World Health Organization
Somalia

EPI watch

Epidemiological Bulletin

Epidemiological Bulletin For epidemic-prone diseases in Somalia for epidemiological Week 42-43 of 2023 (16-29 October 2023)

Current situation

Somalia is emerging from a risk of famine which was projected in 2022, following the five consecutive failed rainy seasons - a climatic event not seen in four decades. The famine has been averted through the collaborative efforts of national authorities, communities, humanitarian partners, and with better-than-expected Gu rainfall performance. Despite the scaled-up implementation of response activities, the situation remains critical. As of September 2023, nearly 3.7 million people – 22 per cent of the population - are acutely food insecure, a reduction from 6.6 million in April 2023. The number of people experiencing emergency food insecurity has reduced by 34% from 4.3 million March 2023 to 2.8 million as of September 2023. An estimated 1.5 million children under 5 face acute malnutrition, including 331 000 who are severely malnourished. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in Somalia, the dyer rains have intensified with heavy rains reported across Somalia affecting 1.17 million people, displacing 335000, people and led to deaths of 28 people in 21 districts in addition to destruction of destruction of property and food crops in field particularly in in Puntland, Galmudug, South West, Hirshabelle and Jubaland states. Humanitarian partners are working closely with the Government, through the Somalia Disaster Management Agency at the federal level and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management at the state level to scale up implementation of humanitarian response activities.

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED DISTRICTS

An estimated **8.3 million** people in the country in need of water, humanitarian assistance, and protection[1].

Nearly **3.7 million** people - **22 per cent** of the population - are experiencing acute food insecurity including **2.8 million** in emergency (IPC 3) and **919000** in catastrophe (IPC 4). **1.5 million** children under 5 are facing acute malnutrition[2].

The El Nino that started October have so far affected **1.17 million** people, displaced **335 000**, 28 people died in 21 districts in addition to destruction of destruction of property and food crops in field particularly in in Puntland, Galmudug, South West, Hirshabelle and Jubaland states[3].

Epidemiological weeks 42-43, 16-29 Oct 2023

435
suspected cholera cases

1533
acute diarrhoeal disease cases

478
suspected measles cases

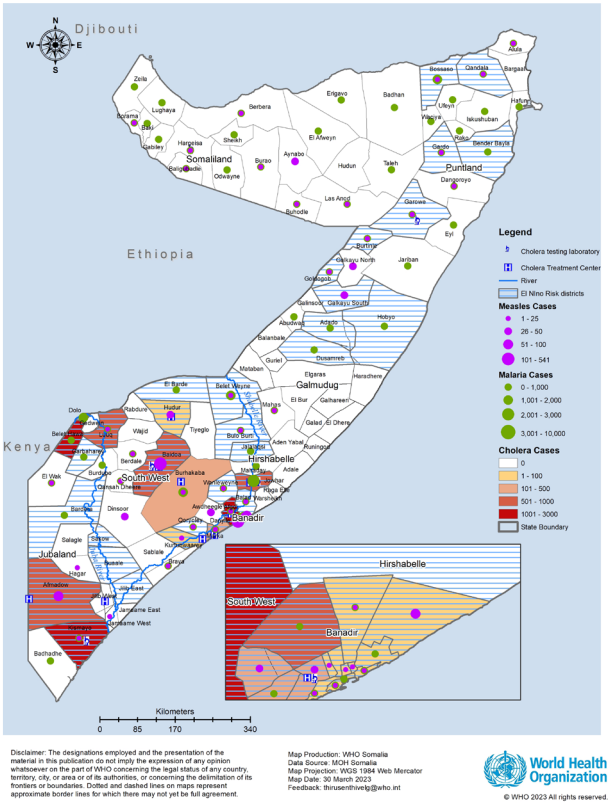
3930
SARI cases

695
confirmed cases of malaria in September 2023

260
health facilities reporting in DHIS2[5]

185
community health workers deployed in high risk areas including in drought affected districts

Reported cases of acute diarrhoeal disease, suspected measles, SARI and clinically diagnosed malaria cases in drought-affected region of Somalia, (epidemiological weeks 1 -Week 43 2023, 02 January to 29 October 2023)



The Federal Ministry of Health and WHO monitor the trends of epidemic-prone diseases in flood and drought affected districts using an Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response Network (IDSR). With support from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and in collaboration with state ministries of health, WHO is implementing activities aimed at preventing disease outbreaks, including the timely detection and response to alerts of epidemic-prone diseases reported among vulnerable communities in drought affected districts.

