



## Highlight: Mogadishu conflict

The worsening humanitarian situation in the central and southern regions of Somalia continues to pose major challenges to implement critical life-saving health interventions. With the ongoing conflict in Mogadishu, health workers are facing security constraints and severe difficulties to provide basic health services to the vulnerable populations. As a result of the conflict, public health workers have also incurred serious injury or even lost their lives while on duty.



Osman Hussein Ibrahim (left) pictured with colleagues during NID/CHD a month ago (*Photo by WHO*)

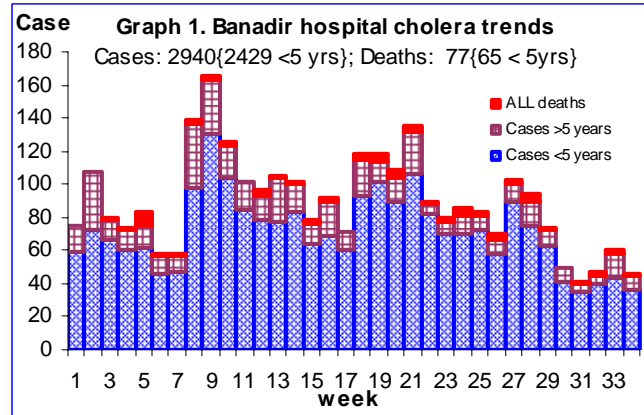
On 22 August 2010, Mr Osman Hussein Ibrahim, District Polio Officer in Mogadishu, Somalia, was shot and killed by a stray bullet while on his way to supervise the polio national immunization days (NID) and Child Health Days. He had served nearly 10 years in Mogadishu for the polio eradication initiative. Mr Ibrahim was a committed, highly-motivated, hard-working team player. His death is a big loss to the WHO Somalia team and the Somali people as a whole.

Since the beginning of 2009, 13 humanitarian aid workers from various agencies have been killed, several injured and 10 abducted remain unaccounted for. This highlights the dangers and challenges that humanitarian aid workers continue to face while working in Somalia.

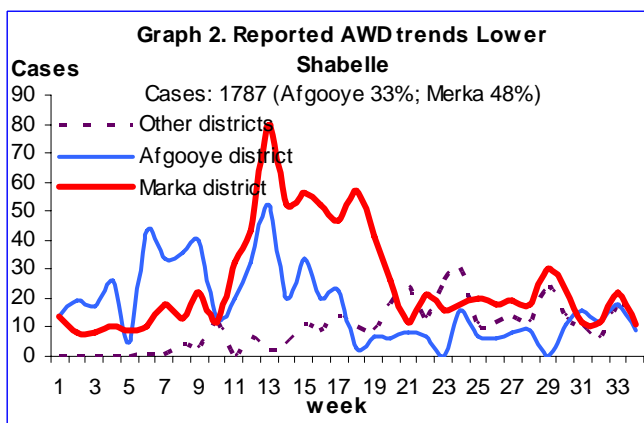
## Update on major public health concern:

- Cholera/Acute watery diarrhoea

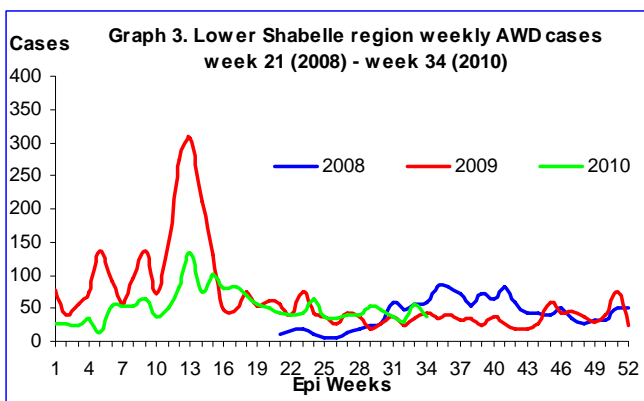
The number of **cholera** cases reported from Banadir hospital in **Mogadishu (Banadir region)** remained stable during week 34<sup>1</sup>. Since epidemiological week 1<sup>2</sup>, a total of 2940 cases, including 2429 under five years of age and 77 deaths, have been reported (*see Graph 1*). WHO and partners continue to monitor the ongoing cholera outbreak, carrying out preventive and case management interventions in the region.



