World Health Organization
Somalia

EPI watch

Epidemiological Bulletin

For epidemic-prone diseases in Somalia for epidemiological Week 2-3 of 2023 (09-22-January-2023)

Current situation

Somalia is experiencing worsening drought following four consecutive seasons of failed rainy season. According to the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and Famine Early Warning Network (FEWS NEST), Somalia received suboptimal amount of dyer rains than expected since October 2021. Currently, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) estimates that the number of people affected by extreme drought has risen from 4.9 million in March to 7.8 million in December 2022, with 1.3 million displaced from their homes in search of water, food, and pasture. Some 6.3 million people - 45 per cent of the population - are acutely food insecure. For the first time since 2017, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification has confirmed pockets of catastrophic food insecurity (Phase 5) affecting more than 322,010 people. An estimated 1.8 million children under 5 face acute malnutrition, including 515 550 who are severely malnourished. The current situation including the displacement has led to more people being vulnerable to epidemic prone diseases, particularly acute diarrheal disease, and measles.

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED DISTRICTS

7.8 million people estimated to be affected by the current drought; 1.3 million have been internally displaced by drought and 50,000 have migrated to Ethiopia and Kenya[1].

Some **6.3 million** people - **37 per cent** of the population - are experiencing acute food insecurity.

45 per cent of children are facing acute malnutrition[2].

An estimated **7.8 million** people in the country require humanitarian assistance and protection

Epidemiological weeks 02-03, 09/01/2022-22/01/2023

456
suspected cholera cases

5835
acute diarrhoeal disease cases

383
suspected measles cases

2696
SARI cases

895
confirmed cases of Malaria in December 2022

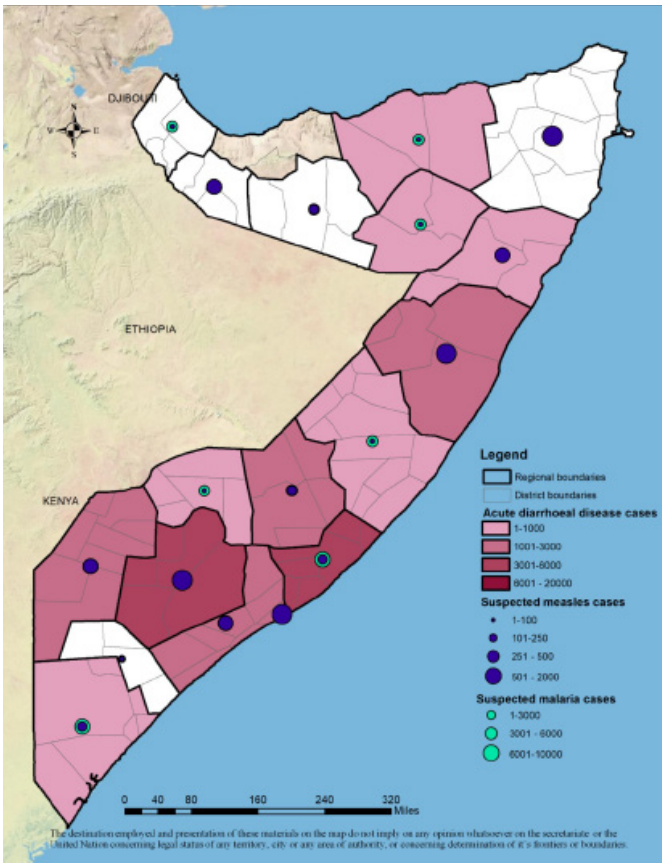
424
health facilities reporting through Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN)

2163
community health workers deployed in high risk areas including in drought affected districts

1 Somalia: Drought Response and Famine Prevention (15 November - 15 December 2022) - Somalia | ReliefWeb

2 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Report -December 2022

Reported cases of acute diarrhoeal disease, suspected measles, SARI and clinically diagnosed malaria cases in drought-affected region of Somalia, (epidemiological weeks 1 2023-Week 03 2023, 02 Jan 2022 to 22 January 2023)



The Federal Ministry of Health and WHO monitor the trends of epidemic-prone diseases in drought affected districts using data from the electronic-based EWARN, fever and rash surveillance system and community health workers deployed in drought affected districts. With support from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and in collaboration with state ministries of health, WHO is implementing activities aimed at preventing disease outbreaks, including the timely detection and response to alerts of epidemic-prone diseases reported among vulnerable communities in drought affected districts.

