23 July 2015 -- Health partners in Somalia have expressed concern that they will face difficulties in continuing to provide life-saving health services at the scale required as a result of declining humanitarian funding for 2015 and the forecast for 2016. Despite continued early warnings and appeals for timely and adequate funding, health is currently funded at 8.5%, the lowest since 2008.

Over the past 3 months, at least 10 hospitals in Somalia have either been closed or have majorly curtailed their services across the country, and at least 3 other hospitals are at risk of closure in the near future. Basic health posts and clinics are currently struggling to meet primary health needs, and many aid agencies have withdrawn health workers from high-need areas.

Examples of reductions in health services due to lack of funding include:

- International Medical Corps suspended secondary health care services at Beletweyne Hospital earlier this year due to lack of funds; CESVI is at risk of phasing out its support to the hospital’s outpatient department next September.
- International Medical Corps is phasing out of Galkacyo South Hospital. Inpatient health care, emergency surgery, among other services, will no longer be supported.
- Save the Children is no longer able to support primary health care services at Dobley Hospital.
- Intersos will be unable to support Johwar Regional hospital by the end of the year.
- Medecins du Monde will be unable to support Bossasso Hospital by the end of the year.
- International Rescue Committee will be unable to support primary health care services at South Galkacyo Hospital by the end of the year.

There are currently 3.2 million people in need of humanitarian aid in Somalia, and human
development and gender indicators are among the lowest in the world: every 2 hours a Somali mother dies due to pregnancy complications; every hour, 8 Somali children below the age of 5 die; one in 4 children suffers from chronic malnourishment; and only 1 in 3 Somalis have access to safe water.

Lack of funding for OCHA’s Humanitarian Response Plan in 2015, as well as the lack of prioritization of secondary health service provision, has left more than 1.5 million people cut off from primary or secondary health care services. As of July 2015, out of a required US$ 71.5 million, only US$ 6.1 million (8.5%) has been received.

“The international community has invested in supporting the political process and the security set-up in the country and Somalia is showing some good signs of improvements in the health sector, said WHO Representative for Somalia Dr Ghulam Popal during a high level forum meeting in Nairobi last month, chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator and attended by health authorities, donors, UN agencies and nongovernmental organizations. “We cannot afford to let the country slide back into a humanitarian crisis. Otherwise we would undermine all gains made until today.”

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International Medical Corps

Save the Children

Medecins du Monde

International Rescue Committee

Thursday 13th of February 2020 09:23:36 PM