

# Somalia Health Cluster Bulletin # 6



Women lining up to vaccinate their children in Jamame during the UNICEF supported EPI acceleration campaign.  
Photo: WHO/Ahmed Omar Hussein

3 December 2007

*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

- The estimated number of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) along the 30 km Mogadishu/Afgoye road has now reached 190,000, according to the UNHCR. Humanitarian partners are scaling up the response to ensure access to basic services. Muslim Aid UK and the International Medical Corps (IMC) are providing basic health care services to the IDP settlements through health and mobile clinics with support from WHO.
- Heavy rains causing severe flooding announced the beginning of the Deyr rainy season. At the beginning of November, serious floods damaged about 350-400 houses and latrines in Burhakaba town, affecting between 700 and 800 families. More flood damage was reported from the Juba and Shabelle regions. The UN Flood Working Group technical partners (SWALIM, FSAU, and FEWS<sup>1</sup>) issued a flood advisory at the beginning of November due to heavy rains in Ethiopia and weak river embankments, despite relatively low river levels.

**Invitation for application**  
Training of Trainers workshop on **Public Health Emergencies and Response Planning** 14-22 January in Nairobi, Kenya  
For more information: [paranien@nbo.emro.who.int](mailto:paranien@nbo.emro.who.int)  
**Deadline** 11 December 07

**Somalia has 2 rainy seasons:**  
Gu April-June  
Deyr Oct-Dec

## Situation Overview

- Fighting between Ethiopian and Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces and anti-government groups in Mogadishu continues. An increased number of civilian deaths have been reported; three hospital staff members were injured when mortars landed at the SOS Hospital in Mogadishu. Access inside the city is limited, as Ethiopian and TFG soldiers have closed the main roads.
- In Baidoa, the situation is calm in spite of tensions due to the appointment of a new prime minister by the parliament, three weeks after his predecessor was forced from office.
- An increased number of IDPs from Mogadishu have reportedly arrived in Afmadow and Kismayo district, heading to Kenya.

<sup>1</sup> Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM); Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU); Famine Early Warning System (FEWS)



## Health Response to the Humanitarian Crisis

### 1. Assessment and monitoring

- A joint UN assessment mission to 4 out of 32 IDP settlements on the road from Afgoye to Mogadishu was carried out on 17 November. UN partners visited Onad camp (600 families), Tawakal Jango'an camp (420 families), Ex-Stadium Mogadishu 2 camp (333 families) and Hawa Abdi hospital. Besides the hospital, health care is provided through nearby health centres in Afgoye, and mobile clinics for the most remote settlements. A rapid assessment mission was conducted early November, showing the urgent need for increased humanitarian response.
- A monitoring visit from the Italian NGO Comitato Collaborazione Medica (**CCM**) CCM was conducted to the TB centre run by **Muslim Aid UK** in Jamame.
- **ACF** completed data collection of the Wajid nutrition survey and preliminary results will be available soon.
- As a result of several assessments **Medair** has decided to implement per 1 March 2008 an integrated water and sanitation, health education and hygiene promotion program in Jowhar and Mahadey districts and at the same time, a primary health care, nutrition, water and sanitation and hygiene promotion program in Adale district.
- A joint assessment visit was conducted into flood damage in Wadajir, Howlwadaaga, and Waberi sections of Burhakaba town, between the **Ministry of Health, UNICEF, WHO** and **WFP**. The Mother and Child Health Care (MCH) centre run by **World Vision** in Burhakaba reported a lack of essential drugs, in spite of continuing health concerns regarding Acute Watery Diarrhoea, Malaria, and Acute Respiratory Infections. **WHO** has provided **World Vision** with essential drugs for treatment of key diseases as well as sufficient amounts of household chlorination tablets to provide the affected population with safe drinking water for at least 1 month.
- **UNICEF** and **WHO** assessed the health situation in Dayniile district, in Mogadishu, where thousands of displaced people have settled. Dayniile Hospital is the only health facility that provides preventive and curative services and has been overwhelmed with large numbers of war-injured from Mogadishu.
- **FSAU** is conducting another 5 nutrition assessments in Shabelle, Afgoye and Merka. The assessment results will be comparable to the May 2007 results.
- A large scale Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) study conducted by **FSAU** with support from **UNICEF** and Gedo Health Consortium (**GHC**) in Somalia shows that lack of knowledge is one of the main obstacles for mothers to seek health care in Somalia. The study was focused on the contribution of poor childcare practices to malnutrition. Clear recommendations from the study are to raise awareness on the importance of breastfeeding, complementary feeding and health seeking behaviour; the collaboration with traditional healers in the community and last but not least: to drastically improve interagency coordination at the field level.