CHOLERA IN DROUGHT-AFFECTED DISTRICTS

Recurrent cholera outbreaks have been reported in the drought-affected districts of Somalia since 2017, with no interruption in transmission in Banadir region. The cholera outbreak in 2022 in which 15653 cases including 88 associated deaths in 26 drought affected districts were reported remained uninterrupted up to now.. (Figure 1). Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, a total of 690 cases of suspected cholera and one death were reported in 23 drought affected districts of which 392 (56.8%) cases were children under 5 , 323 (46.8%) were women and 326 (47.2%) were severe cases. In 2023, The regi)ons reporting most of the cases are Lower Juba (268), Banadir (176), Lowe Shebelle(113) and Kismayo (113 which are the current epicenter of the outbreak (see Table 1). However, the number of new cholera cases reported in Afmadow district bordering Kenya and Kismayo have reduced significantly over the past three weeks. The reduction in the cholera cases is attributed to implementation of health and WASH interventions in drought affected districts. In January 2023, 905,229 (90% of the target) people living in IDP camps received single dose of oral cholera vaccine in 10 drought affected districts. Of the 905,229 people vaccinated,149555 (16.5%) were aged 1-4 years, 300712 (33.2%) aged 5-15 years while 454962 (50.2%) were aged over 15 years.

Since January 2023, 1 total of 221 stool samples were collected from suspected cased admitted in eight treatment facilities supported by WHO and analyzed in the national public health laboratory in Mogadishu, out of which 2(0.9%) samples tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae* 01 serotype Ogawa. Culture and sensitivity studies conducted showed that the *V. cholera* serotypes isolate is sensitive to chloramphenicol and tetracycline but resistant to ampicillin and nalidixic acid.

ACUTE DIARRHOEAL DISEASES

The number of new acute diarrhoeal disease cases reported in the Early Warning Alert and Response Network (EWARN) and from the communities in drought affected districts increased during the first three weeks of 2023 compared to the past two years. Over the past three weeks, the number of acute diarrhoeal cases increased by 33.4% from 2331 in week 1 to 3190 in week 3 of 2023. The increased cases may be linked to increased number of displaced persons with limited access to safe water and proper sanitation. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 8166 cases of acute diarrheal disease were reported of which 6120 (74.9%) were children under five years of age. The regions reporting most of the cases are Banadir (2201), Bari (1501), and Lower Shabelle (696) (Table 1). WHO conducts sentinel-based surveillance for rotavirus in Banadir region which is the most common case of acute diarrheal disease among children aged under 5 years worldwide. Of the 780 stool samples collected from different locations from children aged under 5 years, 294 (37.9%) were tested positive for rotavirus infections.

INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE

The trends of cases of severe acute respiratory illness (SARI) increased in the first month of 2023 compared to the past two years. This increase may be attributed to increased displaced people who have poor shelter which resulted in people living in overcrowded conditions in camps (Figure 3). Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 3492 cases of SARI were reported from drought affected districts of which 2498(71.5%)

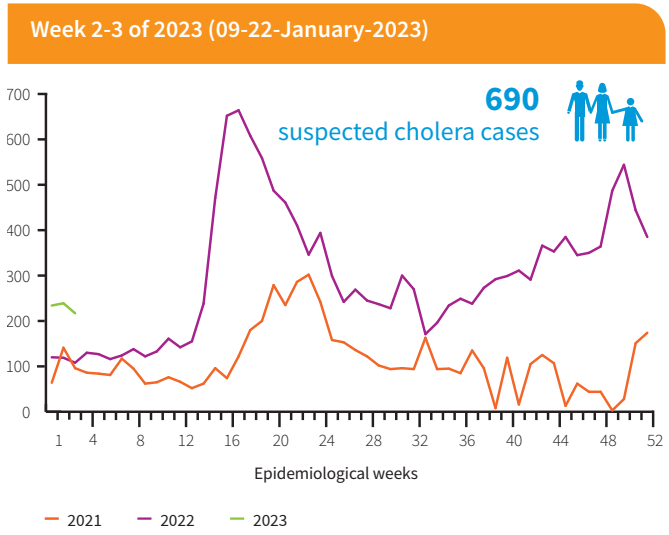


Figure 1. Trends of suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhoea cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

