World Health Organization
Somalia

EPI watch

Epidemiological Bulletin

Epidemiological Bulletin For epidemic-prone diseases in Somalia for epidemiological Week 44-45 of 2023 (30 October-12 November 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 1.7 million people, displacing 649000, people and led to deaths of 41 people in addition to destruction of destruction of property and food crops in field particularly in in Puntland, Galmudug, Southwest, 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 **1.7 million** people, displaced **649 000**, **41** people died in addition to destruction of property and food crops in field particularly in Puntland, Galmudug, Southwest, Hirshabelle and Jubaland states[3].

Epidemiological weeks 44-45 of 2023 (30 Oct-12 Nov 2023)

545
suspected cholera cases

1620
acute diarrhoeal disease cases

404
suspected measles cases

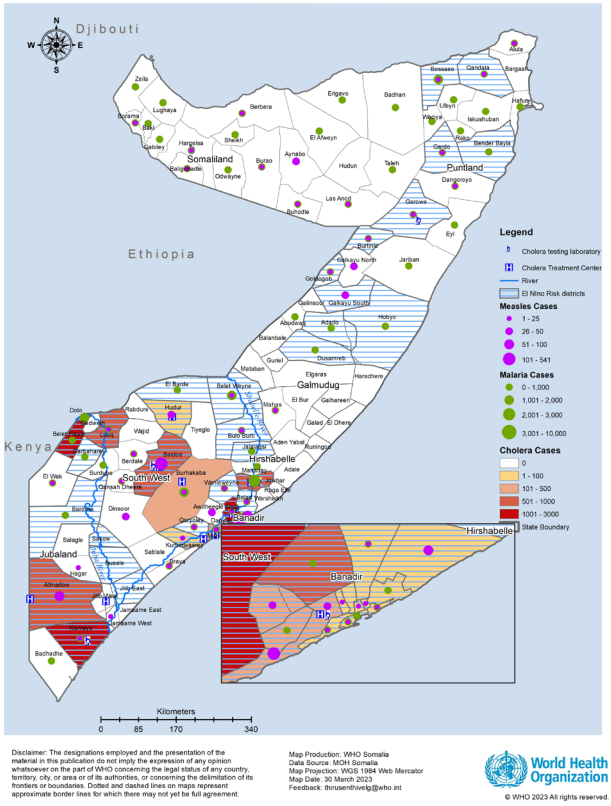
3582
SARI cases

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 45 2023, 02 Jan to 12 November 2023)



Somalia is currently experiencing escalating floods caused by heavy Dyer rains that started in 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: 2023 Deyr Season Floods Situation Report No. 1 (As of 17 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 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 15 171 cases of suspected cholera and 42 deaths (Case Fatality Rate 0.3%) were reported from 25 drought and four flood-affected districts of which 8 153 (53.7%) cases were children under 5, 7860 (51.8%) were women and 7197(47.4%) were severe cases. Since week 41 2023, 320 cholera cases and no deaths have been reported from districts affected by the current floods. In 2023, The regions reporting most of the cases are Gedo (4354, Banadir (2934), and Lower Juba (2896), (see Table 1). A total of 2260 stool samples were collected and tested in WHO supported laboratories of which 242 (10.7%) samples tested positive. Out of the 242 samples tested positive, 241(99%) stool samples were tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae* 01 serotype Ogawa. In addition, 2517 samples were tested by Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) of which 726 (28.8%) 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.

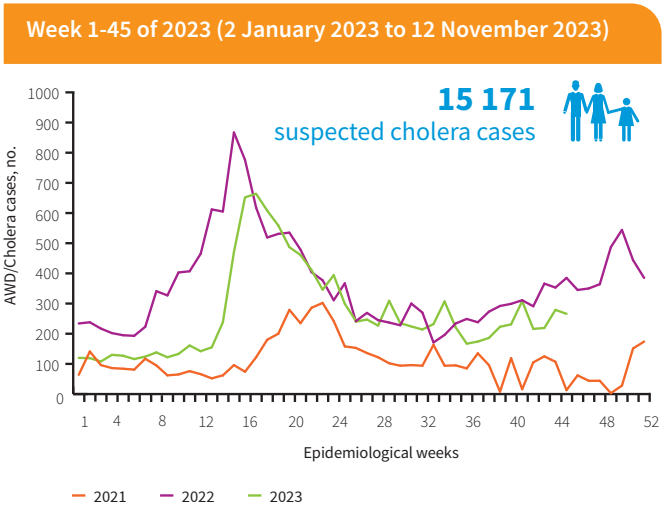


Figure 1. Trends of suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhoea cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

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, 45 102 cases of acute diarrhoeal disease were reported of which 26 416(65%) of the cases were from districts at risk of El Nino. The regions reporting most of the cases are Gedo (11 669), Lower Juba (7407) and Mudug (6236), (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 diarrheal diseases cases.