In week 34, the number of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) cases reported from **Lower Shabelle region** was 38, including 73% (28) children under five years of age. In comparison with week 33, this is a 33% decrease. **Merka** and **Afgooye** district alone accounted for over 50% of all reported cases from 33 health facilities in the region. From week 1-34, the two districts accounted for 48% and 33% respectively of all AWD cases (*see Graph 2*).



WHO continues to call on health partners to respond to the current situation, in light of seasonal outbreaks in the past years (*see Graph 3*).

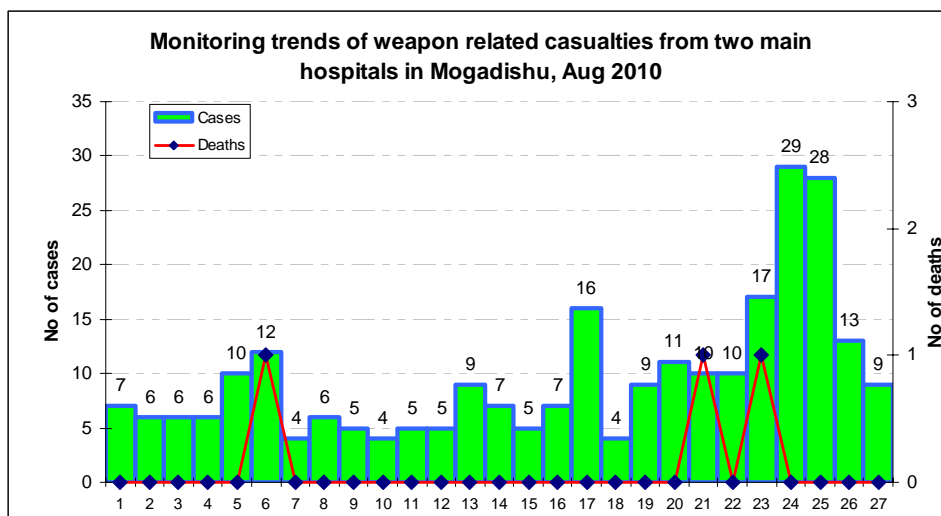


<sup>1</sup>Week 34: 23- 29 August 2010

<sup>2</sup>Week 1: 4-10 January 2010

- **Conflict and displacement**

Between **1–27 August 2010**, two main hospitals in Mogadishu reported 247 weapon-related casualties, including **15%** (38) children under five years of age and three related deaths (*see caseload graph below*). Due to escalations of the conflict, the number of reported trauma cases increased significantly between the period of 23-27 August, with scores of people injured and an unspecified number of deaths among civilians. In the past week, a WHO Polio District Officer was killed by a stray bullet while on duty and another was injured as a result of flying motor fragments. Since **January 2010**, 2774 weapon-related casualties, including **538** under five years of age and 98 related deaths, have been reported from these two hospitals. The deaths on site of injury are still unknown. It remains a challenge to classify victims as combatants or non-combatants.



From **January-July 2010**, a third hospital in Mogadishu reported 2037 weapon-related injuries; of these 163 cases under the age of 15 years. Female casualties accounted for **34%** (686) of the injured cases.