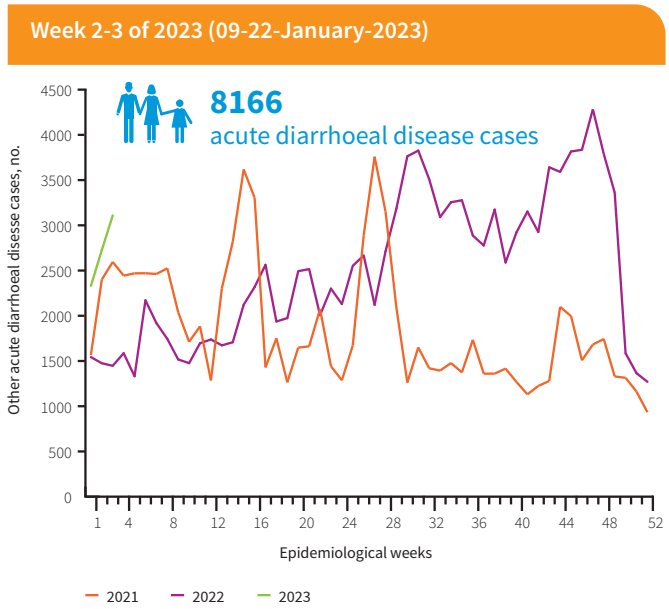


Figure 2. Trends of acute diarrhoeal disease cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2021–2023

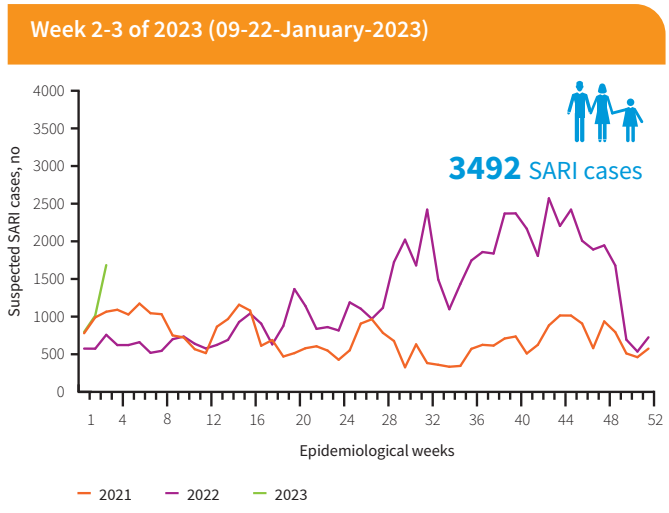


Figure 3. Trends of severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) reported from drought affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2020-2023

are children under five years. The regions reporting most of the cases are Banadir (707), and Gedo (630), Galgadud (727) (Table 1). WHO in collaboration with United States Center for Disease Control (US-CDC) and the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness(PIP) Framework supports Ministry of Health to implement sentinel based surveillance for Influenza in three sites-two located in Banadir region and one in Puntland.

In 2023, a total of 388 suspected cases of influenza were enrolled at three sentinel sitesand were reported in the platform of Eastern Mediterranean Flu (EMFLU) network. Since epidemiological week 1 of 2023, 355 influenza cases were tested at the National Public Health Laboratory of which 4 (1.1%) were tested positive for influenza; 1 (25%) were positive for seasonal influenza A (H1N1); 1 (25%) were positive for influenza A (H1N1) pdm09, 1(0.28%)) were positive for influenza B Victoria Lineage.

