

19 December 2017 - The Ministry of Health of Somalia has reported an additional 435 suspected cases of cholera and 0 deaths for week 48 (ending 3 December). Since the beginning of the year, a cumulative total of 78 784 suspected cases have been recorded across the country, including 1159 associated deaths.

Although the overall case-fatality rate for the outbreak is 1.47%, cholera response and prevention efforts by the Ministry, WHO and health partners have significantly reduced the number of new cases reported.

Surveillance activities have been enhanced and 265 health facilities were added in the Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARNs), with a plan to expand reporting sites to all districts. A training-of-trainers workshop was held for community health workers from various regions. In addition laboratory staff were trained to collect and analyse samples to test for cholera, and community health workers were trained on initial case management and referral to the nearest hospitals.

The Ministry of Health in coordination with WHO and partners continue to manage a united response to the outbreak. Community health workers held a social mobilization campaign in high-risk areas focusing on hand washing, use of latrines, safe water, and immediate reporting of any symptomatic cases and the benefits of oral cholera vaccines as a preventative measure. During these activities hygiene kits were distributed among the IDP communities of Lower and Middle Jubba, Banadir region and Baidoa. These activities were also carried out in hard-to-reach areas in coordination with other organizations working in the area.

The drought in Somalia has brought on lack of clean water, destroying livestock and crops, and causing displacement of hundreds of thousands of Somalis. Around 6.7 out of 12.3 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. Nearly 5.5 million people are at risk of contracting water-borne diseases like cholera.

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