Children and women are the most affected by the ongoing conflict being the highest number of trauma cases reported (*Photos by SOYDA*)

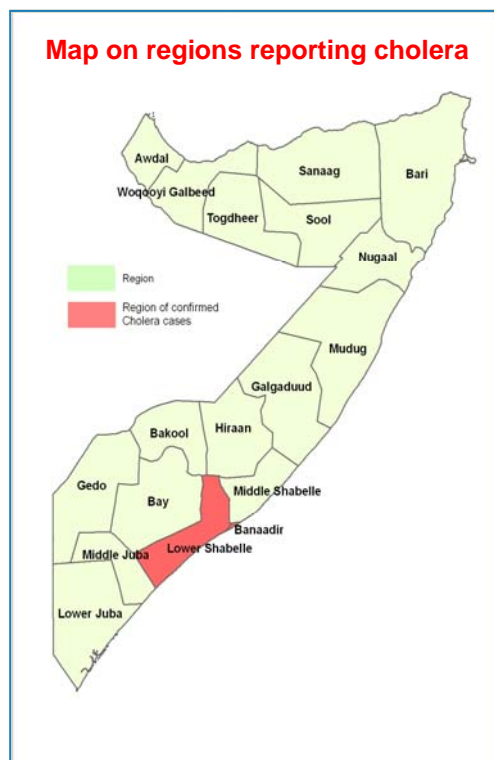
The number of displaced persons continues to rise as a result of the ongoing conflict in the Mogadishu. UNHCR<sup>3</sup> estimates indicate that since 1 July 2010, 36 200 people have been displaced from Mogadishu including 20 400 who moved out of the capital, while 15 700 have left for relatively calmer districts within the city.

<sup>3</sup>OCHA Weekly Humanitarian Bulletin #33

## Health Events in Somalia

### Epidemiological surveillance during week 34

- 14 health facilities in seven districts in **Lower and Middle Juba regions** reported a total of 1003 consultations, including 50% (501) children under five years of age. Suspected malaria cases accounted for 411 consultations, including 32% (132) children under five years with no death. Acute watery diarrhoea accounted for 163 consultations, including 71% (117) children under five years. Another 252 consultations were registered for influenza-like illness (ILI), including 69% (174) children under five years. Of all the consultations, **Afmadow** and **Jilib** districts accounted for the highest number with respectively 395 and 222 .
- 33 health facilities in **Lower Shabelle region** reported 4183 consultations, including 40% (1704) children under five years. Acute respiratory infection (ARI) accounted for 767 consultations of which 53% (411) were children under five years. Malaria accounted for 92 cases including 37% (34) children under five years and no related death. Only 41% (38) were confirmed by rapid diagnostic test or microscopy. Acute watery diarrhoea accounted for 38 consultations including 73% (28) children under five years and one related death; case fatality rate 2.6. **Merka** and **Afgooye** districts reported the highest number of cases. In The Merka Hospital cholera treatment centre, 6 admissions were reported including 50% (3) children under five years with no related death. Compared to week 33, this means a 70% decrease.
- Banadir Hospital in **Mogadishu** reported 45 cases of cholera including 80% (36) children under five years of age and one death below 5 years.
- Habeeb hospital cholera treatment centre in Heliwa district, **Mogadishu**, reported 29 admissions including 62% (18) children under five years and one related death of a patient above 5 years; case fatality rate 3.4.
- Jowhar hospital in **Middle Shabelle region** reported 9 admissions including 77% (7) children under five years with no related death.
- Qooladey, Marodijeex and Lawyado villages in the **Awdal region** in Northwest zone reported an increase in AWD cases. A total of 13 cases, including four children under five years of age with no associated deaths, were reported from Qooladey .



### WHO response

- From 27-28 August 2010, WHO and partners conducted outbreak investigation activities in Bu'aale district (**Middle Juba region**) following rumors of bloody diarrhoea in four settlement areas along the Jubba river. Retrospective review of health facility-based records revealed that in the past three months, a total of 172 cases of bloody diarrhoea were registered including five deaths - four under five years of age. Patients suffered from abdominal pains and having visible blood in the stool, but no active cases were detected.
- Following rumors of an increase in AWD cases in the Badhaade district (**Lower Juba region**), WHO undertook rumor verification. The number of cases being reported are as the previous weeks. The situation continues to be monitored by WHO and partners.
- As a response to the reported AWD cases in some villages in **Awdal region**, WHO provided case management supplies including ringer lactate infusion solution, an assortment of antibiotics and accessories. Health assessment is ongoing in Lawyado village.