

8 January 2020 – The Ministry of Health of Somalia has announced 126 new suspected cases of cholera, with no deaths reported for epidemiological week 52 (23–29 December 2019). No suspected cholera cases were reported between epidemiological weeks 1 and 7 due to the closure of the main cholera treatment centre from which the data were collected. The cumulative total number of suspected cholera cases since the beginning of the outbreak in December 2017 is 9861, including 50 associated deaths. During this period, all of the cases were reported from a total of 27 districts in Banadir and lower Jubba regions. Of the 126 cases reported during week 52, 67% of the cases (84) were children under 5 years of age.

The cholera outbreak has been contained in the districts of Hirshabelle, Jubaland, and South West states following the implementation of oral cholera vaccination (OCV) campaigns and other health interventions. Active transmission is still reported in Banadir where the most affected districts are Darkenley, Deynile, Hodan and Madina Hamer Jabjab. These areas have experienced heavy rains in the recent past that may have contributed to the contamination of water sources leading to repeated cholera outbreaks. Over the past two weeks there has been an increase in the number of cholera cases reported.

The overall reduction in the number of new cholera cases compared to the numbers at the beginning of the outbreak is attributed to improved implementation of preventive interventions, including OCV and the strengthening of water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) activities in key areas.

Of the 983 stool samples tested since December 2017, a total of 222 samples were positive for *Vibrio cholerae*. In week 52, no stool samples tested positive by rapid diagnostic test.

In June 2019, WHO and the Ministry of Health implemented an OCV campaign in the six districts of Afgoi, Balad, Hamajajab, Kismayo and Heliwa and Kahda in Banadir at high risk for cholera. A total of 621 875 (96.7%) individuals aged one year and older received the first dose of the cholera vaccine.

WHO continues to provide leadership and support health authorities and partners in implementing activities to 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), which is 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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