1 Somalia: Drought response & famine prevention (15 February - 15 March 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb
2 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Report -September 18, 2023
3 Somalia: Flood situation snapshot (As of 9 November 2023) - Somalia | ReliefWeb

CHOLERA IN DROUGHT-AFFECTED DISTRICTS

Recurrent cholera outbreaks have been reported in the drought-affected districts of Somalia since 2022, with no interruption in transmission in Banadir region since 2017. The number of cholera cases reported in drought and flood affected districts have increased significantly in 2023 compared to the same time over the past two years (Figure 1). This increase is attributed to a higher proportion of people with limited access to safe water and uncontrolled cross border movement in Somalia and neighboring countries triggered by drought. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, a total of 14 626 cases of suspected cholera and 39 deaths (Case Fatality Rate 0.3%) were reported from 29 drought and flood-affected districts of which 7883 (53.7%) cases were children under 5, 7591 (51.8%) were women and 6888(47.1%) were severe cases. In 2023, The regions reporting most of the cases are Gedo (4318), Banadir (2851), and Lower Juba (2758), (see Table 1). A total of 2129 stool samples were collected and tested in WHO supported laboratories of which 224 (10.5%) samples tested positive. Out of the 224 samples tested positive, 223(99%) stool samples were tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae* 01 serotype Ogawa. In addition, 2372 samples were tested by Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) of which 658 (27.7%) stool samples were tested positive. Culture and sensitivity studies conducted showed that the *Vibrio cholera* serotypes Ogawa isolates are sensitive to chloramphenicol and tetracycline but resistant to ampicillin and nalidixic acid.

ACUTE DIARRHOEAL DISEASES[4]

The number of new acute diarrhoeal disease cases reported through the District Health Information System (DHIS-2) decreased by two-fold compared to the same period last year. The reduction in cases is attributed to scaling up the implementation of intervention for water, sanitation and hygiene by the WASH cluster partners. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 43 482 cases of acute diarrhoeal disease were reported. The regions reporting most of the cases are Gedo (11 125), Lower Juba (7329) and Mudug (5712), (Table 1). Despite the reported reduction in the number of new cases, the flash floods that are expected from the anticipated El Nino especially in the riverine districts of Somalia is expected to contribute to increased acute diarrhoeal diseases cases.

WHO is supporting the Ministry of Health to conduct sentinel-based surveillance for Rota virus in Banadir region. Since epidemiologic week 1 of 2023, of the 803 cases of acute watery diarrhoea, collected from cases admitted in Banadir hospital, 217 (27.0%) have tested positive for Rota Virus.

INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE[5]

The number of severe acute respiratory illnesses (SARI) reported through the DHIS-2 system increased by four-fold in 2023 compared to the same time in 2022. This increase may be attributed to increased displaced people who have poor access to standard shelter which resulted in people living in overcrowded conditions in camps (Figure 3). Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 106 784 cases of SARI were reported from the drought affected districts. The regions reporting most of the cases are Galgadud (36 369), Gedo (13871), and Banadir (10 739), (Table 1).