MEASLES UPDATES

The number of suspected cases of measles reported in January 2023 decreased compared to the same period in 2022. This reduction in cases is linked to an increase in the number of children vaccinated through integrated outreaches supported by WHO. (Figure 4). A total of 558 cases of measles were reported through the community-based surveillance system for fever and rash and the AFP/Polio surveillance system from week 1 to week 3 of 2023 of which 410(73.5%) are children under 5 years. The regions reporting most cases are Bay (212),Banadir (174) and Lower Shabelle (30).

MEASLES VACCINE UPDATES

A total of 596,737(91%) out of the targeted 658035 children under one year received the first dose of measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) in drought-affected districts in 2022 according to data from district health Information software 2 (DHIS2) (Figure 5). From 2019 to 2022, the measles vaccination coverage ranged between 80% and 91% per month compared to the national target of 95%.

MALARIA UPDATES

The number of laboratory-confirmed cases of malaria reported through DHIS2 has gradually decreased since January 2022 which might be linked to implementation of additional malaria control interventions in drought affected districts. However, the number of confirmed cases of malaria reported over the past two months have decreased by 38% from 1449 in November to 895 in December (Figure 6). Since epidemiological week 1 of 2022, a total of 336840 cases of suspected malaria have been reported of which 11550 (3.4%) have been confirmed positive by Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) and blood smear. Of the 1 1550 confirmed cases, 2970 (25.7%) are children under 5. Regions reporting most of the suspected malaria cases in 2022 are Banadir (39,659) Bay (29,544) and Mudug (27,978) (Table 1).

POLIO UPDATE

- In 2023, a total of 11 Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases, were reported. Samples from AFP cases were collected and transported to the laboratory pending results. Seven samples collected from the environment in January 2023 are also pending results
- In 2022, five circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) were isolated from Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases, four circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus

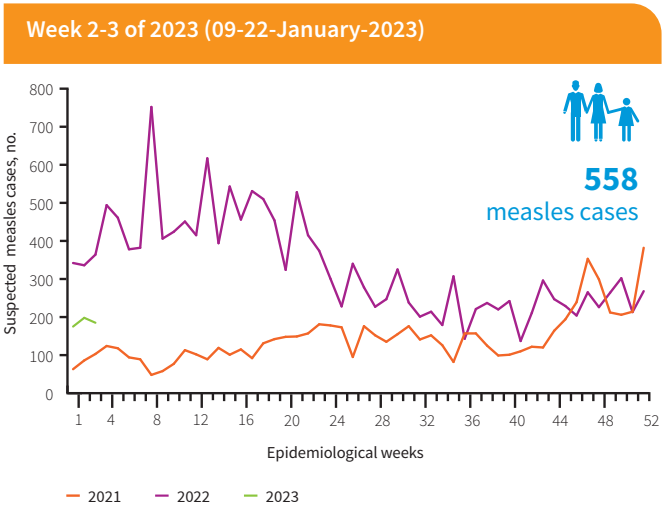


Figure 4. Trends of measles cases reported in drought-affected regions/districts of Somalia, 2020–2022

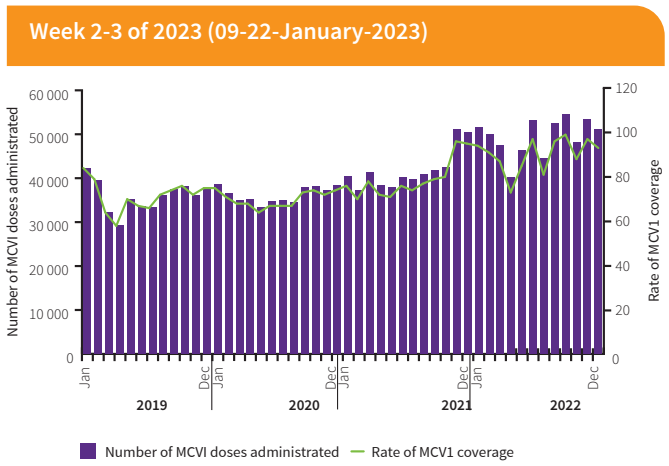


Figure 5. Number of children under 1 year vaccinated against measles by month, 2019-2022

