

22 October 2019 – The Ministry of Health (MoH) of Somalia has announced 54 new suspected cases of cholera, with no deaths, for epidemiological week 40 (30 September – 6 October) in 2019. No suspected cholera cases were reported between epidemiological weeks 1 and 7 due to the closure of the main cholera treatment center from which the data was collected. The cumulative total number of suspected cholera cases since the beginning of this outbreak in December 2017 is 8832, including 46 associated deaths. During this reporting period, all of the cases were reported from a total of 27 districts in Banadir and Lower Jubba regions. Of the 54 cases reported during week 40, 69% of the cases (37) are children below 5 years of age.

The cholera outbreak has been contained in the districts of Jubaland, Hirshabelle and South West States following the implementation of oral cholera vaccination (OCV) campaigns and other health interventions in these areas. Active transmission is still reported in Banadir region and cases are now also being reported among displaced populations in Badhadhe region of Lower Jubba. The displaced communities have limited access to safe water due to the contamination of water sources resulting from periodic rains that have been received in the region.

The overall reduction in the number of new cholera cases is attributed to improved implementation of preventive interventions including OCV and the strengthening of water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) activities in hot spots.

Of the 820 stool samples tested since December 2017, a total of 162 samples tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae*.

During weeks 24 and 26 WHO and MoH implemented OCV campaign in 6 cholera high risk districts of Kahda, Hamajajab and Heliwa in Banadir region as well as Kismayo, Balad and Afgoi. A total of 621 875 (96.7%) of people aged 1 year and above received the first dose of cholera vaccine.

WHO continues to provide leadership and supports the health authorities and partners in activities to mitigate the outbreak. Disease surveillance is being managed through the Electronic Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) system with the support of WHO and is currently being expanded to all health facilities across the country. WHO and the MoH continue to monitor outbreak trends through the EWARN system and promptly investigate and respond to all alerts.

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