



Other acute watery diarrhea (AWD) admissions at Banadir Hospital in Mogadishu test positive for cholera 28 March 2011

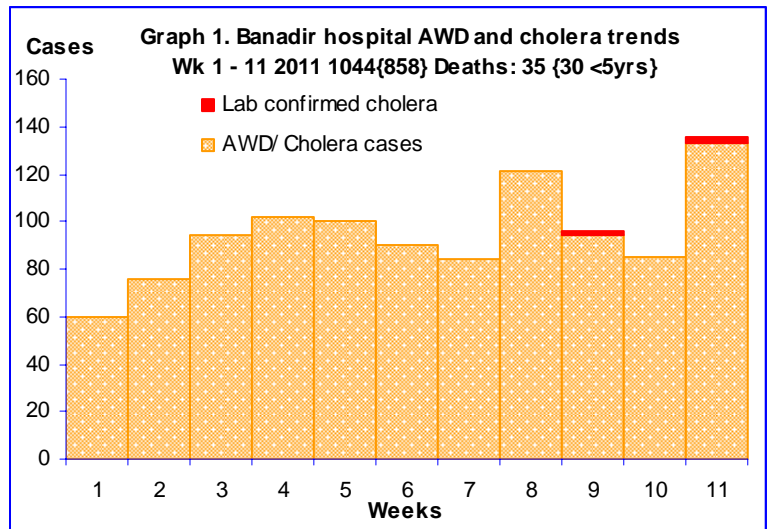
Background: WHO issued a cholera alert for **Mogadishu**, Banadir region on 17 March 2011 after two of 20 samples collected from acute watery diarrhea (AWD) cases admitted at the Banadir Hospital tested positive for *Vibrio cholera* serotype 'inaba'. The two cases, 12 months and eight years respectively were reported from Wadajir district (see previous cholera alert). WHO re-visited Banadir hospital and collected an additional 20 samples for tests.

In Somalia, the annual cholera transmission season has begun. The number of AWD cases is steadily rising with rumors reported from Awdheghele district in **Lower Shabelle region** and Aden Yabal district in **Middle Shabelle region**.

