



Alongside the government and partners, WHO supports COVID-19 vaccinations for eligible people. Photo credit: WHO Somalia/Mogadishu, 4 August 2022 – The Government of Germany donated US\$ 4.6 million to the WHO country office for Somalia in support of continued efforts to reach more people with COVID-19 and childhood vaccinations. Alongside the Federal Ministry of Health and Human Services, this contribution will be used to ensure the most vulnerable children and adults, including those living in remote areas, receive life-saving vaccinations.

“COVID-19 has proven that health infrastructure is vital not only with regards to new diseases and viruses but also to existing ones,” said Sascha Kienzle, Deputy Ambassador of Germany to Somalia. “Germany therefore stands with those most disadvantaged and seeks to include them in health interventions to ensure a lasting impact on everyone.”



Health care workers search for children who have never received vaccines before to boost their immunity against preventable diseases. Photo credit: WHO Somalia/Mukhtar Sudani “We have recently sounded the alarm as our new data has shown that childhood vaccination coverage has continued to decline and thousands of children in Somalia have missed out on life-saving vaccines. COVID-19 has caused the largest and sustained backslide in childhood immunization in Somalia,” said Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik, WHO Representative to Somalia and Head of Mission.

“We cannot emphasize how important these funds are to reach out to children who have missed out on life-saving vaccines, identify the zero-dose children and vaccinate them to close the equity gap, and at the same time protect the high-risk adult populations of the country against COVID-19. In this spirit, we are grateful for the support from the Government of Germany. With support from partners, WHO is collaborating with the Ministry of Health to use a blend of strategies, including fixed vaccination sites, accelerated outreach services and mobile teams, to vaccinate more children and adults in an integrated manner, thereby improving the uptake of COVID-19 vaccines as well as bringing the country on-track for childhood immunization goals.”

By using these creative strategies, the uptake of COVID-19 vaccines significantly improved in November, December 2021 and February 2022.

Around 13% of the Somali population has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 so far. Somalia plans to vaccinate 40% of its population by the end of 2022, with more than 3.5 million people expected to be fully vaccinated by the end of September 2022 with these funds made available from Germany. By combining the acceleration of both COVID-19 and childhood immunization programmes in the past, WHO and its partners were able to identify and vaccinate more than 75 000 zero-dose children, who had never received vaccines, thereby closing the immunization gaps in children living in hard-to-reach areas and marginalized communities.



Skilled health workers vaccinate children against preventable childhood diseases, with support from partners. Photo credits: WHO Somalia/Mukhtar Sudani Germany's support will also boost childhood vaccination, as Somalia is witnessing outbreaks of measles due to a decline in the rates of immunization, which is happening against a backdrop of rapidly rising rates of severe acute malnutrition owing to severe drought in the country. A malnourished child already has weakened immunity and missed vaccinations can mean common childhood illnesses quickly become lethal. The convergence of drought, risk of famine and a growing immunization gap threatens the lives of children.

In addition to this support, the Government of Germany has donated over US\$ 11 million to Somalia for the COVID-19 response, along with COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility and 1.3 million medical face masks in August 2021.

For additional information, please contact:

Judith Gosmann, Policy Officer Somalia Unit, pol-13@nair.diplo.de

Kyle DeFreitas, WHO Somalia External Relations Lead, defreitask@who.int

Fouzia Bano, WHO Chief of Staff ai, Communications Officer, banof@who.int

Note to Editors:

Please see the links below for additional information on recent support received from the Government of Germany:

[In fight against COVID-19, Germany donates 163 000 COVID-19 vaccine doses to Somalia through COVAX Facility](#)

[Germany donates 1.3 million face masks to WHO for its COVID-19 response work in Somalia: more face masks means more people protected](#)

Tuesday 30th of April 2024 12:52:32 AM