World Health Organization
Somalia

EPI watch

Epidemiological Bulletin

Epidemiological Bulletin For epidemic-prone diseases in Somalia for epidemiological Week 16-17 of 2023 (17-30 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. Nearly 6.6 million people – 38.8 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 4.3 million people (IPC 3) and 40350 in catastrophic food insecurity (Phase 5). An estimated 1.8 million children under 5 face acute malnutrition, including 478 000 who are severely malnourished. According to the weather forecast by competent agency, moderate to heavy rainfall is expected over several areas in southern, central, and north-western parts of Somalia with dry conditions only in the north-eastern coastal areas. 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 diarrhoeal 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]

Nearly **6.6 million** people - **38.8 per cent** of the population - are experiencing acute food insecurity including **4.6 million** in emergency (IPC 3) and **40 350** in catastrophe (IPC 5). **1.8 million** of children are facing acute malnutrition[3].

175 000 people affected by flash floods of whom **14 000** have been displaced especially in Baardheere district of Gedo region and Baidoa district of SouthWest state. The rainy season that started in April is project to end in June[4].

Epidemiological weeks 16-17 (17-30 April 2023

1394
suspected cholera cases

5828
acute diarrhoeal disease cases

362
suspected measles cases

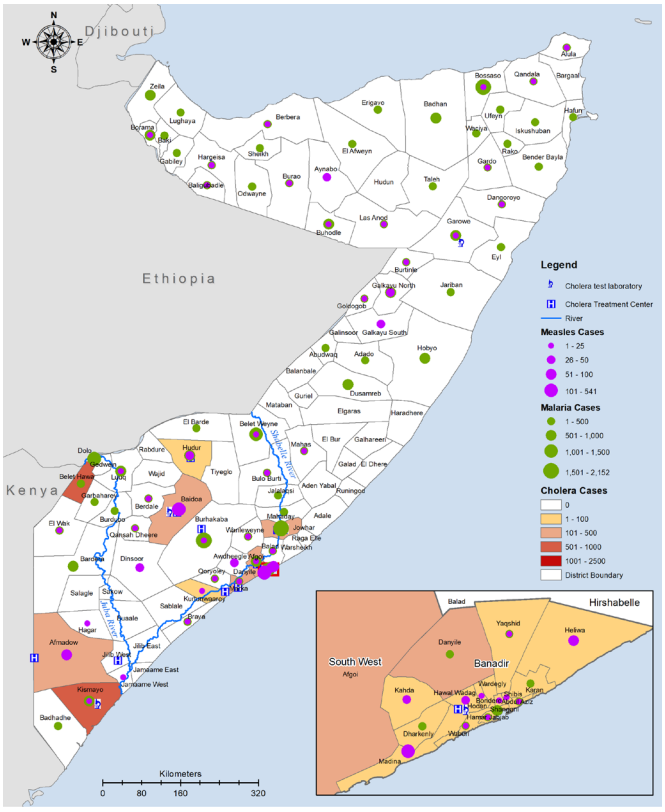
3415
SARI cases

887
confirmed cases of malaria in March 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 week 1-17, 2 January to 30 April 2023)



Disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of WHO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

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 -April 2023
4 Somalia: Gu rainy season 2023 Flash Floods Update No. 3 (13 April 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb
5 EWARN mobile application was deactivated in February 2023- MOH is transitioning from EWARN to Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response strategy supported by the DHIS2 web-based application.

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 6923 cases of suspected cholera and 21 deaths (Case Fatality Rate 0.3%) were reported in 28 drought-affected districts of which 3805(55%) cases were children under 5, 3586 (51.8%) were women and 2380(34.4%) were severe cases. In 2023, The regions reporting most of the cases are Gedo (2285), Lower Juba (1901), and Banadir (1078) (see Table 1). The number of new cholera cases reported from drought and flood affected districts have decreased by 28% in the past three weeks however, the cholera outbreak spread to Dolow and Luuq in Jubaland state. Risk factors for the current outbreak include limited access to safe water, poor sanitation due to open defaecation in camps and uncontrolled border movement between Somalia and Kenya. Since January 2023, total of 827 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 22(2.7%) 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). 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-

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

Week 1-17 of 2023 (2 January to 30 April 2023)

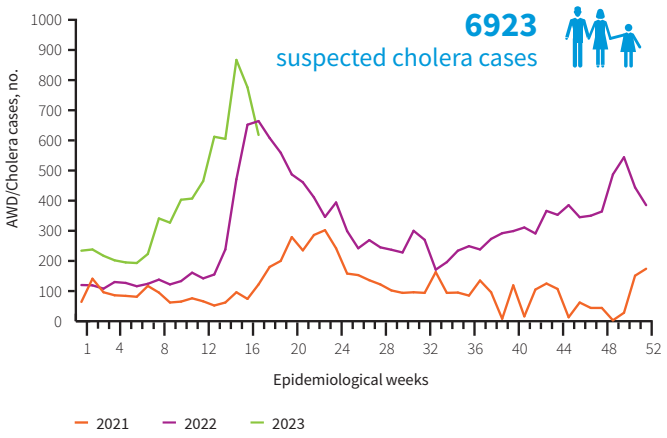


Figure 1. Trends of suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhoea cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

