

Current major event

An overview of cholera in Somalia 2020

In 2020, the Federal Ministry of Health of Somalia reported cumulatively a total of 6589 cases and 33 deaths (CFR 0.5%). Two peaks were observed at weeks 5 and 23, before cases then gradually decreased over time. The ministry, with the support of health and WASH clusters, implemented control measures to decrease the caseload and prevent further spread.

Editorial note

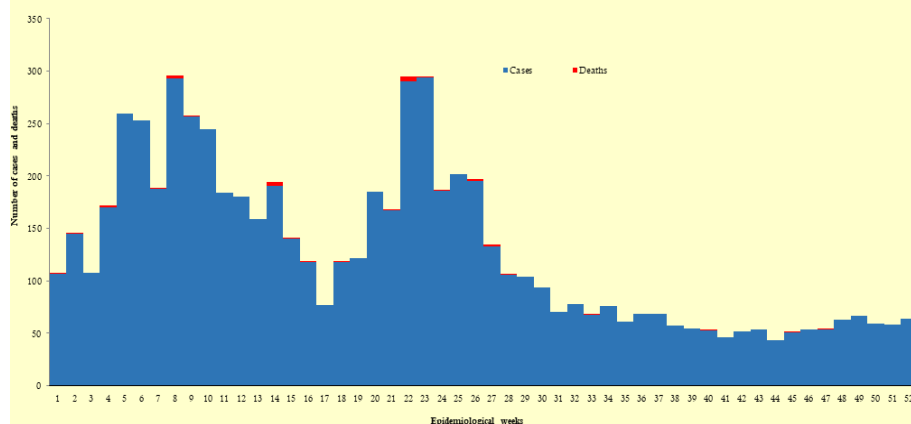
Cholera is endemic to Somalia with a frequent resurgence of outbreaks. The current cholera outbreak is a continuation of the previous outbreak that started in Banadir in 2017. The condition was exacerbated by the flash floods caused by heavy Gu rains in April 2020 that displaced over 400 000 people in 23 districts. Moreover, in June, the areas and towns located along river Shabelle suffered from Hagaa rains that led to the contamination of drinking sources and increased the cases of suspected cholera.

In 2020, a total of 6589 cases including 33 deaths (CFR 0.5%) were reported from 29 flood-affected districts. Slightly less than half of the reported cases (46%) were aged 2 years or below. Since the start of the current outbreak, most cases were from Banadir (4037 cases), Hiran (948 cases), Middle Shabelle (560 cases), Bay (935 cases) and Lower Shabelle (109). Of the 33 deaths reported, 22 (67%) were in Banadir region. Three districts recorded CFR of more than 1%, namely Wartanabada (1.8%), Baidoa (1%) and Beletweyne (1%) which is above the WHO threshold levels for emergency settings.

A total of 587 stool samples were collected from the affected 5 regions, and 175 (29.8%) were positive for *V. Cholerae* (see table). Serotype *V. Cholerae* Ogawa is predominantly detected in the country and *V. Cholerae* Inaba was also isolated from stool samples collected from Baidoa. These strains are sensitive to Tetracycline, Chloramphenicol and Ciprofloxacin.

Effective cholera prevention and control interventions rely on a multisectoral approach supported by effective coordination mechanism. The ministry, with support from water, sanitation and

Suspected cholera cases and deaths, Somalia, 2020



Number of stool samples analyzed for *V. Cholerae*, Somalia, 2020

Region	Sample tested	Sample culture positive	Positivity rate(%)
Banadir	471	134	28.5
Bay	30	11	36.7
Hiran	38	13	34.2
Middle Shabelle	20	11	55.0
Lower Shabelle	28	6	21.4
Total	587	175	29.8

hygiene (WASH) and health clusters enhanced its Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) and its laboratory capacity to ensure real-time surveillance that allows early detection and rapid response to any cholera alert or outbreak. EWARN played a crucial role in monitoring the trend of the disease and assess the effectiveness of prevention and control measures. District-based rapid response teams were deployed and became instrumental in the verification and investigation of the cholera alerts, which led to early and appropriate response generation in some regions. Under the leadership of this ministry and other relevant ministries, partners also contributed to enhancing capacities in risk communication and community engagement, case management and efficient evaluation and implementation of WASH activities.

This long cholera outbreak in Somalia serves as a forewarning to the need of implementing appropriate measures such as durable water and sanitation infrastructure and the promotion of adequate hygiene practices. Proper case management, the timely introduction of vaccines and the initiation of community awareness activities are essential factors in reducing morbidity and mortality during such outbreaks.

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): 2019-2021

Afghanistan	[54 672 (2385), 4.4%]
Bahrain	[99 456 (367), 0.4%]
Djibouti	[5918 (61), 1%]
Egypt	[161 143 (8902), 5.5%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[1 367 032 (57 294), 4.2%]
Iraq	[612 870 (12 988), 2.1%]
Jordan	[319 519 (4217), 1.3%]
Kuwait	[160 901 (952), 0.6%]
Lebanon	[276 587 (2570), 0.9%]
Libya	[113 688 (1763), 1.6%]
Morocco	[465 769 (8128), 1.7%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[174 413 (1951), 1.1%]
Oman	[132 486 (1517), 1.1%]
Pakistan	[532 412 (11 295), 2.1%]
Qatar	[148 772 (248), 0.2%]
Saudi Arabia	[366 185 (6350), 1.7%]
Somalia	[4754 (130), 2.7%]
Sudan	[28 870 (17 388), 6%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[13 557 (879), 6.5%]
Tunisia	[197 373 (6234), 3.2%]
United Arab Emirates	[274 376 (783), 0.3%]
Yemen	[2122 (618), 29%]