



WHO's response to the current conflict in South Central Somalia, including Lower and Middle Juba regions:

Installation of a field hospital and on-the-job training on emergency surgery, basic emergency obstetric care (EmOC) and trauma management

11–15 November 2009

Background: Ongoing hostilities in Lower Juba in South Central Somalia continue to result in deaths and casualties. As of early November the total number of casualties reported by Kismayo General Hospital and surrounding health facilities was over 400. In early October, hostilities broke out in the Afmadow and Hagar districts of Lower Juba which, as well as resulting in casualties, has led to the displacement of the community, including health workers. Buale is a location that allows key health workers from the Region to attend training away from the current insecurity. Furthermore, there has been an almost near lack of secondary health care services for these communities since the onset of the civil war.

To extend surgical services to conflict-affected communities in the Region, the capacity of Buale mother and child health (MCH) centre was extended with tents, equipment and essential medical supplies to act as a field hospital providing an additional 12 beds, operating theatre and hospital pharmacy.



WHO established the field hospital in conjunction with the World Food Programme (WFP), World Vision and community leaders



The capacity of Buale MCH centre was extended to provide an additional 12 beds

Training objectives: Through the installation of the field hospital, in conjunction with WFP and World Vision, WHO was able to conduct on-the-job training of key health workers on emergency surgery, basic EmOC and trauma management. Objectives included:

- understanding the importance of trauma as a significant cause of morbidity
- understanding the principles of first aid and its role in preventing mortality.



Training covered aspects of infection control

- being aware of techniques by which basic life support is achieved and when they are necessary, particularly in treating conflict-related injuries
- recognizing basic surgical hand craft and essential emergency surgery
- saving lives of the affected population due to the current conflict and other injuries, such as road traffic accidents, and particularly on the use of triage
- understanding the importance of, and methods for, infection control and aseptic techniques.

Training participants: 36 health workers were trained, including:

- all qualified nurses currently working in health facilities in the Region
- the Head or Deputy of Primary Health Care in Lower and Middle Juba regions
- doctors working in the region
- community volunteers.

Training methodology: The training combined both theoretical and practical aspects of trauma management and surgery. Theoretical teaching was provided to participants in the MCH centre and on-the-job practical teaching was conducted within the operating theatre, outpatient department and medical ward.



The training combined both theoretical and practical aspects of trauma management and surgical techniques

Beneficiaries: From 11 to 15 November, more than 240 patients were screened with 145 patients receiving a full medical examination and 25 patients undergoing surgical operations for a range of medical complaints. At the present time, patients are receiving post-operative care and being followed up by the WHO field officer. No post-operative complications have been reported so far.



From 11 to 15 November, over 240 patients were examined, of whom 145 received a full medical examination and 25 underwent surgical operations. In addition to on-the-job training, WHO provided a range of essential medicines and supplies

Recommendations: The training methodology proved to be effective and needs to be replicated in other conflict-affected areas of South Central Somalia. Joint supervision and monitoring visits from health cluster partners should be organized.