Week 1-17 of 2023 (2 January to 30 April 2023)

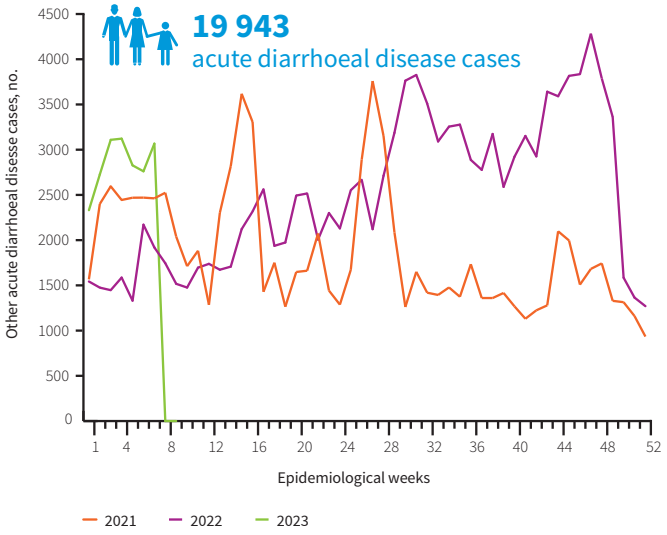


Figure 2. Trends of acute diarrhoeal disease cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2020–2023

Week 1-17 of 2023 (2 January to 30 April 2023)

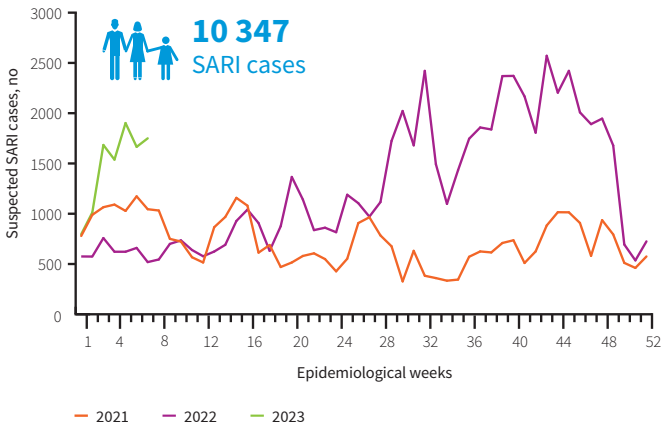


Figure 3. Trends of severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) reported from drought affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2020-2023

based surveillance for seasonal influenza and other respiratory pathogens in three sites-two located in Banadir region and one in Puntland. In 2023, a total of 1253 suspected cases of seasonal influenza were enrolled at four sentinel sites and were reported in the platform of Eastern Mediterranean Flu (EMFLU) network. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 1211 suspected cases of seasonal influenza were tested at the National Public Health Laboratory of which 101 (8.3%) were tested positive for influenza; 68(66.3%) were positive for influenza A (H1N1) pdm09, 1(1.0%) positive for influenza A(H3N2) while 10 (0.8%)) were positive for influenza B virus (Victoria Lineage). 5 (0.4%) cases were also positive for Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) while 7 (0.6%) 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 2 711 cases of measles were reported through the AFP/ Polio surveillance system from week 1 to week 17 of 2023 of which 11836(67.7%) are children under 5. The regions reporting most cases are Bay (911), Banadir (836) and Lower juba (181). Of the 836 blood samples collected from cases of fever and rash, 679 (81.2%) 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 79 331 cases of suspected malaria have been reported of which 2777 (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 881 cases in March which represents a decrease of 2 per cent. Of the 2777 confirmed cases, 749 (27%) are children under 5. Regions reporting most of the suspected malaria cases in 2023 are Bari (8570), Gedo (7751) and Bay (6834) (Table 1).

Polio update

- A total of 132 cases of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) were reported in 2023, of whom 54(40.9%) case were female and 78(59.1%) were male. Of the 132 AFP cases reported,107 (81%) cases had stool samples collected and analysed in the laboratory while 25 (19%) cases are pending laboratory diagnosis.

