

# Somali Health Cluster Bulletin #14



Child with Cholera in Merka Photo: Dr. Hammam/ WHO Somalia

## August 2008

*The Somalia Health Cluster Bulletin aims to provide an overview of the health activities conducted by the health cluster partners active in Somalia.*

*The Health Cluster Bulletin is issued on a monthly basis.*

*Contributions are to be sent to [cluster@nbo.emro.who.int](mailto:cluster@nbo.emro.who.int)*

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Number of people in humanitarian need increased from 1.8 to 3.24 million
- Access to people in need for humanitarian assistance has further deteriorated
- Fourth round of Polio National Immunization Days completed
- Confirmed cholera cases in Merka hospital

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

- This month, Lower Jubba has been hit by several incidents of violent conflict: On 12 August, a grenade exploded near the mosque of Doble town in Afmadow district, killing 2 and wounding at least 4. In Kismaayo, fights have been escalating between local clan and ICU since 20 August, claiming more than 120 deaths, over 170 wounded.
- According to OCHA\*, since January, 23 employees of aid agencies have been killed, 18 have been abducted of which 10 are still held captive.

### HEALTH RESPONSE TO THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

#### 1. Assessment and Monitoring

- **WHO** has completed a review of human resource distribution by work place and professional group in Nugal region/ Puntland with focus on qualified nurse-midwives, describing nature, make-up and mode of operation; and analyzing in-depth the pre- and in-service training history of the participants.
- **FSAU** has completed an assessment of the livelihood crisis and humanitarian emergency in Somalia. Findings include:
  - » since January, the number of people in need of livelihood and humanitarian support increased by 77% from 1.8 to 3.24 million
  - » 85% of the rural populations in need of humanitarian assistance are in 3 areas—Lower and Middle Shabelle; Central regions Mudug and Galgadud; and Hiraaan
  - » Some 870,000 people have been newly displaced since March; and an estimated 275,000 are long-term or protracted IDPs.
  - » 1 in 6 Somali children under five years is acutely malnourished. Median malnutrition rates in some areas of Somalia are above 20% (15% being the international emergency threshold).

\* OCHA – SOMALIA Situation Report # 34 - 29 August, 2008



## 2. Health Coordination & Capacity Building

### Training

- **Mercy Corps** has conducted 4 workshops for water and sanitation to reduce vulnerability of water borne diseases due to gaps in environmental hygiene (e.g. no latrines) in Jamaame, Lower Jubba since end of June.
- Based on gaps identified in an assessment in June, **COOPI** has trained 48 participants from Jamaame and surrounding villages in Lower Jubba, in a seminar for community hygiene promotion conducted on 23-27 August, with the aim to mitigate water borne diseases.
- **World Vision** conducted a workshop for teachers in Buaale, Middle Jubba in July with focus on malnutrition related diseases. 13 teachers from different primary schools were trained aiming to raise awareness of causes of malnutrition and response in their curricula.

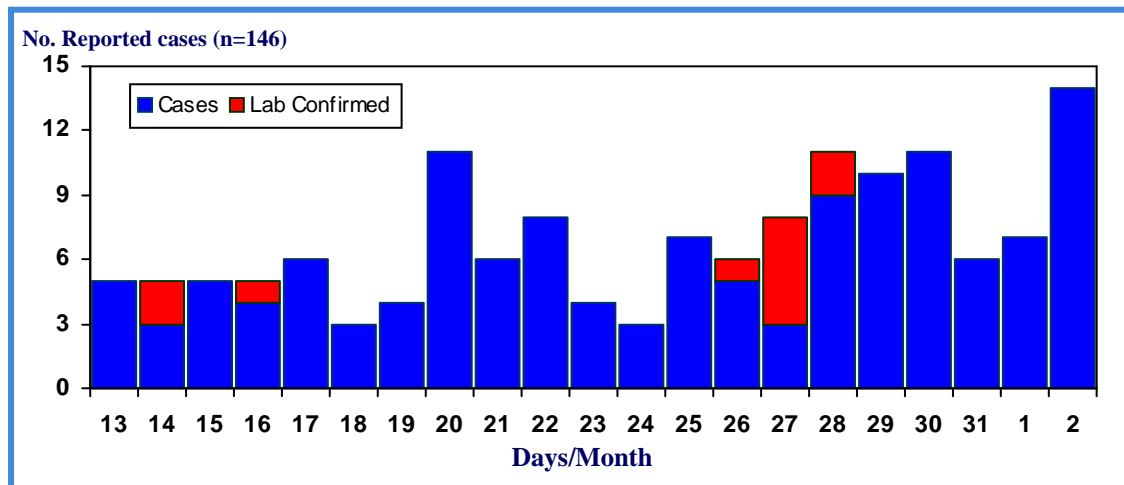
## 3. Communicable Diseases and Environmental Health

### Surveillance (EWARS)\*

- **Lower Shabelle** EWARS sites reported a total of 10,931 health events under surveillance including 103 reported deaths in the period of epidemiological weeks 29-32 (up to 15 August). Of the total cases, 14% (1,535) were reported as diarrhoeal diseases, 13% (1,510) were acute respiratory infection (ARI), 4% (436) were injuries (INJ), 2% (220) as severe malnutrition (SMN) and 2% (177) due to malaria (MAL).
- During the same reporting period in **Lower Shabelle**, a total of 4,298 consultations were reported in the <5 years old group (39% of the total consultations), of which 23% (970) were due to diarrhoeal diseases, 18% (794) due to ARI, 4% (156) due to SMN, 3% (127) due to INJ and 2% (73) were reported as malaria.