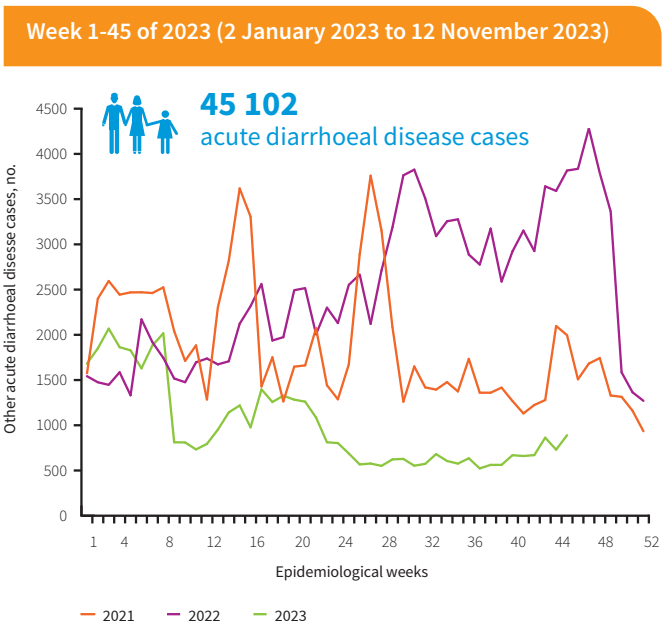


Figure 2. Trends of acute diarrhoeal disease cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

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, 110 366 cases of SARI were

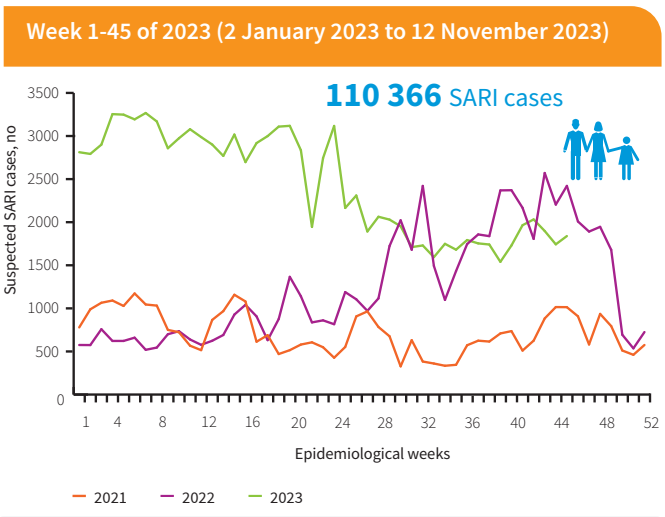


Figure 3. Trends of severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) reported from drought affected

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

reported, of which 91 139 (83%) of the cases were from districts affected by the current El Nino. The regions reporting most of the cases are Galgadud (37 240), Gedo (14 501), and Banadir (11 103), (Table 1).

WHO, in collaboration with Center for Disease Control and Prevention of United States (US-CDC) and the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Framework supports Ministry of Health to implement sentinel-based surveillance for seasonal influenza and other respiratory pathogens in four sites-two located in Banadir region, one in Puntland and one in Hargeisa Somaliland. In 2023, a total of 3001 cases of SARI and ILI were enrolled at four sentinel sites and were reported in the platform of Eastern Mediterranean Flu (EMFLU) network. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 2775 (92.5%) cases were tested at the National Public Health Laboratory of which 202 (7.3%) were tested positive for influenza; 150 (74.3%) were positive for influenza A (H1N1) pdm09, 2(1.0%) positive for influenza A(H3N2) while 11 (5.4%)) were positive for influenza B virus (Victoria Lineage). 5 (0.2%) cases were also positive for Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) while 13 (0.5%) were positive for COVID-19

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 11 602 cases of measles were reported from week 1 to week 45 of 2023. 110 366 cases of SARI were reported from of which 9153(79%) of the cases were from districts affected by El Nino. The regions reporting most cases are Banadir (3319), Bay (2055), and Lower Juba (1645). Of the 2 594 blood samples collected from cases of fever and rash, 1483 (57.2%) were tested positive for measles specific Immunoglobulin M(IgM)

MEASLES VACCINE UPDATES

A total of 41314(73%) out of the targeted 56,482 children under one year received the first dose of measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) in drought-affected districts in September 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 73% 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).

