

Current major event

Cholera outbreak in Somalia

The Ministry of Health of Somalia reported a total of 5,257 cumulative cases of suspected cholera including 84 deaths (CFR 1.6%) from January to December 2015 to WHO. The outbreak is still continuing in several districts in the Southern and Central Regions.

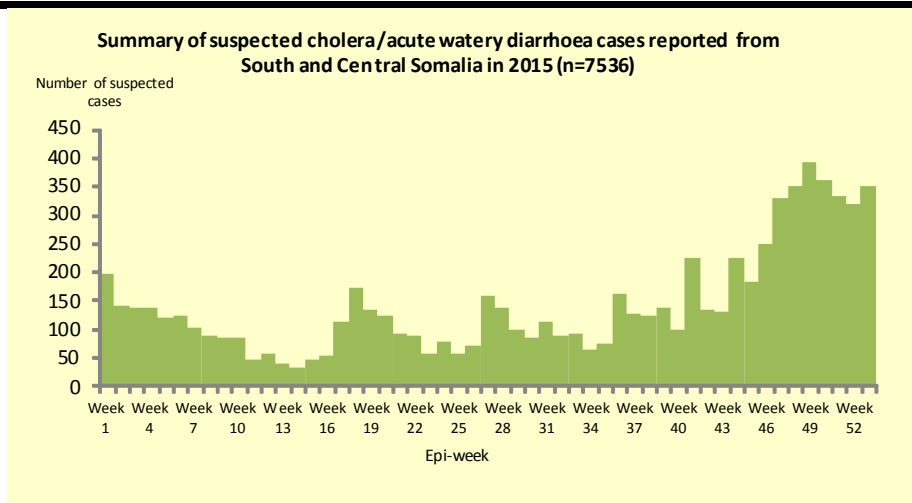
Editorial note

Somalia continues to experience seasonal cholera outbreaks in recent years (see the summarized chart below). The worst cholera epidemic was recorded in 2011 and 2012 with over 100,000 suspected cases including over thousand deaths were reported from the country. In 2015, cholera outbreaks were confirmed in Somalia from various zones such as in Baidoa, Banadir, Doble, Jowhar, Kismayo, Merka and others locations, with a total of 5,257 cases including 84 deaths (CFR 1.6%) reported from these areas between January to December 2015. A total of 118 stool specimens were analyzed for cholera in 2015 at the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) laboratory in Kenya and 31% of specimens were tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae* serotypes of "Inaba" and "Ogawa".

A recent assessment of the current situation has revealed that most of the cholera-affected communities in Somalia are those living in large camps of internally displaced populations (IDPs) and dense settlements with limited access to health care, clean water, sanitation and hygiene.

The overall trend of cholera (Please see the epicurve above), has significantly increased in the last two months of 2015 with the majority of new cases being reported from Baidoa and Kismayo Region of Southern Somalia. This surge in suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhea cases in Somalia might have been linked to the climatic phenomenon triggered by El Niño among other factors.

Similarly, major cholera outbreaks are still ongoing in several East African countries including Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia. One primary concern for Somalia is the on-going cholera



Cholera outbreak reported from Iraq in the recent past

Year	Cases	Death
2011	77636	1130
2012	26124	200
2013	8513	140
2014	7577	?
2015	7536	68

outbreak in north-eastern Kenya especially in Dadaab camp which is hosting a large number of Somali refugees. This situation has a potential risk of further spread of cholera inside Somalia with the returnee Somali refugees from this camp to Kismayo, Mogadishu and other major urban centers of Somalia.

Although, the impact of the ongoing El Niño climatic phenomenon in aggravating the risk of cholera and other waterborne diseases in Somalia is not well known, there are predictions that cholera situation will worsen in 2016. The severe drought situation, currently affecting northern regions, with thousands of people having lost their livelihoods and requiring emergency food assistance and water trucking may further aggravate the risk. The situation will undoubtedly worsen the already deteriorating humanitarian situation in Somalia.

Given this heightened risk, it would be important for all health partners working in Somalia to come out with a strategy to contain the current surge as well as control the continued transmission of cholera infections specially amongst the vulnerable populations.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

MERS-CoV in Saudi Arabia;

Current public health events of international concern [cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Avian Influenza : 2006-2016

Egypt (A/H5N1)	[346 (117), 33.8%]
Egypt (A/H9N2)	[3 (0)]

MERS-CoV: 2012-2016

Saudi Arabia	[1277 (549), 42.9%]
Jordan	[39 (12), 31%]
Oman	[7 (3), 42.8%]
UAE	[78 (11), 14.1%]
Kuwait	[3 (1), 33.3%]
Republic of Korea	[186 (36), 19.3%]
Qatar	[14 (5), 35%]
Iran	[6 (2), 33.3%]

Ebola Virus Disease: 2014-2016

Guinea	[3804 (2536), 66.6%]
Liberia	[10675 (4809), 45%]
Sierra Leone	[14124 (3956), 28%]

Viral Haemorrhagic Fever (of unknown aetiology)

Sudan	[561 (101), 26.3%]
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Wild poliovirus: 2014-2016

Pakistan	[360 (0)]
Afghanistan	[47(0)]