



A health care worker briefs an elderly gentleman after he receives his COVID-19 vaccines, Banadir Hospital, March 2021. Photo: WHO

15 September 2021 – Since the day the news of availability of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines emerged, the Federal Government of Somalia has worked hand in hand with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other key partners to secure vaccines for Somalis.

One year after the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Somalia on 15 March 2021, the first consignment of 300 000 AstraZeneca vaccines for COVID-19, received through the COVAX Facility, arrived in Mogadishu. In the following months, frontline workers, including health care workers; the elderly people; and people with chronic health conditions were targeted for vaccination as the first priority groups to receive COVID-19 vaccines.

### **An insight from a nurse trained to offer vaccinations**

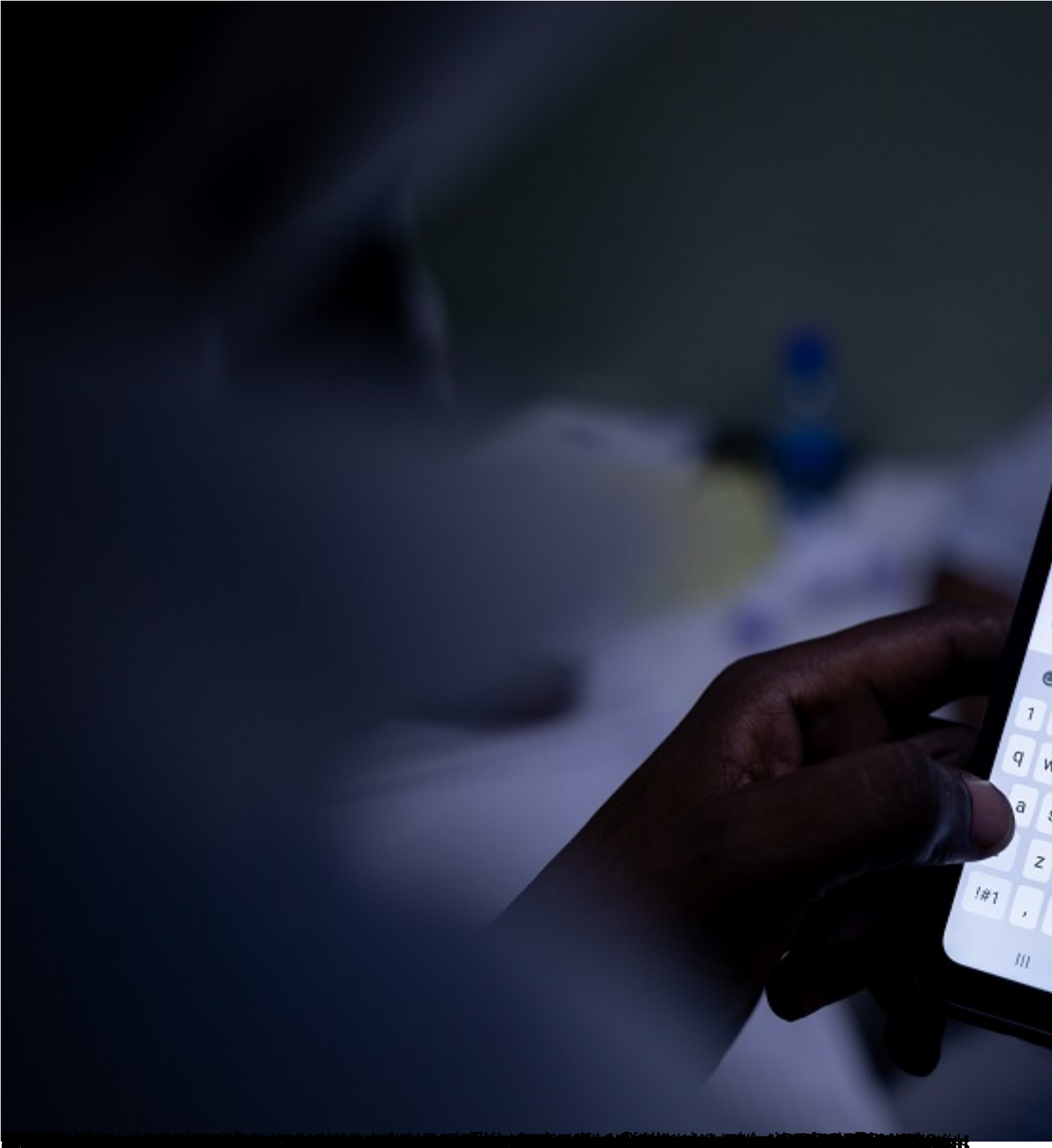
As a nurse and being a frontline health worker, 26-year-old Ikram Ahmed Mohamed was among the first to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

“I work 6 days a week at the Banadir Hospital – and feel like this is the busiest COVID-19 vaccination site in the country,” says Ikram. “In the beginning, most of the people were elderly, but nowadays, more young people aged between 20 and 40 years are coming to get vaccinated. For some reason though, we have been seeing more men than women taking the vaccines.”

Health care workers like Ikram are trying their very best to dispel rumours and fears. He explains, “Sometimes I do meet people who do not want to get vaccinated. But it is my job to convince them to trust the vaccine. I explain to them the benefits of vaccination and tell them I took it too.”

“Initially, I was a nurse, but before the first COVID-19 vaccines came to Somalia, the Government and WHO trained health professionals like me to administer COVID-19 vaccines safely,” adds Ikram. “Today, I am happy and proud to be a vaccinator, as I feel I am working to combat deadly diseases like COVID-19. I really feel like I am contributing to my community.”

### **Intensifying the race against time to keep people safe**



## **Acknowledging the crucial role of donors**

The response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Somalia has been made possible with the generous support of donors and partners, particularly the European Union (EU) Delegation to Somalia

which has provided funding to cover the operational costs for the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations all across the country. This support has enabled the country to roll out the vaccination against COVID-19 effectively to end the pandemic and help in recovery of the health systems towards building a fairer and healthier world.

Saturday 27th of April 2024 11:01:32 PM