

Current major event

Cholera in Somalia: situation update

Early this year, Somalia was affected by flash floods that led to the contamination of water sources and an upsurge in cholera cases. This coincided with the increased risk of COVID-19 to different regions of the country that resulted in the overstretching of the health system's capacity to respond to multiple outbreaks.

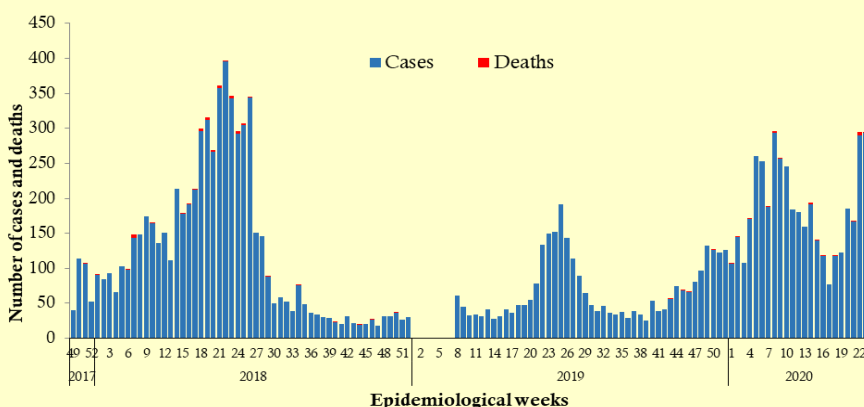
Editorial note

The current cholera outbreak in Somalia has been ongoing since it started in December 2017 after heavy floods hit many areas near Juba and Shabelle river (*see graph*). An upsurge in cholera cases has been documented in recent years following rainy seasons and subsequent floods. Limited access to safe water, proper sanitation and population displacement add additional risk for cholera transmission among vulnerable populations. From December 2017 till 7 June 2020, 14 112 cumulative cases including 73 deaths were reported (CFR 0.5%). A total of 29 districts in seven regions have reported cases since 2017.

The current upsurge of cholera cases has been seen after the Gu' rain (April-June) hit many parts of the country this year, and the subsequent floods that affected almost a half million people living along the two rivers. Some of the areas that recorded heavy rains this year include Banadir, Hiraan and some parts of Bay region, who are hosting camps for internally displaced persons, with limited living conditions, sanitation and access to clean water. The contamination of water sources following the floods has led to an increase in the number of cholera cases in Banadir, while new cases were reported from Hiraan, Lower Shabelle, Bay and Middle Shabelle. Since the beginning of this year, a total of 4251 cases including 23 deaths (CFR 0.5%) have been reported from 23 flood-affected districts in the basins of rivers Juba and Shabelle. Many of these new cases were reported among children aged two years or less (1956, or 46% of the cases) with 14 deaths (60.1%). No new cholera case was reported from Middle Shabelle region since week 17, but other affected regions were reporting cases until this week.

In 2020, 462 stool samples were collected from 5 regions, and 162 (35.1%) samples tested positive for *V. Cholerae*. The predominate *V. Cholerae* serotype is *Ogawa*, however, serotype *Inaba* was isolated from stool samples collected from Baidoa. This

Suspected cholera cases and deaths reported in Somalia, Week 49-2017 to week 23-2020



Cholera cases and CFR by state from W 1-24 2020 in Somalia

Region	Cases	Deaths	CFR%
Banadir	2575	2	0.5
Bay	196	3	1.5
Hiraan	879	6	0.7
Lowe Shabelle	41	0	0.0
Middle Shabelle	560	2	0.4
Total	4251	23	0.5

strain is sensitive to Tetracycline, Chloramphenicol and Ciprofloxacin.

The Federal MoH and the Federal member states have quickly responded to the upsurge of cholera cases, with the support of the WHO and other health partners, by using district-based rapid response teams (RRTs) to investigate and respond to the situation. The RRTs are continuously monitoring the Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) which is operational in the affected regions. Moreover, hygienic kits were distributed among displaced populations in Banadir, Baidoa and Marka regions, while the chlorination of water sources and periodic water quality assessment were conducted in Baidoa. Intensive community awareness campaigns are ongoing in all affected areas through local radio channels.

Although several rounds of oral cholera vaccine campaigns were conducted in Somalia, most of the newly reported cases are un-vaccinated. WHO will continue to support affected regions to improve hygiene and sanitation, expand cholera vaccination campaigns, and strengthen surveillance and the early warning system. WHO also prepositioned adequate cholera kits and other essential medical supplies.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

COVID-19 in 22 EMR countries

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

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019-2020

Afghanistan	[18 969 (309), 1.6%]
Bahrain	[13 733 (22), 0.2%]
Djibouti	[4123 (26), 0.6%]
Egypt	[29 767 (1126), 3.8%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[167 156 (8134), 4.9%]
Iraq	[9846 (285), 2.9%]
Jordan	[784 (9), 1.1%]
Kuwait	[30 644 (244), 0.8%]
Lebanon	[1312 (28), 2.1%]
Libya	[209 (5), 2.4%]
Morocco	[8030 (208), 2.6%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[643 (5), 0.8%]
Oman	[15 086 (72), 0.5%]
Pakistan	[89 249 (1838), 2.1%]
Qatar	[65 495 (49), 0.1%]
Saudi Arabia	[95 748 (642), 0.7%]
Somalia	[2204 (79), 3.6%]
Sudan	[5714 (333), 5.8%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[124 (6), 4.8%]
Tunisia	[1087 (49), 4.5%]
United Arab Emirates	[37 018 (273), 0.7%]
Yemen	[457 (104), 22.8%]