

# Somalia Health Cluster Bulletin # 8

February 2008



Shallambood IDP camp, Merka district  
Photo by WHO

*The Somalia Health Cluster Bulletin aims to provide an overview of the health activities conducted by the health cluster partners active in Central and South Somalia. It compiles health information received from the different organizations working in Somalia, but does not include Somaliland and Puntland.*

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

## Highlights

- Cluster partners carried out a vulnerability assessment mission on the health and nutritional needs of the IDPs at the Shallambood camp in Merka district, Lower Shabelle region on 16 February 2008.
- Between 21 January and 29 February 2008, 696 AWD cases including 13 related deaths (CFR 1.87%) were reported from Belet Xawa (Bulla Hawa) in Gedo Region.
- In the region of Hiraan, there has been an increase in acute watery diarrhea cases. Between 15 and 29 February 2008, about 63 AWD cases were reported from Belet Wayne Hospital and IMC OPD with three related deaths.
- The second round of the Polio National Immunisation Day (NIDs) is planned for 3-5 March and 10-12 March 2008.

## Situation Overview

- On 20 February, the UN Security Council extended the African Union-led mission in Somalia for another six months. Currently, the mission, which has also been attacked several times by anti-government elements, consists of 1,700 Ugandans and 192 Burundian troops.
- According to UNHCR, people continue to be displaced by the ongoing fighting in Mogadishu, bringing the total number of displaced this year to 51,000.
- Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) latest Weather Hazards Impact Assessment confirms that rainfall has been below-normal for the short rains season (October – December) in most parts of east Africa. In the central regions of Somalia, this has caused poor pasture conditions and limited water availability for the pastoral and agro-pastoral populations. Already, the central regions of Mudug and Galgaduud are experiencing severe drought. In southern Somalia, the assessment says crops suffered from the low rainfall totals, which could limit food availability until the next harvest season in March.



## Health Response to the Humanitarian Crisis

### 1. Assessment and monitoring

- On assessing health posts in Naftakoor and Edadgeri villages of Jamaame district, **WHO** and **Muslim Aid UK** recommended improving of the referral system in order to provide proper treatment in cases of schistosomaematobium.
- Cluster partners **WHO**, **WFP**, **COSV**, **MDM**, **CARE**, **CONERN Worldwide**, **NEW WAY**, **MoH** and **Hamillo Foundation**, carried out a vulnerability assessment mission on the humanitarian needs of the IDPs at the Shallambood camp, Merka district on 16 February 2008. Key findings include an increased number of IDP consultations at the OPD in the Shallambood Mother and Child health centre (MCH). **WHO** and **MDM** are supplying basic essential drugs to the MCH.



### 2. Health Coordination

- International NGOs operating in Merka meet to initiate the development of the Health Cluster Strategic Plan 2008 for Lower Shabelle region that will address key priority areas for emergency health intervention. Focal agencies of the various technical working groups formed include **WHO**, **MDM**, **MERLIN** and **COSV**.

### 3. Communicable diseases and Environmental health

#### Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD)

- Lower and Middle Jubba reported 358 cases from eight different districts in epidemiological week 6-8 of 2008. Approximately Forty percent (142/358) of the cases were reported from Jilib district and has been attributed to unsafe drinking water. No deaths were reported.
- In response to the AWD/cholera cases in regions of Lower and Middle Jubba, **SRCS** started case investigation and as a follow up to the response, **WHO** provided complete guidelines, supplying ORS (Oral Rehydration salt) and Ciprofloxacin 500mg tablets treatment. **SRCS**, **Mercy USA**, **World Concern** and **WHO** initiated chlorination and health education activities.
- Between 21 January and 29 February 2008, 696 AWD cases including 13 related deaths (CFR 1.87%) were reported from Balet Xawa in Gedo Region. Thirty-seven percent (257/696) were admitted to the hospital. Of the 257 cases admitted to the hospital 52% (88/257) were less than 5 years old. Sixty-six percent (155/257) was females.
- Following reports of the outbreak, a Cholera Treatment Centre (CTC) was established in Belet Xawa Hospital together with patient referral system for the village and the surrounding areas. **GHC**, in collaboration with the district health authorities and administration, has mobilized communities to chlorinate the water boozers, brackets and jerry cans to ensure safe water supplies at the household level. There are currently sufficient amount of chlorine tablets, supplied by **WHO**, in Belet Xawa.

