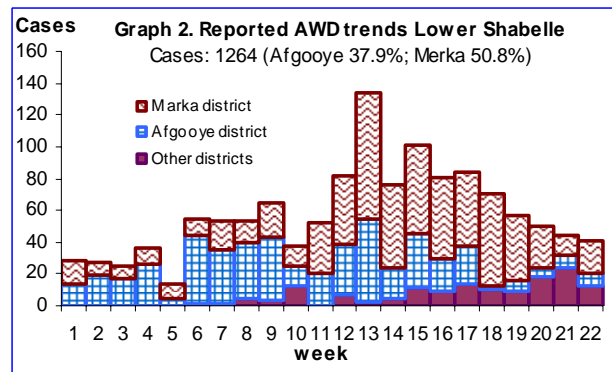
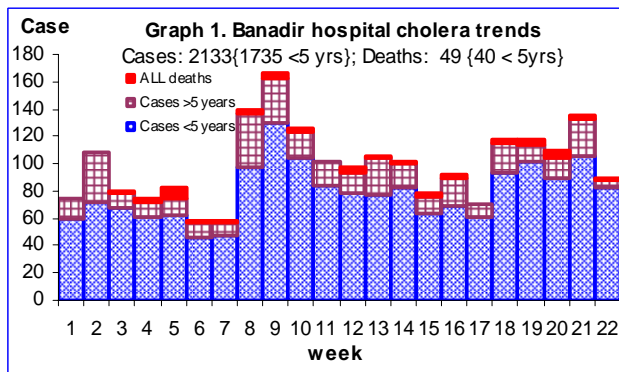




Health situation monitoring in Lower Shabelle and Banadir regions: Confirmed cholera in Merka 8 June 2010

Background: WHO regularly conducts periodic monitoring of the health situation in Somalia. These include visits to health facilities and the various localities. WHO has been monitoring the development of the ongoing acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) and cholera outbreaks reported at Banadir hospital in Mogadishu, **Banadir region** and the Merka hospital cholera treatment centre (CTC) in **Lower Shabelle region** (see graphs below)



Monitoring activity: Between **27-30 May 2010**, a WHO team visited the Merka hospital CTC and Banadir hospital. Rectal swabs were randomly collected from patients who had not received any form of treatment at these health facilities. These were sent for laboratory analysis in Nairobi for culture to verify causal agent for the AWD. Five specimen were collected from the Merka CTC; three were from patients above five years of age, while at the Banadir hospital 15 specimens were collected, nine of these from patients above five years age.

Outcome: Four specimens from the Merka hospital CTC tested **positive** for *Vibrio cholera* serotype 'inaba' while all 15 samples from Banadir hospital tested **negative**. The first positive cholera case in Merka was diagnosed using the Cholera Smart II[®] rapid diagnostic test (RDT) when one of two samples tested positive for *Vibrio cholera*. At the Banadir hospital the ongoing cholera outbreak was confirmed through laboratory tests in early March. WHO has observed that the number of admissions have declined at the Merka hospital over the past weeks. In Banadir hospital the number of cases has remained relatively stable.

Response: WHO planned a 2-days training in outbreak investigation and AWD case management in Merka for 70 health workers from seven districts in Lower Shabelle region. The implementation of the training has been delayed, awaiting clearance from the local authorities. A similar training is also planned in Hiraan region. AWD and cholera case management supplies are already distributed to selected health partners in response to AWD/cholera and the same are strategically pre positioned in Mogadishu and Hargeisa ready for dispatch to affected location.

WHO is calling on health partners in Somalia to remain vigilant and report any unusual AWD trends in the context.