Interagency assessment mission to Afgoye

### 2. Health coordination

- An interagency coordination meeting was held in Jamame at **Mercy corps** where all humanitarian partners working in Jamame and Kismayo discussed a range of issues, including health.
- The **Ministry of Health** and **WHO** conducted the first Avian Influenza Preparedness Planning workshop from 12 to 14 November in Baidoa. Over 30 health cluster partners, who came from Mogadishu, Huddur, Wajid, Jamame and Baidoa, were trained in how to identify possible cases of avian influenza in birds and in humans, as well as in rapid response and treatment.

#### Decentralization of clusters

More and more cluster activities are being decentralized: The first intercluster coordination meeting organized by **OCHA** and normally held in Nairobi was conducted in Jowhar on 24 October 2007. Many health partners active in the Middle Shabelle region were present.

### 3. Communicable diseases and Environmental health

#### Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD)

- Six new cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (suspected cholera) including one related death were admitted in Bay Regional Hospital in Baidoa between 25 and 29 November 2007. One stool sample was sent to the **AMREF** public health laboratory in Nairobi. **WHO** is providing technical support to ensure appropriate case management, together with control and prevention measures. The hospital has sufficient amounts of cholera supplies in stock.



AWD patient in Merka hospital  
Photo: WHO/Ramadan Assi

#### Water and sanitation

- As a major cholera prevention measure, Action Contre la Faim (**ACF**) started chlorination of 326 wells in Mogadishu with support from **UNICEF**.
- To improve the sanitary condition of the large number of IDPs on the road from Mogadishu to Afgoye, **Oxfam** started the construction of 1500 sanitation facilities for 26 IDP settlements. At the same time, **Oxfam** is supporting its local partner **HIJRA** to carry out hygiene promotion campaigns to IDP communities. **Oxfam** is also supporting the Centre for Education and Development (**CED**) to distribute safe drinking water to all IDPs settlements and to rehabilitate 9 water wells.
- **UNICEF** is supporting Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (**WASH**) cluster partners to lay a new pipeline on the Mogadishu/Afgoye road to provide clean drinking water.
- **Muslim Aid UK** with support from **WHO** chlorinated water wells and conducted health education campaigns in an area in Jamame town from where two AWD-related deaths were reported. Another health education campaign targeting AWD and other diarrhoeal diseases is ongoing in Jilib district sponsored by **Mercy USA**.

#### Vaccine Preventable Diseases

- Coverage for the October polio Sub National Immunization Days (SNID) was between 98 and 92%. The total number of confirmed polio cases for 2007 is 8, although no more cases have been reported since March 2007. The last Sub-National Immunization Days were conducted from 26 to 28 November in Togdheer, Nugal, Mudug, Galgadud, Banadir, and Hiran regions.
- Rumours of 45 suspected measles cases were reported from two villages in Jilib district by **Mercy USA**, with no related death. **Mercy USA** promptly initiated a localized vaccination campaign and treated 11 of the patients in its health clinic.

#### Deworming drug provided during Polio vaccination campaign

For the first time in Somalia, house to house deworming tablet distribution was piloted in two regions during the polio Sub National Immunization Days (SNID) in October 2007 and in three regions during the November SNID.

#### Kala Azar

- "A 7-fold increase in the number of Visceral Leishmaniasis cases, also known as Kala Azar, was reported from Huddur, Bakool region between early 2002 and end 2006", shows a study published in the Public Library of Science Neglected Tropical Diseases.<sup>2</sup>

#### Vector control

- Conclusion from a **WHO** entomological research in Baidoa shows that community awareness on the use of bednets, and insecticide spraying with pyrethroid are the most effective measures to decrease morbidity from malaria. Malaria is endemic in Baidoa district all year round, with *Plasmodium falciparum* as the predominant species, causing high morbidity and mortality. Seasonal rivers and rainwater form favourite breeding sites for the malaria-transmitting mosquito *Anopheles arabiensis*.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/pr/2007/10-31-2007\\_2.cfm](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/pr/2007/10-31-2007_2.cfm)

