

March 2022

Health Emergency Programme Update – Somalia



WHO and MOH teams vaccinating children in drought-affected districts in Galmudug state @WHO

KEY HEALTH INDICATORS – March 2022

130 Health cluster partners
7 million People in need of health care

HEALTH NEEDS AND PROVISION

- 7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in Somalia
- 4.5 million people in 71 districts are affected by severe drought; 717 700 have been displaced from their homes.
- Fewer than 1 consultation per person per year reported during the month (as compared to the OCHA standard of 1 new visit/person/year).

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1928 community health workers (CHWs) deployed in 71 districts, including 66 drought-affected districts.
- 908 689 people reached by the CHWs with integrated health and nutrition services and health protection messages for disease prevention and health promotion.
- 2976 alerts of epidemic-prone diseases notified by CHWs, of which 15% were verified as true after field investigation by the Rapid Response Teams.
- 1321 cases of severe acute malnutrition with complications treated in stabilization centres supported by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- 4876 cases of trauma treated.
- WHO donated six kits for the management of severe cases of malnutrition with complications to the Ministry of Health of Jubaland state.

Coordination meetings

- The Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) convened a meeting with WHO and health partners to review the progress of implementation of Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response System (IDSRs) activities. During the meeting, health partners noted delayed implementation of planned activities outlined in the IDSR implementation plan and discussed the progress of establishment of Public Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHEOCs). The FMOH will convene a workshop with all stakeholders in May 2022 to finalize and endorse the revised IDSRs implementation plan and technical guidelines.
- The second cohort of frontline field epidemiology training programme was conducted in Mogadishu. A total of 25 (19 male and 6 female) participants from the FMOH and member states were enrolled into the course. Ten graduates from the first cohort have been adopted as co-mentors for the second FETP cohort.
- The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean convened the ninth review meeting for the implementation of International Health Regulations (2005) in Cairo, Egypt. The National Focal points for IHR (2005) from 21 countries and discussion focused on (i) conducting COVID-19 intra-action review (ii) conducting a tabletop exercise to test IHR (2005) core capacities and (iii) reviewing the state annual report (SPAR) submitted in February 2022.
- WHO convened a coordination meeting with UNICEF to discuss the implementation of drought response activities in high-risk districts of Puntland state. The meeting focused on the integration of response activities and dissemination of epidemiological bulletins for measles and other epidemic-prone diseases in drought-affected districts. Action points of the meeting included:
 - (i) convening a coordination meeting jointly with MOH (ii) supporting Puntland MOH to investigate measles outbreaks and disseminate epidemiological bulletins with all partners.
- During the reporting period, a monthly health cluster coordination meeting was convened to discuss the progress of implementation of drought response activities. The participants in the meeting resolved to strengthen the coordination of emergency response and scale up the implementation of measles outreach vaccination campaigns in high-risk districts.



WHO providing life-saving primary health care services to IDPs in Baidoa, Southwest state © WHO

Drought response operations

Implementation of community-based surveillance

In response to the drought, WHO deployed 1928 community health workers (CHWs) in 66 drought-affected districts and conducted the following activities during the month of March 2022:

- A total of 908 689 individuals in 259 600 households were given health promotion messages for COVID-19 and other epidemic-prone diseases and delivered a set of health and nutrition services at the community level. The CHWs also reported 2976 COVID-19 alerts, 15% of which were investigated and verified as true alerts. The CHWs identified 65 new contacts of COVID-19 positive cases and followed up these close contacts for 14 days. A total of 45 contacts completed 14 days of their follow-up period without developing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Overall, 906 cases of acute diarrhoeal disease were detected among children aged below 5 years and treated at home with oral rehydration salt and zinc; 312 of the cases appeared to be severe and were referred to the nearest health facility for further management.

- A total of 1972 children under the age of five were screened for malnutrition using mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) tape, 497 (27%) that were below 11.5 cm were referred to an outpatient therapeutic programme (OTP) for additional treatment.
- 1758 pregnant women were given iron and folic acid supplements, 1380 children aged 6 to 59 months were given vitamin A supplements, and 4797 lactating mothers were given information on the benefits of infant and young child feeding (IYCF), including breast feeding.
- A total of 815 suspected malaria cases were tested, of which 216 were tested as positive by rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) and treated with artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT). Of the 216 malaria-positive cases, 159 (74%) were children aged below 5 years.