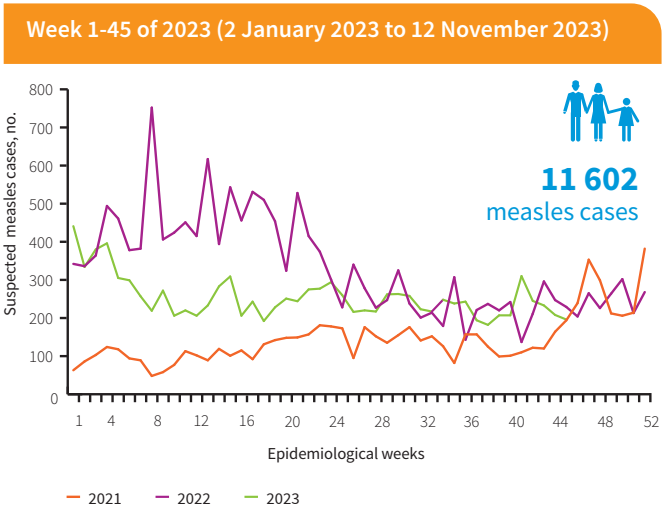


Figure 4. Trends of measles cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

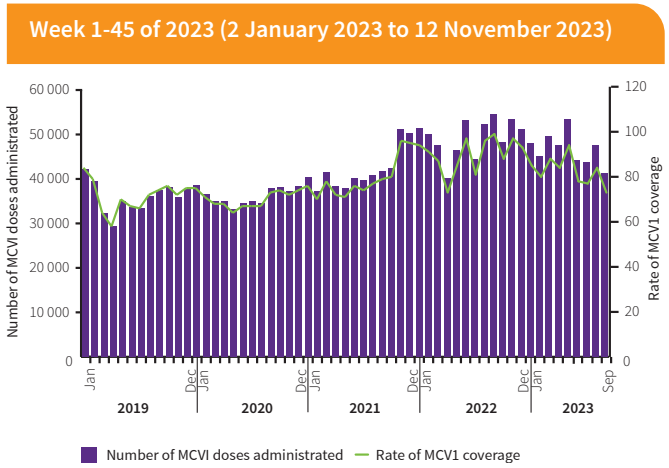


Figure 5. Number of children under 1 vaccinated against measles by month, 2020-2023

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

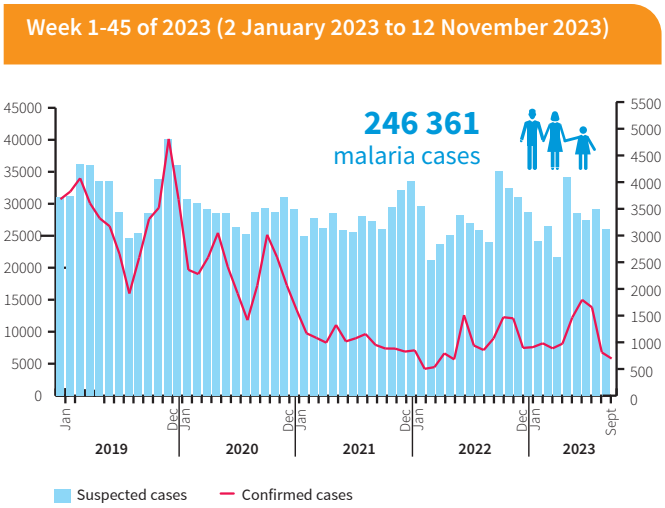


Figure 6. Trends of malaria cases reported in drought-affected regions, 2020-2023

POLIO UPDATE

- A total of 366 cases of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) were reported in 2023, of whom 166 (43.5%) cases were female and 200(56.5%) cases were male. Of the 366 AFP cases reported,347 (95%) cases had stool samples collected and analyzed in the laboratory while 19(5%) 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.
- 197 environmental surveillance (ES) samples have been collected as of week 45 of 2023. Of these, 187 (95%) samples have lab results, while 10 (5%) are still awaiting processing.
- Out of the 187 ES samples with Lab results in 2023, 6(3%) cVDPV2, 3(2%) PV2-nOPV2-negative, 65(35%) of the samples isolated NPEV, 5(3%) Sabin, like virus and the remaining 101(57%) samples tested negative.

Table 1: Cumulative number of acute diarrheal disease, suspected cholera, suspected measles, SARI, and suspected malaria cases in drought-affected regions of Somalia (epidemiological weeks 1 -Week 45 2023, 02 January to 12 November 2023)

Regions	Acute diarrhoeal disease[6]	Suspected Measles cases[7]	Suspected Malaria case[8]	SARI cases[9]	Suspected cholera cases[10]	cVDPV2 from AFP Case12[11]
AWDAL	0	11	10670	0	0	0
BAKOOL	389	761	6910	10 151	66	0
BANADIR	3584	3319	24319	11103	2934	1
BARI	3481	50	14700	95	0	0
BAY	1285	2055	25999	9707	1648	2
GALBEED	0	14	8489	0	0	0
GALGADUD	1843	301	13957	37240	0	1
GEDO	11669	280	29614	14501	4354	0
HIRAN	884	513	11706	4020	1	0
KARKAR	1537	0	6765	428	0	0
LOWER JUBA	7407	1645	13584	8671	2896	0
LOWER SHABELLE	2411	896	19219	3360	2233	1
MIDDLE JUBA	0	0	0	0	0	0
MIDDLE SHABELLE	552	1046	12194	1819	1039	0
MUDUG	6236	281	14032	7230	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	**45 102**	**11 602**	**226 361**	**110 366**	**15 171**	**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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