- An increased number of Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) was also reported in Luuq town, Gedo region. **WHO** team conducted an emergency outbreak investigation visit on the 9 February. Between 17 November 2007 and 9 February 2008, 299 cases of AWD were reported from Luuq including six related-deaths (CFR 2.01%). **GHC** conducted an extensive community sensitization activity in collaboration with the local district health boards including health education activities at village level. A major house-to-house health education campaign is planned for the coming months.
- In Mogadishu, Banadir hospital received 321 AWD cases with 14 related deaths in the month of February. **Muslim Aid** supplied 13 cartons of Ringer lactate, 3000 of ORS and 200 of IV catheter (canula) to Banadir hospital. **ACF** has provided blood bags to Banadir and Madina hospitals. **MSF-S** has a stockpile of essential drugs at their CTC in Mogadishu, which can easily be mobilized in the case of a cholera outbreak.
- In the region of Hiraan, there has also been an increase in acute watery diarrhea cases. Between 15 and 29 February 2008, about 63 AWD cases were reported from Belet Wayne Hospital and IMC OPD with three related deaths. Ten samples from 10 patients tested positive of *V. Cholerae*. **MSF- CH** and **IMC** are treating isolated cases. **CARE** is conducting sanitation activities while **MSF Swiss** and other NGOs present in the area is undertaking medical management of patients. **IMC** is undertaking the construction and rehabilitation of 16 wells in various villages. Chlorine tablets were distributed for the treatment of wells. Health education was also provided. **UNICEF** will also provide chlorine for disinfection of identified wells.
- Between 21- 27 February 2008, 148 AWD cases with one related death was reported from the MSF hospital and MCHs in Beletweyne district. About 26 cases of bloody diarrhea was also reported.

### Water and sanitation

- **WHO** and **Muslim Aid UK** were on a joint mission in Jamaame town, Lower Jubba region to promote environmental hygiene activities.
- Hygiene promotional activities began at the IDP camps in Elasha and KM13. **SOPHA** conducted a demographic assessment of the IDP camps and the distribution of 3000 of cartons of soap bars. The organization will begin constructing 300 latrines for internally displaced persons.
- **ACF** initiated chlorination activities in almost 251 wells in ten districts in the northern and southern parts of Mogadishu on 14 February 2008.



Residents fetching water from a well  
Photo by WHO

### Vaccine Preventable Diseases

- Coverage for the January polio National Immunization Days (NID) was 98%. During this round de-worming tablet were administered in the 8 remaining regions of South and Central zones of Somalia targeting more than half a million children ages 2-5 years. The second round of the NIDs is planned for 3-5 March 2008 using tOPV. The campaign will be implemented in two phases with the 2nd phase conducted from 10-12 March 2008. During this round of campaigns, Vitamin A supplementation will be administered to children between ages 6-59 months.
- Two cases of measles were reported from Gududey village, Jilib district on 26 February 2008. Teams from **WHO** and **SRCS** carried out case investigation. Isolated cases were detected and treated.

#### Deworming drug provided during Polio vaccination campaign

Successful piloting of house-to-house deworming tablet distribution has been continued during the last polio National Immunisation Days (SNID) in January 2008.

	Jamame	Kismayo IDP camps
OPV0	157	49
DPT1	206	99
DPT2	392	224
DPT3	997	358
Measles	337	149
BCG	231	106
TT1	76	51
TT2	201	74
TT3	87	32
TT4	52	15
TT5	35	13

- **Muslim Aid** and **UNICEF** initiated the third round of the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) acceleration campaign on 12- 16 February 2008 in the Jamaame and Kismayo IDP camps through its outreach.
- **SCRS** and **UNICEF** conducted a similar campaign along the Afgoye IDP corridor.
- Community-based organisations together with **UNICEF** undertook sporadic EPI activities at the Tiida IDP camp in Daynile district.

#### 4. Primary and Secondary Health Care

- **WHO** donated drugs to Muslim Aid health facilities in Lower Jubba to enhance secondary health care delivery.
- **UNFPA** is supporting five mobile health teams from **Muslim Aid UK** to respond to the reproductive health needs of IDPs at camps in Mogadishu. The UN agency has supplied 200 hygiene kits to the mobile teams for pregnant women. Banadir hospital has also received seven reproductive health kits.
- **MANHAL** and **WHO** conducted an eye camp activity from 5-23 February 2008 in Jowhar. About 920 patients underwent an eye operation and 1200 patients screened.

#### Rehabilitation and support of health facilities

- **Muslim Aid** and **UNICEF** have established two OPDs along the Afgoye IDPs corridor in Elasha and Agriculture College. With the support of **WHO**, **Muslim Aid UK** will continue to manage the OPDs in Lafole orphanage, Agriculture college and Garasbaley for another three months.
- **MSF-F** is supporting the surgical activities of Daynile hospital. With the assistance of ICRC, **SRCS** opened a temporary primary health care (PHC) clinic in Tiida IDP camp on 20 February 2008.

#### HIV/AIDS

- A review of the Strategic Framework for the Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS and STIs within Somali Populations (2003 – 2008) is underway. Efforts are being made to generate more data and strategic information on most vulnerable and high-risk populations who are inevitably mobile internally and across Somali borders with countries of significantly higher prevalence.
- **NGO Murado** in Buuale district, Middle Jubba region is running an awareness campaign on the prevention and early treatment of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) practices.

#### Relevant links

- Somalia Support Secretariat <http://www.somalisupportsecretariat.info>

Please send all your contributions to [cluster@nbo.emro.who.int](mailto:cluster@nbo.emro.who.int)