

19 December 2019 – The Ministry of Health of Somalia has announced 132 new suspected cases of cholera, with no death, for epidemiological week 49 (2–8 December) in 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 was collected. The cumulative total number of suspected cholera cases since the beginning of this outbreak in December 2017 is 9487, including 48 associated death cases. During this period, all of the cases were reported from a total of 27 districts in Banadir and lower Jubba regions. Of the 97 cases reported during this week, 57% of the cases (75) are children below 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, Madina and Hodan. 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 as compared to the numbers at the beginning of the outbreak is attributed to improved implementation of preventive interventions including OCV and the strengthening water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) activities in hot spots.

Of the 895 stool samples tested since December 2017, a total of 197 samples came out positive for *Vibrio cholerae*.

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

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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