

March 2021

# Health Emergency Programme Update – Somalia



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## HEALTH NEEDS AND PROVISIONS

- 2.4 million people internally displaced of which 1.8 million require humanitarian assistance
- 681 000 drought-affected people in six states and Banadir
- < 1 consultation per person per year reported during the month (as compared to OCHA standard of 1 new visit/person per year)

## DISEASE BURDEN INDICATORS

- MCV1 coverage rate reported to be 70% (37 272 out of 53239 infants under the age of 1 year) as of March 2021
- OPV-3 coverage rate reported to be 76% (40 396 out of 53 239 infants under the age of 1 year) as of March 2021

## KEY HEALTH INDICATORS – March 2021

- 130 Health cluster partners
- 3.15 million people in need of health care

## Funding gaps

**8.3 million** Required for WHO's health emergency programme in 2021

## HIGHLIGHTS.

- **OUTBREAK ALERTS:** 437 alerts of epidemic-prone diseases were reported through the EWARN system in March 2021. The three main alerts were for suspected AWD/cholera (37%), suspected measles (14.5%) and malaria (48.5%) - with most cases located in drought and flood affected districts
- **COVID-19:** In March 2021, there were 3807 laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Somalia, 615 patients were admitted in isolation facilities, and 227 deaths were recorded. Since the beginning of the outbreak a total of 1819 patients with COVID-19 were admitted in different isolation centres in Somalia.
- **COVID-19 VACCINE:** In March 2021, 300 000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine arrived in Mogadishu, Hargeisa, Garowe and in all federal member states. These doses are part of the first phase of the vaccination campaign and will be administered to high-risk priority groups, including health workers, frontline workers, teachers, police, people above 50 years old and people with medical conditions.

## Coordination

### Missions and meetings

- On 29 March, a UN delegation led by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, along with the WHO Representative, visited Dhusamareb in Galmudug state. During the visit, the delegation met with the Ministry of Health and the Vice-President of Galmudug state to discuss the humanitarian situation and response activities. WHO handed over a solar-powered oxygen system to the State Ministry of Health. The plant has been installed at the Hanano General Hospital, a referral hospital for maternal and pediatric patients in Dhusamareb. The plant will provide life-saving medical oxygen for the population in Dhusamareb and in neighboring districts. The delegation also attended the official launch of the vaccination against COVID-19 in the state with the Vice-President of Galmudug state being the first person receiving the vaccine.
- COVID-19 related coordination meetings which include national and state health cluster meetings, inter-cluster coordination meetings and UN task force technical meetings, were held throughout March 2021. These meetings involved ministries of health, UN agencies and partners at different administrative levels. In March 2021, the coordination meetings focused in particular on the following:
  - The scaling up of COVID-19 surveillance as well as the collection and testing of COVID-19 samples using the new antigen-based Rapid Diagnostic Test (Ag-RDT) kits provided by WHO
  - Ensuring the rollout of vaccination campaign against COVID-19 throughout the country and addressing the slow uptake of the vaccine

### Health cluster coordination meetings

- A session of the Health Cluster was facilitated by the gender and disability inclusion focal point from UNOCHA Somalia, as part of efforts to support the inclusion of people living with disabilities in programming. There are gaps in national disability data, and efforts are ongoing to incorporate disability data in major nationwide surveys, including the upcoming Joint Multi -Cluster Need Assessment (JMNA) assessment.
- COVID-19 Vaccination: Discussions were held on the need to include humanitarian populations of concern in the target groups for vaccination. Marginalized groups, IDPs, people with disabilities and NGO workers in hard-to-reach areas were considered for vaccination in the first phase. Outreach activities were considered in the vaccination plan. At all levels, equitable coverage and access to vaccines for marginalized and vulnerable people were highlighted in the vaccination programme.