4 source of data is DHIS-2.
5 Data source is DHIS-2

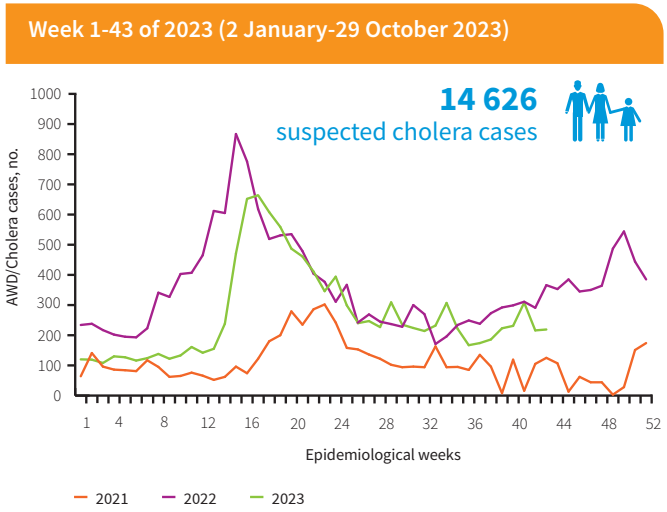


Figure 1. Trends of suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhoea cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

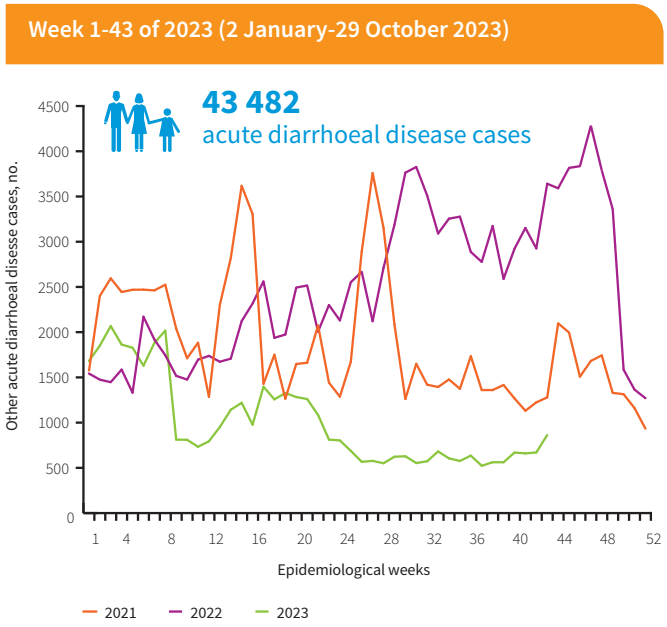


Figure 2. Trends of acute diarrhoeal disease cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

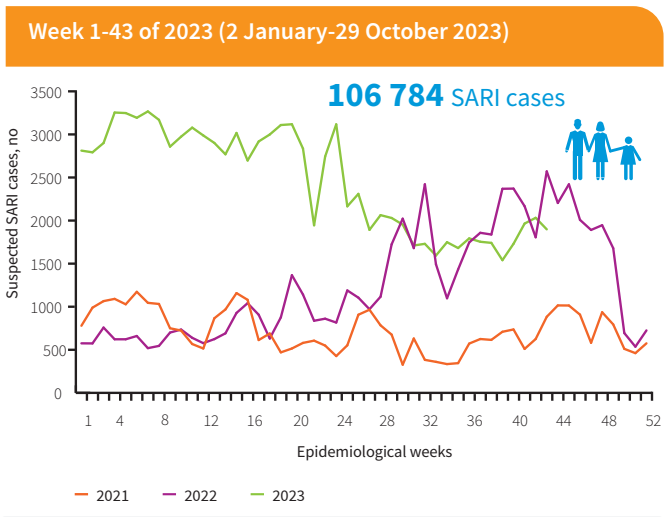


Figure 3. Trends of severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) reported from drought affected

MEASLES UPDATES

The number of suspected cases of measles reported through the AFP/Polio surveillance system and DHIS2 in 2023 decreased by two-fold compared to the same period in 2022. This reduction in cases is linked to an increase in the number of children vaccinated mainly in IDP camps by WHO supported outreach teams that have scaled up the provision of integrated primary health care services including vaccination services to these camps. (Figure 4). A total of 11 198 cases of measles were reported from week 1 to week 43 of 2023. The regions reporting most cases are Banadir (3177), Bay (2021), and Lower Juba (1560). Of the 2323 blood samples collected from cases of fever and rash, 1379 (59.4%) were tested positive for measles specific Immunoglobulin M(IgM).