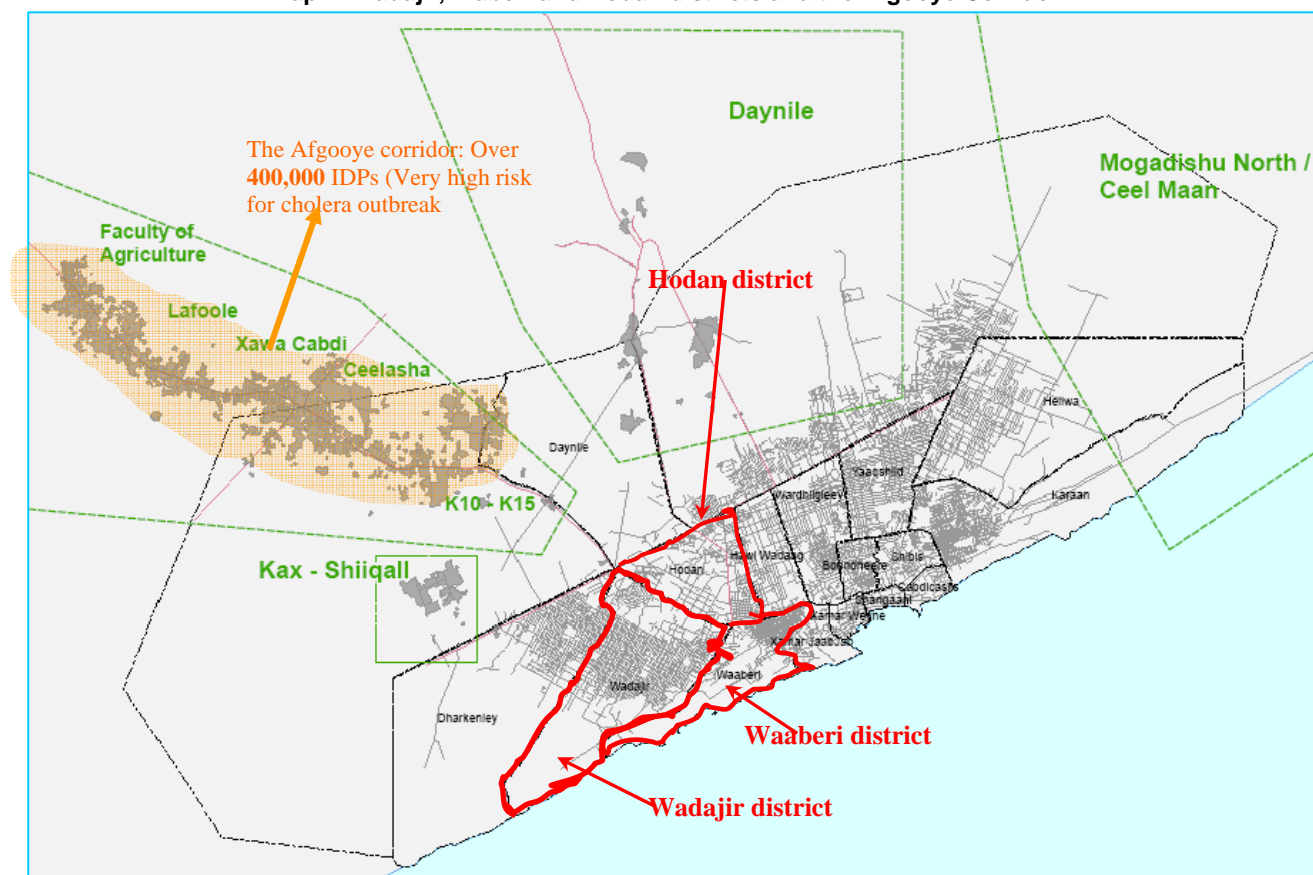
In the event that the current conflict mainly centered around Mogadishu continues, it is estimated that as many as 192 000 new displacements may occur; 142 000 due to conflict and 50 000 as a result of the drought. From the Afgooye Corridor 200 000 internally displaced persons could return to Mogadishu if the transitional national government takes control of more territory. Such contextual changes are in addition to the existing challenges due to ongoing drought and its impact that is causing population migrations into urban areas in search of economic activities and, those in search of viable water sources and pastures for livestock as observed in rural areas such as Wanbati and Qansadhere in Bay region. As a result of this, numerous informal settlements have emerged with dense populations living in make-shift shelters. They have poor access to safe drinking water and sanitary facilities with limited access to basic health services. These factors could only lead to communicable disease outbreaks especially cholera.

Lab results: Three of the 18 examinable rectal swabs tested positive for *Vibrio cholera* serotype 'inaba'. The cases were the age of three, six and 12 months respectively, two of whom reside from Waberi district and the third case is from Hodan district (see Map 1 on page 2 showing districts having positive cases). A case of cholera affecting a three month old child who is supposed to be exclusively breastfed is an indication of the lack of nutrients intake by both mother and child. There is need to target pregnant and nursing mothers with nutritional interventions.

On the other hand, transmission is expected as carriers in highly endemic areas shed vibrios during the cholera transmission seasons, a factor that has sustained the existence of the bacteria in the context.



Map 1. Wadajir, Waberi and Hodan districts and the Afgooye Corridor



Response: WHO has pre-positioned AWD case management supplies in Somalia. This preparedness activity is ongoing including the distribution of diarrhoea diseases (DD) kits and inter-agency health kits (IAHKs). WHO is undertaking strategic distribution of supplies to health partners and this is already done in Merka, Qoryoley and Wajid.

WHO is also training health workers across Somalia in AWD case prevention, detection and management. The training course includes an in-depth review of surveillance tools and case definitions for the integrated disease surveillance and response (IDSR). From **13-14 March 2011**, 33 health workers from 12 health facilities (one hospital, nine mother and child health centers, one outpatient department and one mental health facility) across **Banadir region** received this training that took place in Baidoa, Bay region. From **19-20 March 2011**, an additional 21 health workers were trained in Huddur, **Bakool region**. From **27-28 March 2011**, a training session was conducted for health workers from **Banadir region**. A second training will start immediately, targeting health workers from **Middle Shabelle** and Banadir regions.

Recommendations: Read previous cholera alert.