#### 4. Primary and Secondary Health Care

##### Primary health care and reproductive health

- Health partners with support from **UNICEF** and **WHO** are currently conducting an accelerated measles campaign in Afgoye. The campaign includes supplementary Vitamin A for children and Tetanus vaccines for pregnant mothers.
  - Muslim Aid UK** with support from **UNICEF** concluded an accelerated campaign of the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) in Jamame villages and Kismayo IDP camps through its outreach teams. The total number of immunized are shown in the table.
- |                                 | Kismayo IDPs | Jamame villages |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <b>BCG*</b> (0-11 months)       | 412          | 988             |
| <b>Polio</b>                    | 97           | 173             |
| <b>Total DPT**</b>              | 488          | 2195            |
| <b>Measles</b>                  | 267          | 925             |
| <b>Tetanus</b> (pregnant women) | 347          | 1731            |
- \* Bacille Calmette Guerin (BCG) vaccine against Tuberculosis  
\*\* Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus (DPT) vaccine
- Health response to the 190,000 IDPs along the road from Mogadishu to Afgoye has been significantly scaled up: **Muslim Aid UK** has started mobile clinics to provide basic health services to 45,000 IDPs for a 3-month period in Km 13 and Celasha settlements with support from **WHO**, which also provided the with one basic kit. International Medical Corps (**IMC**) started its mobile health services in 26 camps in Elasha and Arbis areas. Each team is composed of 2 qualified nurses and 4 auxiliaries.
  - In response to the critical nutrition situation in the Shabelle regions, **Intersos** mobile clinics are providing basic health services to over 300 villages in Middle Shabelle. **Intersos** is implementing 20 Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP), most of them located in riverine areas. To get a more complete picture of malnutrition in the area, **Intersos** is screening children through active case finding as a part of their selective feeding programme.
- | <u>Nutrition situation still critical in Shabelles</u> (Data from international NGO) |              |          |
|--|--------------|----------|
| MCH/OPD  | malnourished | severely |
| <b>Gololey</b>   | 15.1%        | 4.8%     |
| <b>Bulo Skeikh</b>   | 9.2%         | 4.2%     |
| <b>Kulmis</b>  | 11.5%        | 2.6%     |
- Mercy USA** is planning to establish emergency nutrition activities in their Gambole Shimbirole health centre in Middle Shabelle.
  - Save the Children-UK** are broadcasting health and nutrition messages through the local radio in Beletweyne, micronutrient and de-worming provision and ITN distribution. A new proposal for another project phase of an integrated response has been developed to various donors, among them UNICEF.
  - Nine OTPs are now operational in Northern Gedo (mainly Belet Hawa, Dolow and Luuq), run by **GHC** and **Concern Worldwide**. **GHC** reports an increased incidence of diarrhoea with the onset of the rainy season.
  - ACF** opened an Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) and Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) in Dusamareb, complementing existing interventions of other health partners in Dusamareb area.
  - UNICEF** is conducting training workshops on cholera prevention, protection, education and HIV/AIDS for community workers from 33 IDP settlements on the road from Afgoye to Mogadishu.
  - The International Committee of the Red Cross (**ICRC**) supports 24 clinics from the Somali Red Crescent Society (**SRCS**) providing health care to a total population of 269,000 with salaries for 3 key staff, supervision costs (car rental, fuel, security) and medical supplies for children above 5 years and adult population. **UNICEF** provides medical supplies and vaccines for mothers and children under 5 years.



### Support to hospitals

- Last preparations are made for the opening of the recently renovated Outpatient Department (OPD) of Bay Regional Hospital in Baidoa. The OPD is being equipped by **WHO** and **UNFPA**. A **WHO** senior surgeon is arriving soon to provide surgical operations to patients as well as training to the only medical doctor in the hospital, while **UNFPA** is mobilizing a qualified obstetrician-gynaecologist. More rehabilitation works will start soon in the hospital, starting with the operating theatre and the laboratory. The reconstruction is implemented by **UNOPS**, with support from **UNDP, WHO** and **UNFPA**.

### References

- All reference materials on **Avian Influenza**: guidelines, training modules, latest news: [http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en)
- Background information on **Leishmaniasis**:  
<http://www.who.int/tdr/diseases/leish/>  
<http://www.who.int/topics/leishmaniasis/en/>



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