Water quality surveillance

- In response to the drought, in the affected districts, WHO supported the district-based surveillance officers in Galmudug state to conduct water quality surveillance. The surveillance officers conducted a mapping of all community water sources. Additionally, water samples were collected from eight water sources, of which 2 (25%) were found contaminated with coliform bacteria. The surveillance officers have teamed up with water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) cluster partners to treat the contaminated water sources and inform communities on how to protect water sources from contamination using household water treatment for safe drinking water and sanitation.

Supportive supervision of drought response activities

- The WHO state data manager in Puntland conducted supportive supervision in the laboratory in Garowe to conduct data quality assessment for COVID-19. The data manager identified the following major gaps: data discrepancies and incomplete recording of COVID-19 cases. Action points included: (i) conducting continuous data quality audits (ii) conducting on-the-job training of the data manager in the laboratory; and (iii) establishing online laboratory health information system
- WHO supported the state MOH's rapid response team in Puntland to conduct supportive supervision in six of the nine districts conducting community-based surveillance. The districts supported included Galkayo, Garowe, Eyl, Dangorayo, Gardo and Waciye. The purpose of the supervision was to monitor the performance of community-based surveillance and verify alerts by district-based rapid response teams, based on standard indicators. The team also conducted supervision visits to the Galkayo General Hospital, Dangorayo and Gardo health facilities. The major gaps included: (i) health workers not trained on reporting of disease alerts using the early warning alert and response network (EWARN); (ii) lack of standard case definition forms in the health facilities; and (iii) poor medical waste management. WHO will support refresher trainings of health workers on reporting using the EWARN mobile application, provide standard case definition charts to health facilities and link up community health workers and RRTs to health facility.

Measles outbreak investigation in Puntland state

WHO supported the district rapid response teams (RRTs) in Garowe to conduct a field investigation for a suspected measles outbreak in the internally displaced people (IDP) camps in Garowe, Puntland. The district-based RRT listed 229 suspected cases in the standard line list; 8 blood samples were collected from 229 suspected cases, of which 4 (1.74%) were tested positive for measles specific Immunoglobulin M (IgM) in the WHO-supported laboratory in Garowe.

Capacity building for laboratory technicians

- WHO supported the FMOH and the Ministries of Health of all Federal Member States to procure and install Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) machines using Nanopore sequencing technology in the public health laboratories of Mogadishu, Garowe and Hargeisa. A total of 17 laboratory technicians (11 male and 6 female) were trained to perform SARS-CoV-2 genomic sequencing in these three level-2 biosafety laboratories. WHO conducted a capacity building session for 12 laboratory technicians (9 male and 3 female) from Jubaland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle and the Southwest State on the use of real-time Polymerase Chain Reaction (rt-PCR) machines to confirm COVID-19 and other disease-causing pathogens.

Nutrition update

- WHO supported the FMOH in the management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) cases with medical complications in the districts affected by drought and long-term impact of floods and conflict. This support was in the form of technical expertise, capacity development, and the provision of supplies to Banadir, Hirshabelle and Jubaland states.
- In February 2022, 33 of 42 (79%) stabilization facilities from all states submitted monthly reports. A total of 1 617 new SAM cases with medical complications were admitted to 33 stabilization centres in Banadir region (2), Puntland (8), Jubaland (9), Galmudug (6), Hirshabelle (2), South West state (6).
- Overall, there were 1321 (82%) recoveries, 17 (1%) defaulters, 44 (2.7%) medical referrals, and 17 (1%) deaths were reported.

Trauma case monitoring and critical care

- As the country is experiencing different types of emergencies, including conflict, WHO is closely monitoring the number of people affected by these events in the country and responding accordingly. In February 2022, 4876 trauma-related injuries were reported from the health facilities in all states through the District Health Information System (DHIS-2). Of these, the majority (69%) were non-weapon related injuries, which included burns and road accidents. These injuries represent a 12% decrease (589) compared to 4287 injuries reported during the same period in February 2021. The reported cases of injuries were managed in different hospitals in all states. The most affected districts are Afgoye (195 cases), Balcad (207 cases) and Daynile (201 cases).



WHO regularly visits the IDP camps to understand the situation and health needs of drought-affected people in Baidoa © WHO

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