



Mogadishu, 1 June 2020 □ The Delegation of the European Union (EU) to Somalia conducted another special flight for WHO in Somalia to airlift lifesaving medicine and other emergency hospital supplies to Jowhar, Kismayo and Baidoa □ areas recently affected by flooding caused by heavy rainfall. These WHO emergency medicines and medical supplies will be used for augmenting emergency health care for people affected by the recent floods. Previous EU-operated flights to the flood-affected areas took place on 20□21 May 2020.

The flights delivered 9144 kgs of supplies of oral rehydration solution, cholera saline and other emergency medicines for patient care, benefiting approximately 2000 individuals over the next 3 months.

Heavy rains are predicted for the remainder of June. The emergency supplies will support emergency health care for cholera and other waterborne diseases for the vulnerable populations of affected areas and also basic health care services in the areas long after the

flood water recedes.

“The EU welcomes the opportunity to join forces and resources with WHO in Somalia,” said EU Ambassador to Somalia Nicolas Berlanga. “Somalia faces a confluence of health challenges, including the urgent task of responding to the COVID-19 outbreak. The recent floods that have impacted so much of the country will only complicate that effort. These are complex challenges that require enhanced coordination and rapid response,” the Ambassador added.

Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik, WHO Representative in Somalia, said, “As we continue to fight on all fronts against COVID-19 and now on reducing the health impacts of the floods, I thank the Delegation of the European Union for their generous support in providing the airbridge between the capital city and flood-affected areas for dispatching critical life-saving supplies, especially at a time when these areas are cut off from the rest of the country owing to lockdown and restriction of flights. Our collaboration with the EU will save lives and minimize the health impacts of these catastrophic events. This solidarity remains critical for Somalia besieged by so many health challenges”.

This joint operation is part of a new bilateral coordination mechanism, established between the WHO country office and the Delegation of the EU to Somalia, which aims to strengthen operational response activities, including for COVID-19. On 3 May, EU flights also airlifted critical medical equipment and supplies from Mogadishu to Kismayo to support Jubaland state in tackling COVID-19. In addition, the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) recently provided US\$ \$1.8 million to WHO’s COVID-19 preparedness and response operations in Somalia.

Effects of flooding

Heavy rains and floods have affected about 918 000 people across Somalia, displacing 412 000 and killing 24 in 29 districts so far. Belet Weyne in Hiraan region is the most affected district after the Shabelle river burst its banks on 12 May and flooded 85% of the town and 25 riverine villages. Jowhar, another agricultural centre, has also been hard hit by flooding. International aid organizations have warned of potential outbreaks of cholera and other waterborne diseases due to overcrowding in areas where those who have been displaced are seeking temporary shelter.

Related link

[WHO and EU unite to fight COVID-19 in Somalia](#)

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Saturday 17th of May 2025 08:55:20 PM