## Epidemiological surveillance update

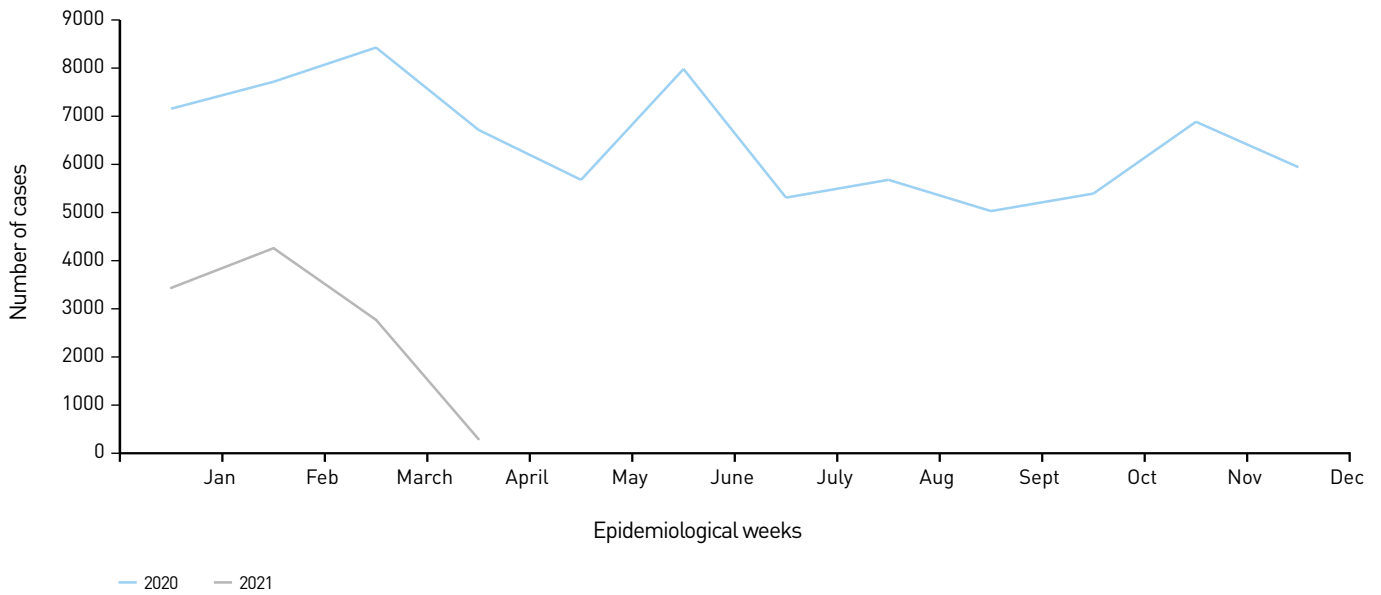
### Acute Diarrhoea

- In March 2021, a total of **7649** cases of acute diarrheal disease were reported from drought-affected districts through EWARD. The three districts reporting more than 500 cases were Marka (1015), Daynile (800) and Beletweyne (705). The number of cases in March 2021 is three times lower than in March 2020 (23 763).
- In March 2021, stool samples from **54** suspected cases of AWD/Cholera were tested. **15** of these samples were tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae* serotype Ogawa. Since January 2021, stool samples from **289** suspected cases of AWD/ cholera were tested, of which **83** were tested positive.



WHO donated an assortment of medical supplies for the De Martino COVID-19 isolation centre in Mogadishu © WHO

