

3 March 2018 – The Ministry of Health of Somalia has announced 192 new cases of cholera including one associated death for week 16 (16 to 22 April) of 2018. The cumulative total number of cases is 2460 including 11 associated deaths (case-fatality rate 0.4%) since the beginning of the current outbreak in December 2017.

Children under 2 years old represent 37.5% of the reported cases. Out of 132 stool samples collected this year, 40 have tested positive for the presence of *Vibrio cholerae* bacterium.

In week 16 active transmission of cholera was reported in Jowhar district of Middle Shabelle region, 10 districts in Banadir region and Kismayo in Lower Jubba region. Up until now, four regions, Banadir, Hiraan, Middle Shabelle, and Lower Jubba, have been affected.

Cholera is endemic in Somalia, however, in 2017 a major cholera outbreak affected many communities, and recorded 79 172 reported cases, including 1159 associated deaths. Oral cholera vaccination (OCV) campaigns were conducted in cholera hotspot areas in response to the outbreak, and successfully limited the number of new cases.

WHO recently concluded a week-long training for 53 surveillance officers from 24 regions on the use of the electronic disease early warning alert and response network (EWARN) to record and report alerts of epidemic- and pandemic-prone diseases. Cholera alerts in the country were received from 265 health facilities through the EWARN system.

WHO is coordinating the planning and implementation of response activities with the Ministry of Health, WASH and Health Cluster partners, and local health authorities. This includes support for: clinical care delivery; support for case management in cholera treatment centres; surveillance; deployment of rapid response teams; engagement of community health workers; provision of medical supplies; health and hygiene education in affected communities; and distribution of hygiene kits. This week 300 hygiene kits have been distributed to IDP communities in Kismayo.

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