### AWD/Cholera\*

- Between 13 August and 2 September 2008, a total of 146 cases of acute watery diarrhoea including 2 related-deaths (CFR 1.37%) were reported from Merka hospital. 11 out of 12 stool samples collected from Merka Hospital on 17 and 28 August were confirmed as cholera.



Distribution of reported clinically diagnosed and Laboratory confirmed Cholera cases, Merka Hospital, Lower Shabelle Region; 13 Aug—2 Sep 2008 (source: WHO Somalia; Monthly Morbidity and Mortality Bulletin August 2008/ Vol. 1)

- **WHO** and **COSV** established a Cholera Treatment Centre (CTC) in Merka Hospital together with patient referral system from the villages and the surrounding areas.

\* more details in WHO Somalia; Monthly Morbidity and Mortality Bulletin (MMMB), Somalia, August 2008/ Vol. 1

## Immunization

- In the third week of August, **WHO** district polio officers, supported by **UNICEF** (supplies) and the **Ministry of Health** (monitoring), carried out the fourth round of the Polio National Immunization Days (NIDs). The programme reached 90% of the targeted 1.8 million children under 5 years. De-worming of approximately 1 million children between 2 and 5 years was included in the NID.
- **World Vision** started an EPI program for nomadic communities in Buaale, Salagle, and Sakow in Middle Jubba. Focus is given to the high risk of measles among children as they are not previously immunized.

## Water and Sanitation

- **Mercy USA, World Vision, World Concern, and AFREC** are continuing water chlorination in Jilib, Middle Jubba due to the high numbers of cases of AWD in the district. 60 shallow wells and 2 water catchments have been chlorinated so far.
- **AFREC** sponsored 3 garbage pits for Jilib town and surrounding villages in Middle Jubba for garbage disposal as landmines in the entire region restrict movement and hence alternatives for safe disposal.
- **Muslim Aid UK**, in partnership with **SRCS**, is continuing to chlorinate shallow wells in Kismaayo and Jilib, Lower Jubba, in order to prevent water-borne diseases. Up to date, 50 water points have been chlorinated.



Water being transported by donkey carts in Merka town  
*Photo: Dr. Hammam/ WHO Somalia*

## 4. Primary and Secondary Health Care

- Armed conflict between local clan and ICU in Kismaayo, Lower Jubba, has been going on since 20 August and later spread towards Gedo and Afmadow areas. The conflict claimed more than 120 deaths, and over 170 wounded were admitted to Kismaayo and Mararey hospitals. The hospitals were overwhelmed with the high influx of patients, running short of dressing material and antibiotics. In response, **WHO** provided 1 Inter Agency Emergency Health Kit with supplies for 10,000 population for 3 months to Kismaayo hospital; and **ICRC** sent 2 emergency trauma kits and a surgical team who did 124 operations. **Muslim Aid UK** supplied IV infusions (2 cartons of ringer lactate and 150 pieces of Flagyl IV injections) to Kismaayo hospital.
- **World Vision** is continuing the outreach services (incl. health education on prevention of AWD and using accessible health facilities in the area) to nomadic communities in Waraha-Dhobley, Jabbi, Tatey, and Nusduniya in Lower Jubba. More than 400 patients have been seen. The most common diseases observed were malaria, AWD, chest infections (e.g. common cold, bronchitis, pneumonia), and conjunctivitis.
- **Muslim Aid UK** has a Schistosomiasis programme ongoing in Jamaame, Lower Jubba, and surrounding villages, namely Kamasuma, Sanguni, Bulu-Musse, and Warkooy. 340 patients have been treated.

## Rehabilitation and Support to Health Facilities

- **SOS Kinderdorf** has taken over the management of Baidoa OPD/MHC from Caritas since 1 August.

## Health Education & Public Awareness

- **SRCS** has initiated health education for prevention of AWD and malaria since end of July in Lower Jubba after selecting village health committees (for Kulbio, Halimo-Addey, and Waraha in Badaade district). Since mid August, substantial health education started again in Jilib and surrounding villages in Middle Jubba.
- **World Vision** is using the accessible health facilities in Buaale, Salagle, and Sakow in Middle Jubba for health education focusing on AWD prevention and information sharing.
- In July, **Muslim Aid UK** initiated breast feeding promotion for lactating mothers in Lower and Middle Jubba in order to prevent AWD and malnutrition-related diseases in infants.
- **AFREC** is carrying out health education on AWD prevention in Kismaayo, Afmadow district and also trained 50 community volunteers (i.e. youths, women, religious leaders) in Middle and Lower Jubba on how to participate in rescue missions in disaster or emergency situations.
- **Mercy USA** is conducting HIV/AIDS health education in Jilib district aiming at full awareness of risk groups .