**Fig.1. Acute diarrhoea cases reported to EWARN in Somalia in 2020 and 2021**



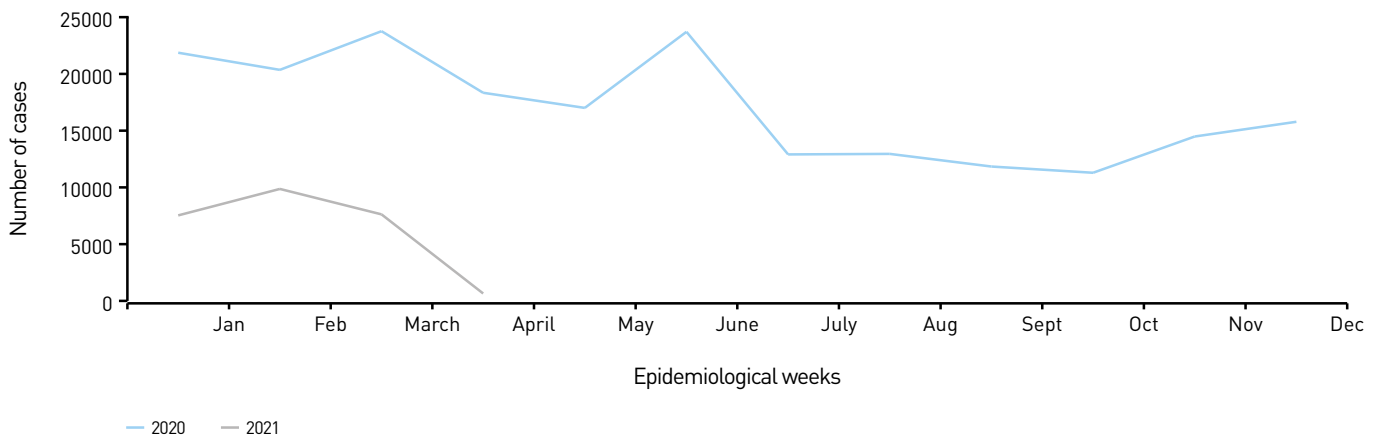
### SARI/ILI

One of the reportable health conditions of EWARN is SARI/ILI. Using a syndromic approach, data on severe acute respiratory infection are collected to support early detection and response to any respiratory disease outbreaks. In March 2021, the Early Warning, Alert and Response Network (EWARN) reported 2,770 SARI cases from the reporting health care facilities in the country. This is three times less than the number reported in March 2020 (8427). The majority of the cases of SARI were reported from the flood and drought affected districts of Adado (272), Beletweyne (428), Dhusamareb (248) and Galkayo (451).



HE. the Minister of Health of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Dr. Fouzia Nur, launches the COVID-19 vaccination exercise in Mogadishu in March 2021 © WHO

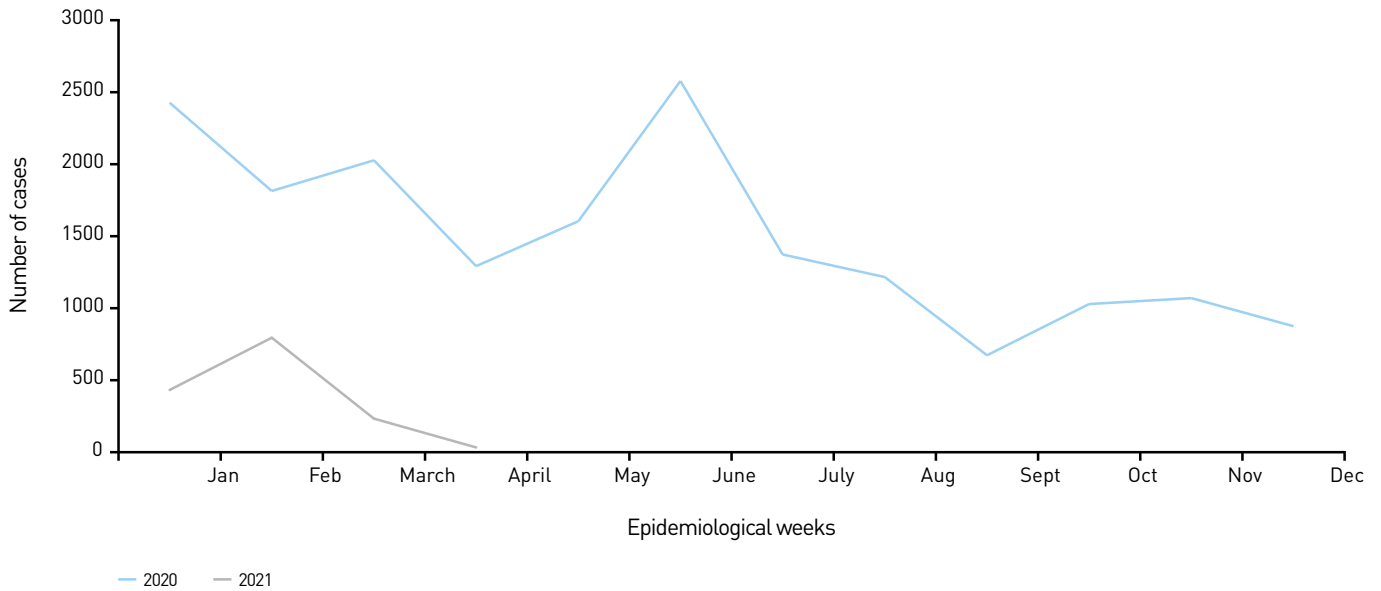
**Fig.2. Severe acute respiratory cases reported through EWARN in Somalia in 2020 and 2021**



