the 94 AFP cases reported,72 (77%) cases had stool samples collected and analysed in the laboratory while 22 (23%) cases are pending laboratory diagnosis.
- In 2023 one circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) was isolated from AFP cases, compared to five cases isolated in 2022.
- As of week 13, of 2023, 57 environmental surveillance (ES) samples have been collected. Of these 45(80%) samples have laboratory results and 12(20%) are pending for processing.
- In 2022, a total of 222 environmental samples were collected from 16 sites and sent to the laboratory of which six were positive for cVDPV2, one was positive for VDPV2, 55 were positive for none Polio Enterovirus (NPEV)), 30 Sabin like virus type, 02 Sabin like and None polio enterovirus virus (SL2), and 127 samples were negative.

Table 1: Cumulative number of acute diarrhoeal disease, suspected cholera, suspected measles, SARI, and suspected malaria cases in drought-affected regions of Somalia (epidemiological weeks 1 -Week 13 2023, 20 March to 02 April 2023)

Regions	Acute diarrhoeal disease[8]	Suspected Measles cases[9]	Suspected Malaria case[10]	SARI cases[11]	Suspected cholera cases[12]	cVDPV2 from AFP Case
AWDAL	0	9	2352	0	0	0
BAKOOL	198	38	2103	38	66	0
BANADIR	5506	633	4224	1783	740	0
BARI	3074	31	5048	78	0	0
BAY	1366	742	4859	686	249	0
GALBEED	0	13	1732	0	0	0
GALGADUD	157	13	2572	3658	0	0
GEDO	433	6	5302	692	813	0
HIRAN	769	71	2595	492	1	0
KARKAR	1342	-	1082	389	0	0
LOWER JUBA	0	117	2614	0	1346	0
LOWER SHABELLE	2222	132	1834	303	594	1
MIDDLE JUBA	0	0	0	0	0	0
MIDDLE SHABELLE	236	34	4352	22	223	0
MUDUG	1382	108	3880	273	0	0
NUGAL	1587	55	2415	427	0	0
SOUTH MUDUG	719	0	0	1256	0	0
SAHIL	0	9	893	0	0	0
SANAG	947	0	1818	0	0	0
SOOL	5	1	669	245	0	0
TOGDHER	0	66	2460	0	0	0
TOTAL	**19 943**	**2078**	**52 804**	**10 347**	**4032**	**1**

Note: Continuous data quality review has been conducted which may lead to variation of figures for new cases and cumulative cases of epidemic prone disease in each region.

7 Source of data is EWARN as of February 2023(up to week 6-7) due to unable failed to download EWARN data.
9 Source of data is fever and rash surveillance system as of January 2023
9 Source of data is EPI/Polio Weekly update sitrep report 2023.
10 Source of data is DHIS2 as of January 2023
11 Source of data is EWARN as of February 2023
12 Source of data is suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhoea surveillance system managed by the FMOH as of February 2023

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