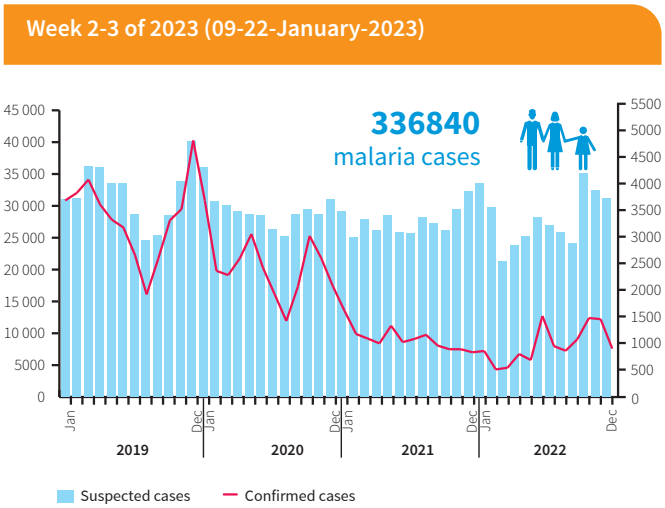


Figure 6. Trends of malaria cases reported in drought-affected regions, 2019-2022

type 2 (cVDPV2) were isolated from environmental samples (ES) while one vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (VDPV2) was isolated from an environmental sample.

- A total of 353 cases of AFP, of which 158 (45.0%) were females and 195(54.9%) males were reported in 2022. Of the 3513 cases, 342 (97%) cases have laboratory results, and 11(3%) cases are pending for processing. Out of the 342 cases with laboratory results, five were positive for cVDPV2, two positive VDPV2 3 suspected Polio Virus type 2, 16 positives for Sabin Like (SL) type virus while 316 cases were tested negative.
- A total 205 environmental samples were collected from 16 sites and sent to the laboratory in 2022. Out of these samples, five were positive for cVDPV2, one was positive for VDPV2, thirty-seven were positive for None Polio Enterovirus (NPEV)), two Sabin like virus type 3(SL3), fifteen Sabin like virus type (SL2), one positive for both SL2, None enterovirus, ninety samples were negative and fifty five are pending for processing.

Table 1: Cumulative number of acute diarrhoeal disease, suspected cholera, suspected measles, SARI, and suspected malaria cases in drought-affected regions of Somalia (epidemiological weeks 1 -Week 03 2023, 02 to 22 January 2023)

Regions	Acute diarrhoeal disease[3]	Suspected Measles cases[4]	Suspected Malaria case[5]	SARI cases[6]	Suspected cholera cases[7]
AWDAL	0	5	17624	0	0
BAKOOL	75	22	9509	6	52
BANADIR	2201	174	39659	707	176
BARI	1501	10	22580	24	0
BAY	534	212	29544	358	45
GALBEED	0	0	13818	0	0
GALGADUD	19	0	14261	627	0
GEDO	414	5	27978	630	0
HIRAN	252	14	17795	140	0
KARKAR	680	-	8425	168	0
LOWER JUBA	0	23	19481	0	268
LOWER SHABELLE	696	30	21518	63	113
MIDDLE JUBA	0	0	75	0	0
MIDDLE SHABELLE	74	12	19540	13	36
MUDUG	531	27	24221	127	0
NUGAL	607	11	11379	144	0
SOUTH MUDUG	179	0	0	421	0
SAHIL	0	1	7027	0	0
SANAG	400	0	10522	0	0
SOOL	3	1	9464	64	0
TOGDHER	0	11	12411	0	0
TOTAL	**8166**	**558**	**336 840**	**3492**	**690**

Note: Continuous data quality review has been conducted which may lead to variation of figures for new cases and cumulative cases of epidemic prone disease in each region.

3 Source of data is EWARN as of January 2023
4 Source of data is fever and rash surveillance system as of January 2023
5 Source of data is DHIS2 as of December 2022
6 Source of data is EWARN as of January 2023
7 Source of data is suspected cholera/acute watery diarrhoea surveillance system managed by the FMOH as of December 2023
7 Source of data is EPI/Polio Weekly update sitrep report.

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Published by World Health Organization (WHO), Country Office, Mogadishu, Somalia
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URL: http://www.emro.who.int/countries/som/index.html