
Communicable disease outbreaks remain a major public health threat in Somalia. Nearly 5.5 million people are at risk of acquiring cholera, of whom more than half are women and children below 5 years of age. The risks are particularly high among displaced people and other vulnerable populations already weakened by poverty and poor nutrition.

“Lack of sufficient resources, coupled with limited access to health services and absence of timely detection and response to disease outbreaks have challenged our efforts to provide lifesaving response and prevent disease outbreaks in the country,” said Dr Ghulam Popal WHO Representative in Somalia.

“We highly appreciate this emergency aid grant from the Government of Japan; it will help us strengthen coordination with the Somali Federal Ministry of Health and step up emergency health and epidemic disease surveillance to reduce morbidity and mortality attributed to epidemic prone diseases,” Popal added.

Earlier this year, WHO reported a funding gap estimated at US$ 4 million required to maintain its life-saving response to outbreaks, drought, and malnutrition in Somalia. With this generous grant from the Government of Japan, WHO will be able to enhance the surveillance system for the timely detection and response to disease outbreaks, strengthen prevention measures through vaccination and risk communication, and ensure effective case management and access to health care services, especially for women and children. The grant will also support the procurement and prepositioning of essential supplies and life-saving medicines in all high-risk areas across Somalia.

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Japan's Emergency Grant Aid

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