### Suspected measles cases:

As a result of the mass measles vaccination campaign conducted in Somalia in 2020, there has been a slight reduction in the number of suspected measles cases in early 2021. In March 2021, 301 suspected cases of measles were reported mainly from Jowhar (35 cases), Heliwa (38 cases) and Kismayo (38 cases), which represents a 50% decrease as compared to the number reported in March 2020 (597 cases).

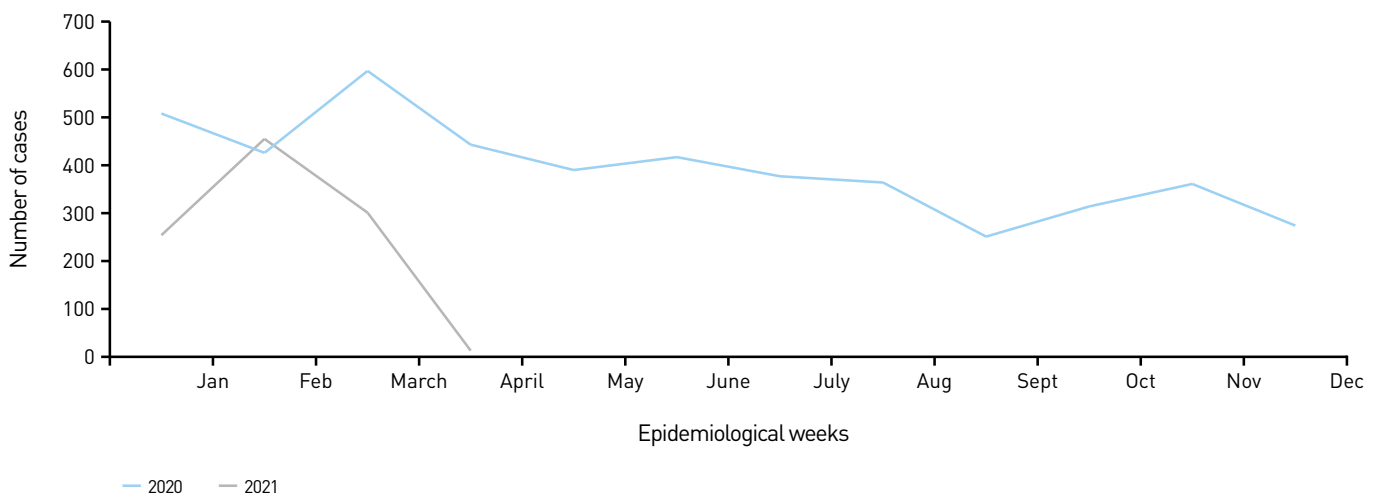
**Fig.3. Suspected Measles cases reported through EWARN in Somalia in 2020 and 2021**



### Suspected malaria cases

The burden of malaria in Somalia is considered a major public health issue. The dominant malaria species in the country is the Plasmodium falciparum, accounting for more than 95% of cases. However, an increased proportion of Plasmodium Vivax cases were reported from Somaliland and Puntland. The groups most vulnerable to malaria are children under 5 years and pregnant women. In March 2021, 233 suspected malaria cases were reported through the EWARN, half of which came from the drought and flood affected districts of Marka (57), Dinsoor (29) and Beledweyne (32). The reported cases in March 2021 are six times lower than those reported same period in March 2020.

