

## Current major event

### Measles outbreak in Somalia, 2022

The Federal Ministry of Health in Somalia reported an upsurge in measles cases in multiple regions across the country. WHO and partners have extended technical and financial support to the Ministry in responding to the outbreak among vulnerable communities in drought affected regions.

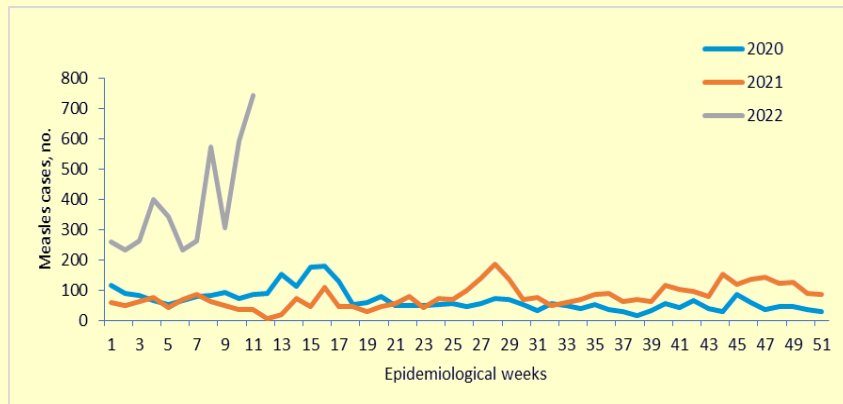
#### Editorial note

Measles is endemic to Somalia with cases being reported every year. The largest recent measles outbreak was recorded in 2017 when 23 039 suspected cases were reported in 118 districts across all six federal states and the Banaadir Regional Administration of Somalia. In 2020, a total of 2596 suspected measles cases were reported to WHO from drought affected districts, while a total of 7494 suspected measles cases were reported in 2021. As cases continue to rise in 2022, and given the low levels of vaccination coverage and high prevalence of both malnutrition and vitamin A deficiency among children aged under 5 years, the overall risk for measles at the national level is assessed as very high. This risk is further aggravated by a complex humanitarian crisis caused by conflict and droughts, as well as the related displacements.

According to the WHO-UNICEF national immunization estimates, coverage with the first dose of the measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) is suboptimal in Somalia, estimated at around 46% for the last 10 years. A second dose of the measles-containing vaccine (MCV2) was introduced to the routine immunization programme in November 2021, but it is not yet used in Somaliland.

The number of measles cases has been increasing as drought conditions intensified and the population susceptible to measles also increases. Between 2 January and 5 March 2022, a total of 3509 suspected measles cases were reported from 18 regions in the country, largely from drought-affected districts. Of these 18 regions, six regions including Bay, Mudug, Banaadir, Bari, Lower Shabelle and Gedo reported the highest number of cases. A total of 249 samples were collected and tested at four laboratories in the country (in Garowe, Hargeisa, Kismayo and Mogadishu). Of these samples, 57% (142 samples) tested positive for measles

## Trend of reported measles cases in Somalia, 2020–2022



Reported measles cases by most affected districts, Somalia, 2022

District	Cases
Bay	1194
Mudug	769
Banaadir	559
Bari	277
Lower Shabelle	121
Gedo	141

Immunoglobulin M (IgM). 81% of the positive cases were less than five years of age.

To control the outbreak and reduce the risk and mortalities, WHO and partners are supporting the Ministry to enhance routine measles vaccination for children; conduct an outbreak response immunization campaign; strengthen the systems to ensure rapid detection, confirmation and response capacities; improve case management and infection prevention and control measures to reduce mortality; and implement appropriate public health measures to prevent the spread of the outbreak. Vitamin A supplementation was administered to all children above six months of age diagnosed with measles to reduce complications and mortality (two doses of 50 000 IU for children less than 6 months of age, 100 000 IU for children 6–12 months of age, or 200 000 IU for children 12–59 months of age, immediately upon diagnosis and on the following day).

The Federal Ministry of Health and partners are committed to minimize the risk of measles spreading to vulnerable population across the country. They will immunize those most at risk of measles to meet the target of 95% and ensure that populations are protected.

## Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

### COVID-19 in 22 EMR countries

### Current public health events of concern

#### Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019-2022

Country	Cases	Deaths	CFR
Afghanistan	177 974	7671	4.31%
Bahrain	558 609	1472	0.26%
Djibouti	15 593	189	1.21%
Egypt	509 177	24 473	4.81%
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	7 183 808	140 492	1.96%
Iraq	2 321 369	25 181	1.08%
Jordan	1 694 216	14 048	0.83%
Kuwait	629 525	2554	0.41%
Lebanon	1 094 096	10 330	0.94%
Libya	501 738	6419	1.28%
Morocco	1 163 806	16 061	1.38%
occupied Palestinian territory	656 287	5655	0.86%
Oman	388 603	4253	1.09%
Pakistan	1 526 093	30 361	1.99%
Qatar	362 404	677	0.19%
Saudi Arabia	751 518	9054	1.20%
Somalia	26 471	1361	5.14%
Sudan	62 032	4923	7.94%
Syrian Arab Republic	55 731	3146	5.64%
Tunisia	1 037 358	28 425	2.74%
United Arab Emirates	893 072	2302	0.26%
Yemen	11 812	2145	18.16%