



An outreach workers reaches out to a family in remote area of State of Galmudug, Somalia. Credit: WHO Somalia/Fouzia Mogadishu, 1 December 2022 – The Government of Germany has donated €1.5 million to the WHO country office in Somalia with the aim of providing life-saving health care to the people of Somalia living in dire humanitarian conditions. Health is one of the priority areas among humanitarian partners during the ongoing historic drought.

This funding will be used to provide essential health care to children and women living in hard-to-reach drought affected areas. It will; however, benefit the wider population as well with long-term measures such as routine immunization. Germany seeks to support Somalia and WHO not only by providing funds but also by extending technical support by deploying a number of German experts to the WHO country office to help with their operations. For the German Government, health globally, but particularly in Somalia, with the current drought, is one of the key areas of its humanitarian engagement.

“This is why we are supporting Somalia with an additional €1.5 million through WHO within a wider scale-up of €10 million for WHO globally,” stated German Ambassador Sebastian Groth, adding that “Germany stands by Somalia for helping with its immediate needs as well as long term overall improvement in health.”

WHO will deploy trained community-based health workers in hard-to-reach areas who will go house to house and render community-based essential health and nutrition interventions. In addition, WHO will support community outreach services for the treatment of sick children, and care for pregnant and lactating women, including vaccination against preventable diseases for children and women of childbearing age. These outreach centres will distribute blanket

micronutrient supplements, such as iron tablets, vitamin-A and deworming tablets to improve the immunity of these vulnerable populations to prevent them from diseases that are avoidable.

In recognition of the continued partnership between WHO and Germany, the WHO Representative to Somalia Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik said that, “We are racing against time to try to prevent major outbreaks of cholera or measles. We have seen, deaths and diseases thrive when hunger and food crisis prolong. This is a timely support to our country office from one of the major donors of WHO globally. On behalf of WHO, I express our utmost appreciation to the Government of Germany for its timely support for the people of Somalia who are facing the risk of famine in one of the most fragile and broken health system setting.” He added, “We will see more people dying from the disease than from hunger and malnutrition combined if we do not act now. The cost of our inaction will mean that children, women and other vulnerable people will pay with their lives while we hopelessly, helplessly witness the tragedy unfold. As we have seen during our collective emergency response operations for COVID-19, early action and delivery of high quality and evidence-based interventions can lead to protecting health and well-being, even if the health system is fragile.”

### **Background information**

WHO has been able to reach nearly 3.3 million people, about 45% of the people who are in need, with life-saving treatments, essential health and nutrition interventions. These services are being delivered through over 2164 community health workers, 148 mobile outreach team, 64 stabilization centres and 280 primary health care centres in the drought-affected districts. Somalia is currently facing one of the most severe droughts in its history, with a looming famine and possibility of severe loss of life due to hunger, malnutrition, and disease. Currently, 7.8 million people are affected and 1.1 million are displaced (on top of 2.5 million which were already displaced) as they are in search of food, water, shelter, healthcare and any assistance available. Furthermore, the drought is increasing endemic-prone diseases, putting millions at risk. For example: 3.5 million persons lack sufficient access to water; and 6 million continue to face severe food shortages, with approximately 1.4 million children facing acute malnutrition, including 329 500 likely to become severely malnourished. Moreover, as of 31 October 2022, a total of 11 332 suspected cases of cholera, 15 143 cases of measles and 96 063 cases of acute diarrhoeal disease have been confirmed in drought-affected areas since January 2022.

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