

24 February 2020 – The Ministry of Health of Somalia has announced 253 new suspected cases of cholera, with no deaths reported, for epidemiological week 6 (3 February to 9 February 2020). The cumulative total number of suspected cholera cases since the beginning of this outbreak is 10 904, including 55 associated deaths. So far in 2020, active transmission has been reported from the regions of Banadir, Hiran and Lower Shebelle. Of the 253 cases reported during this week, 74.7% of the cases (189) are children under 5 years of age.

The current cholera outbreak started in December 2017 following floods that affected districts in the basins of Jubba and Shebelle rivers. It was contained in five of the six region. Active transmission is still reported in Banadir where the most affected districts are Darkenley, Deynile, Hodan and Madina. Over the past two weeks there has been an increase in the number of cholera cases reported in Banadir region and Hiran. The overall reduction in the number of new cholera cases as compared to the numbers at the beginning of the outbreak is attributed to improved implementation of preventive interventions including oral cholera vaccination (OCV) campaigns and the strengthening water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) activities in hot spots.

Of the 1212 stool samples tested since December 2017, a total of 294 samples came out positive for *Vibrio cholerae*. In week 6, 19 stool samples tested positive by RDT in Banadir CTC.

In June 2019, WHO and the Ministry of Health implemented an OCV campaign in six districts that are at high risk of cholera, namely Hamajajab, Heliwa and Kahda districts in Banadir region; Afgoye district in Lower Shabelle region; Balad district in Middle Shabelle region; and Kismayo in Lower Jubba region. A total of 621 875 individuals aged one year and older received the first dose of the cholera vaccine (96.7% of the targeted population).

WHO continues to provide leadership and support to health authorities and partners in implementing activities that can mitigate the outbreak. Disease surveillance is being managed with the support of WHO through an electronic system known as the Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) and is currently being expanded to all health facilities across the country. WHO and the Ministry of Health continue to monitor outbreak trends through EWARN and promptly investigate and respond to all alerts.

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