**Fig.4. Suspected malaria cases reported through EWARN in Somalia in 2020 and 2021**



### COVID-19

- Since 16 March 2020, 12 497 laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 631 associated deaths, were reported in Somalia. The large majority (88.2%) of cases are aged between 20 and 60 years, with a median age of 35 (ranging from 1 to 110 years) and 68% of the confirmed cases have been male. The cumulative positivity rate, since the start of the outbreak, has been fluctuating and as of this month, the rate stands at 7.7%, whilst the cumulative case fatality rate stands at 5.0%. In March 2021, there were 3807 laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Somalia, 615 patients were admitted in isolation facilities, and 227 deaths were recorded.
- In light of the surge in COVID-19 cases in the country, health authorities and other government officials urged the community to apply preventive measures aimed at reducing the spread of the virus, including the consistent use of face masks, hand washing, maintaining physical distance, reducing mass gatherings and seeking medical care when sick.

### COVID-19 Sero-prevalence survey:

- The World Health Organization country office partnered with Ministry of Health and Human Services, Federal Government of Somalia; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) to investigate the extent of COVID-19 infection, as determined by seropositivity in the general population and also the population-level immunity to vaccine preventable diseases (VPD) in Somalia, during this reporting month, in Somaliland, WHO and MOHD conducted training on seroprevalence survey methodology, and sample collection, following the training, sample collection was completed in Somaliland and in the next month the training and sample collection will continue in Banadir region.

### COVID-19 VACCINE:

- As part of the first phase of the vaccination against COVID-19 in Somalia, 300 000 doses of the vaccine arrived in Mogadishu on 15 March for further distribution to all states. The administration of these vaccines is being prioritized for high-risk groups including health workers, frontline workers, teachers and police officers. As of 10 April 2021, a total of 104 432 (35% of the target) people received the first dose of the Oxford AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine in Somalia.



Health staff receive their COVID-19 vaccine in De Martino hospital  
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### Nutrition update

- WHO provides support to state health ministries with regards to management of cases of severe acute malnutrition with medical complications in the drought, flood and conflict affected districts in Somalia. This is done notably through technical support, training and the provision of supplies to nutritional stabilization centers in the country, including the distribution of SAM Kits to the state health ministries on a quarterly basis.
- In March 2021, there were 1010 new admissions to 36 stabilization centres (3 SC in Banadir region, 9 SC in Jubaland, 6 SC in Galmudug, 10 SC in Puntland, 5 SC in Southwest and 3 SC in Hirshabelle). During this month, 15 (1.4%) deaths, 1024 (96.3%) cures, 15 (1.4%) defaulters, 8 (10.8%) medical referrals were reported amongst the admitted children (1010) while 1024 children were discharged after receiving treatment.

## Trauma cases monitoring

- As the country is experiencing different emergencies including conflict, WHO is closely monitor the number of people affected by these conflicts in the country and responding accordingly. In March 2021, a total of 4361 injuries were reported from the health facilities r through DHIS2, which represents a 4% decrease as compared to the same period in 2020 (4538 injuries in March 2020)
- WHO provides quarterly distributions of emergency medical supplies. In March 2021, WHO donated essential medical supplies including 3 trauma kits, 78 boxes of interagency emergency health kits, 1 surgical kit, 5 cholera kits and 1 oxygen concentrator. The kits were handed over to the Banadir region, Galmudug, Southwest, Jubaland and Hirshabelle states. The kits will support the treatment of 8800 people with life-threatening conditions.



Arrival of COVID-19 vaccines at Aden Abdulle international airport in Mogadishu on 16 March 2021 © WHO



Health staff receive their COVID-19 vaccine in De Martino hospital © WHO

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## Our weekly and monthly information products

### Weekly Cholera infographic:

- <http://www.emro.who.int/somalia/information-resources/acute-watery-diarrhoeacholera-situation-reports.html>

### Monthly COVID-19 reports:

- <http://www.emro.who.int/somalia/donors-partners/index.html>



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