MEASLES VACCINE UPDATES

A total of 43 654(77%) out of the targeted 56,482 children under one year received the first dose of measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) in drought-affected districts in July 2023 according to data from district health Information software 2 (DHIS2) (Figure 5). From 2019 to 2023, the measles vaccination coverage ranged between 84% and 77% per month compared to the national target of 95%.

MALARIA UPDATES

The number of laboratory-confirmed cases of malaria reported through DHIS2 has gradually decreased in 2023 compared to the same period in 2022. The observed reduction is linked to scaling up of implementation of additional malaria control interventions in drought affected districts. (Fig 6). As of September 2023, a total of 246 361 cases of suspected malaria have been reported of which 10 173 (4.1%) have been confirmed positive by Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) and blood smear. However, the number of confirmed cases of Malaria decreased from 909 cases in January to 695 cases in September. Of the 10 173 confirmed cases, 2403 (23.6%) are children under 5. Regions reporting most of the suspected malaria cases in 2023 are Gedo (29 614), Bay (25 999) and Banadir (24 319) (Table 1).

POLIO UPDATE

- A total of 347 cases of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) were reported in 2023, of whom 153(43.5%) cases were female and 194(56.5%) cases were male. Of the 347 AFP cases reported,324 (93%) cases had stool samples collected and analyzed in the laboratory while 23 (7%) cases are pending laboratory diagnosis.
- In 2023, five circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) were isolated from AFP cases, compared to five cases isolated in 2022.
- 188 environmental surveillance (ES) samples have been collected as of week 41 of 2023. Of these, 171 (93%) samples have lab results, while 17 (9%) are still awaiting processing.
- Out of the 171 ES samples with Lab results in 2023, 6(4%) cVDPV2, 1(1%) PV2-nOPV2-negative, 59(34%) of the samples isolated NPEV, 4(2%) Sabin, like virus and the remaining 101(59%) samples tested negative.

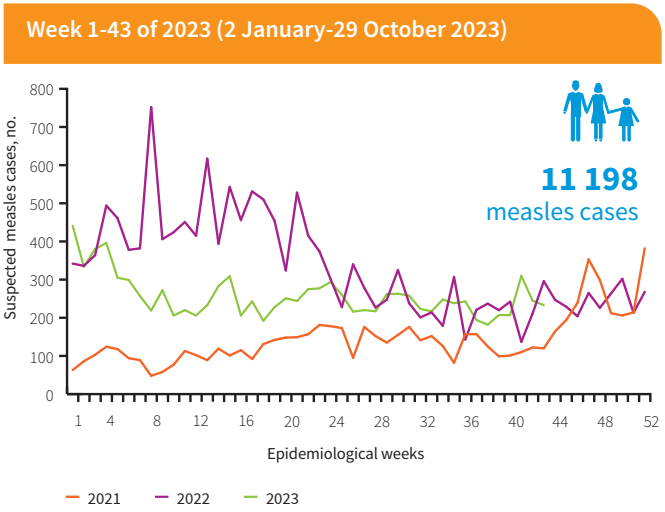


Figure 4. Trends of measles cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

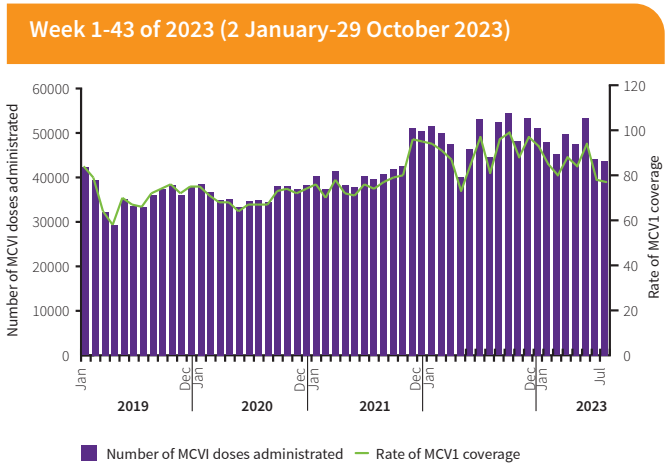


Figure 5. Number of children under 1 vaccinated against measles by month, 2020-2023

