



WHO supported the federal and state governments to resume routine childhood vaccinations during the COVID-19 outbreak in Somalia. Credit: WHO/Somalia

23 April 2022, Mogadishu – While marking World Immunization Week this year, Somalia's Federal Ministry of Health and Human Services, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) jointly urged humanitarian partners, local private agencies and donors to help boost immunization efforts and outreach across Somalia. This message is in line with the theme for World Immunization Week, 2022, running from 24 to 30 April, which is 'Long life for all – in pursuit of a long life well lived.'

World Immunization Week 2022 aims to spur greater engagement around immunization globally, to reiterate the importance of vaccination and improve the health and well-being of everyone, everywhere.

In line with this global call and taking into account only 9% of Somalis have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, Dr Fawziya Abikar Nur, Minister of Health, the Federal Government of Somalia said, "In 2020, the world witnessed a pause on many health services due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By producing vaccines at record speed, alongside other measures, we have now seen how life is resuming slowly again. However, in developing countries, such as Somalia, the majority of the population still remains to be vaccinated. They are still at risk, and we cannot emphasize enough – we must reach everyone, wherever they live, to stop diseases such as COVID-19 from mutating and circulating."

"Vaccines are one of the greatest success stories of public health. And yet, with all the knowledge and tools we have, Somali children are still contracting vaccine-preventable diseases, and adults are still being infected with diseases such as COVID-19. It is our moral imperative to ensure every Somali has equitable access to vaccinations and a life free of disease and disabilities. We must all join forces to reach more people with life-saving vaccines," said Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik, WHO Somalia Representative and Head of Mission, while describing how the advent of smallpox vaccines showed the world that it is possible to eradicate diseases if governments and all stakeholders join forces.





<https://www.who.int/emro/news/2022/08/20220820-somalia-immunization>