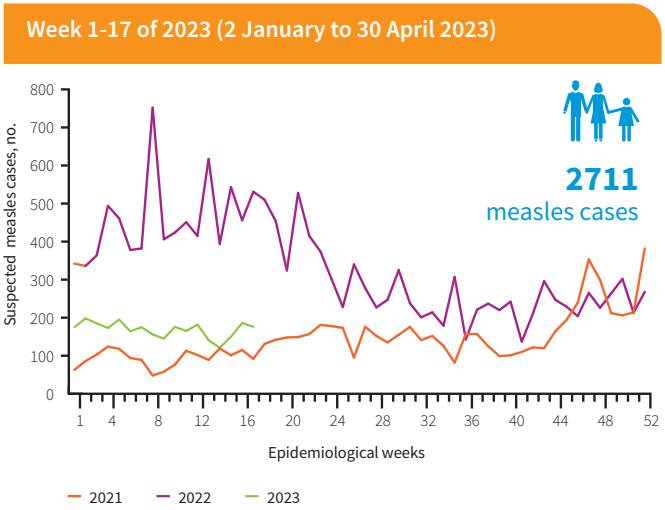


Figure 4. Trends of measles cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

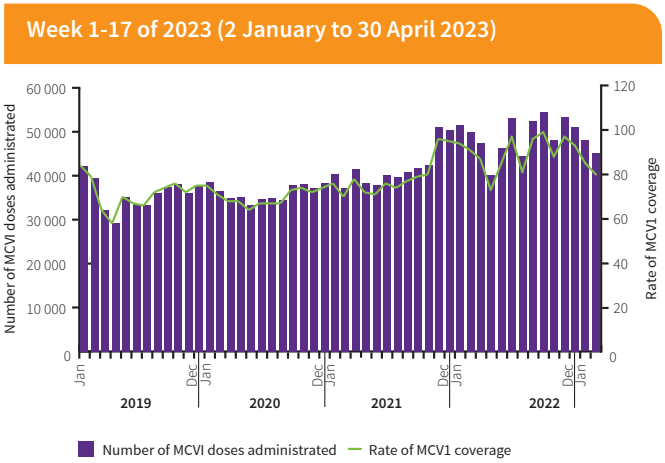


Figure 5. Number of children under 1 vaccinated against measles by month, 2019-2023

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

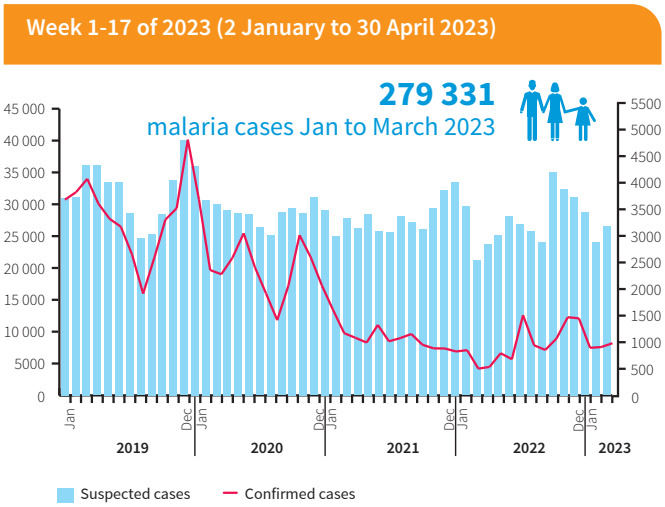


Figure 6. Trends of malaria cases reported in drought-affected regions, 2019-2023

- In 2023 two circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) was isolated from AFP cases, compared to five cases isolated in 2022.
- A total of 71 environmental surveillance (ES) samples have been collected since epidemiologic week 1 of 2023 of which 66 (93%) samples have laboratory results and 5(7%) are pending for processing.
- Out of the 66 ES samples with laboratory result in 2023, 20(30%) of the samples were isolated none polio entero virus (NPEV), 2 Sabin like virus (3%) and the remaining 44 (67%) samples were tested 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 7 2023, 03 to 07 May 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[12]
AWDAL	0	10	3139	0	0	0
BAKOOL	198	39	3189	38	66	0
BANADIR	5506	836	6527	1783	1078	0
BARI	3074	48	8570	78	0	0
BAY	1366	911	6834	686	437	1
GALBEED	0	14	2482	0	0	0
GALGADUD	157	35	4224	3658	0	0
GEDO	433	8	7751	692	2285	0
HIRAN	769	140	4474	492	1	0
KARKAR	1342	-	1740	389	0	0
LOWER JUBA	0	181	3700	0	1901	0
LOWER SHABELLE	2222	173	3237	303	823	1
MIDDLE JUBA	0	0	0	0	0	0
MIDDLE SHABELLE	236	48	5803	22	332	0
MUDUG	1382	122	5798	273	0	0
NUGAL	1587	57	3552	427	0	0
SOUTH MUDUG	719	0	0	1256	0	0
SAHIL	0	14	1329	0	0	0
SANAG	947	0	2544	0	0	0
SOOL	5	1	1101	245	0	0
TOGDHER	0	74	3337	0	0	0
TOTAL	**19 943**	**2711**	**79 331**	**10 347**	**6923**	**2**

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.

8 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
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
12 Source of data is EPI/Polio Weekly update sitrep report 2023.

@WHO Somalia WHO Somalia somaliawho

Published by World Health Organization (WHO), Country Office, Mogadishu, Somalia
For additional information, kindly contact: Tel: +252616695096; Email address: emacosomwr@who.int;
URL: http://www.emro.who.int/countries/som/index.html