*The measles vaccination data for November and December 2022 is not yet available

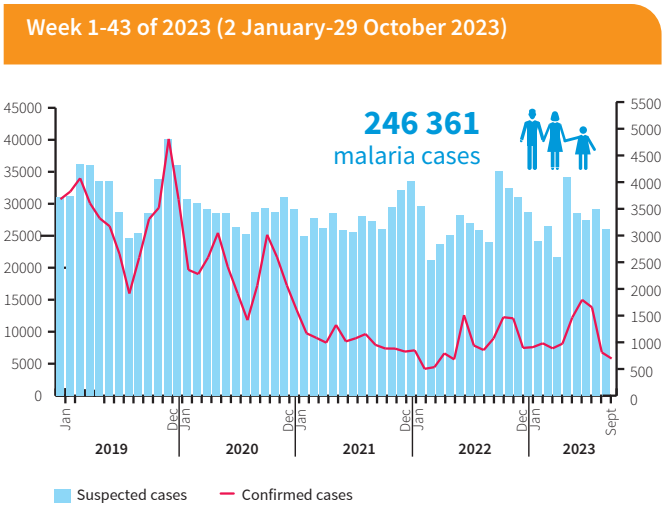


Figure 6. Trends of malaria cases reported in drought-affected regions, 2020-2023

Table 1: Cumulative number of acute diarrheal disease, suspected cholera, suspected measles, SARI, and suspected malaria cases in drought-affected regions of Somalia (epidemiological Week 1 -43 2023, 02 January to 29 October 2023)

Regions	Acute diarrhoeal disease[6]	Suspected Measles cases[7]	Suspected Malaria case[8]	SARI cases[9]	Suspected cholera cases[10]	cVDPV2[11]
AWDAL	0	11	10670	0	0	0
BAKOOL	385	738	6910	9868	66	0
BANADIR	3469	3177	24319	10739	2851	1
BARI	3481	50	14700	95	0	0
BAY	1219	2021	25999	9332	1516	2
GALBEED	0	14	8489	0	0	0
GALGADUD	1738	289	13957	36369	0	1
GEDO	11125	278	29614	13871	4318	0
HIRAN	829	504	11706	3888	1	0
KARKAR	1537	0	6765	428	0	0
LOWER JUBA	7329	1560	13584	8480	2758	0
LOWER SHABELLE	2320	848	19219	3104	2032	1
MIDDLE JUBA	0	0	0	0	0	0
MIDDLE SHABELLE	534	998	12194	1748	984	0
MUDUG	5712	276	14032	6598	0	0
NUGAL	1772	60	8784	493	0	0
SOUTH MUDUG	929	279	0	1521	0	0
SAHIL	0	18	2817	0	0	0
SANAG	1098	0	8997	5	0	0
SOOL	5	1	3702	245	0	0
TOGDHER	0	76	9903	0	0	0
TOTAL	**43 482**	**11 198**	**226 361**	**106 784**	**14 626**	**5**

Note: Continuous data quality review has been conducted which may lead to variation of figures for new cases and cumulative cases of epidemic prone disease in each region.

6 Source of data DHIS-2
7 Source of data is fever and rash surveillance system for week 1-9 and DHIS-2 for week 10-29
8 Source of data is DHIS2 as of July 2023
9 Source of data is DHIS2 and EMFLU
10 Source of data is suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhoea surveillance system managed by the FMOH as of June 2023
11 Source of data is EPI/Polio Weekly update sitrep report 2023.

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