

WHO has significantly scaled up its presence and activities in Somalia to respond to increasing health needs and prevent a worst-case scenario for millions of people at risk of famine, but resources are urgently required to enable the necessary interventions. Out of a total of US\$ 825 million appealed for by the United Nations for the first half of 2017 for the pre-famine response, US\$ 85 million is required by the health sector, of which US\$ 13 million is required by WHO to reach 4.3 million people in first half of 2017.

[Download the Somalia fact sheet](#) [PDF, 570 kb]

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{besps_c}0|1-1.jpg| **In 2016 and early 2017**

Almost 4.3 million people living in 7 high-risk areas have been provided with life-saving support through the supply of more than 45 tonnes of medicines and medical to health centres in the areas most hard hit by cholera as part of the health response plan for the ongoing drought.

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More than 450 000 people were vaccinated in the first round of Somalia's first national oral cholera vaccination campaign (OCV) in March 2017. The campaign focused on reaching vulnerable people living in 7 high-risk areas around the country and is one of the largest oral cholera vaccination campaigns conducted in Africa. It is the first national OCV campaign to be conducted in the country.

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Cholera treatment centres are operational in 40 districts to manage severe cases of acute watery diarrhea/cholera. To keep these facilities functioning, WHO and partners are providing medicines and medical supplies and training health staff. WHO and partners are also increasing the number of surveillance sites for epidemic-prone diseases like cholera and measles across the country.

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With WHO support, the first national public health laboratory in Somalia was established in 2016, marking a vital first step towards improving patient care, controlling infections and managing disease outbreaks. Previously, all samples were sent out of the country for testing and diagnosis, a procedure that could take one week. The new facility provides reliable laboratory results to clinicians within 48 hours, contributing significantly to a faster response and reducing the number of mortalities.

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More than 240 health workers participated in capacity-building events covering cholera case management, surveillance, water and sanitation. With increased knowledge and skills among front line health care workers, cholera patients will receive better care from trained professionals.

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The country is on the brink of famine. More than three million people go hungry every day, and need urgent humanitarian assistance. If the current situation continues, almost one million children will be acutely malnourished this year, making them more susceptible to disease and almost 8 times more likely to die than children who are well nourished.

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Nearly 5.5 million people are in urgent need of health care, of which more than half are women and children under 5 years of age. Conflict, food insecurity and internal population displacement are increasing.

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Cholera cases are increasing. Drought has led to lack of clean water and the largest outbreak of cholera Somalia has seen in the last 5 years. More than 36 000 cases of cholera, including 690 deaths have been recorded in 2017. With the beginning of the expected rainy season and floods this month, these numbers are expected to increase to 50 000 cases by the end of June.

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Measles is rapidly spreading. Mass displacement as a result of the drought has created overcrowded living conditions for more than one million people, resulting in increasing numbers of measles cases. Almost 6500 measles cases have been reported in 2017 as of 30 April, with children making up 71% of all cases.

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Insecurity and access are impeding a humanitarian response. The rapid movement of IDPs is overwhelming health facilities and the delivery of life-saving medicines, vaccines and medical

equipment has been irregular due to insecurity, road inaccessibility, electricity and fuel shortages, and rupture of the cold chain for vaccines.

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