The Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children Hon. Ummy Mwalimu (MP), conducted a fact finding operation on the Cholera outbreak currently ongoing in the country. Her programme included a Cholera Press Conference, an inspection of Mburahati Cholera Treatment Centre and an observation of DAWASCO water pipes in a sewerage trench in Manzese Ward. WHO staff were present in all the Minister’s activities.

Summary of Ministers’ Cholera Press Conference

The press conference was attended by the Deputy Minister, Hon. Dr. Hamis Kigwangala, the Directors and Technical Officers from the Ministry, WHO and representatives from the media houses.

The Minister noted that 21 regions have reported cases of cholera since the start of the outbreak on 15 August 2015. The regions include Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Morogoro, Iringa, Kilimanjaro, Dodoma, Kigoma, Geita, Mara, Manyara, Arusha, Singida, Tanga, Lindi, Rukwa, Mwanza, Kagera, Katavi, Mbeya, Shinyanga and Tabora. She also noted that Kilimanjaro and Iringa have not reported any case for the past one month.
The cumulative number of cases has reached 11,257 with 175 deaths and case fatality rate of 1.6%. The most affected regions are Dar es Salaam reported 4,628 cases (41%), Tanga reported 1,443 (15%), Singida reported 955 (8%) and Mwanza 841 (7%). There has been great reduction in the number of new cases reported in Dar salaam from 80 cases per day in September to 6 cases as on 15 December.

She also highlighted on the interventions which already have been undertaken by the Ministry in collaboration with partners including;

1) Establishment of the National task Force with representatives from other ministries, Partners and DAWASCO
2) Establishment of Cholera Treatment camps in the affected regions and equipping the centres with essential medicines and supplies and conducting training of health care providers
3) Conducting water quality testing in collaboration with DAWASCO, chlorination of water sources and provision of Aqua tabs to the most affected households.
4) Providing technical support to the Regions and Districts affected by cholera.
5) Press conferences, mass communication, information through different media and conducting house to house social mobilization
6) Inspections of food vending premises and closure of those which do not meet the standards

The Minister issued the following Directives:

1) All regional and district medical officers to supervise the implementation of the public health interventions and provide report on daily basis on what has happened. **Measures will be taken to those who will not comply**
2) Each region, District and Ward to establish a Task Team (Public Health Emergency) which will supervise the implementation of the interventions and report back to the Ministry
3) The Regional and District Executive Officers to supervise and facilitate the Health teams and ensure they perform their duties as required and ensure environmental cleanliness in the communities
4) From today (16 December 2015), it is prohibited to sell food and fruits in the streets, **actions will be taken to those who do not comply.** Health officers should ensure that the designated food vendors observe hygiene and sanitation measure.
5) All schools and institutions should ensure high level of hygiene and sanitation in their premises.

She acknowledged all partners who have been providing technical and financial support to the Ministry of Health since the start of the outbreak, including WHO, UNICEF, CDD, USAID, MSF, Red Cross.

The Minister urged members of the press to use different channels to inform the public on cholera issues including, Radio, television, Blogs, Print media to spread the message that “Cholera is shameful” we should all take actions to prevent it.

Lastly, she reiterated the need for collaboration between her Ministry and other Ministries and departments to ensure multi sectoral interventions are undertaken to control cholera. In this regard, an Inter-Ministerial Meeting has been organized by the Ministry of State, Policy and Parliament on 17th
involving Ministries of Water, Education, Infrastructure, Transport and Communication to agree on key interventions and roles and responsibilities.

**Minister’s visit to the Mburahati Cholera Treatment Center (CTC) in pictures**

On completion of the press conference the Minister and the Deputy Minister conducted respective field visit to Mburahati and Buguruni Cholera Treatment Centers. Their objective was to see how the CTCs function, and coping with management of cholera patients. At Mburahati CTC, the Minister was met by the Kinondoni Medical Officer, Dr Aziz Msuya and his team. They presented on the Cholera situation and an overview of the services which are provided by the health facility, including, OPD, Delivery Service, RCH service, Care and Treatment for HIV and TB. It was noted that given the location of the centre the dispensary is operating above its capacity and hence the request to upgrade it to become the Health Centre was tabled. On completion of the briefing the Minister was given a tour of the CTC in the health facility. Following are pictures of the Minister’s tour accompanied by Directors and Technical Officers from the Ministry of Health, WHO and representatives from the media houses.

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*Minister being shown how decontamination is done on exiting a CTC*
Minister’s inspection of DAWASCO water pipes in a sewerage trench

The Minster also had an opportunity to visit Manzese Ward, where she was able to see the DAWASCO water pipes in a sewerage trench. On witnessing the situation, the Minister emphasized that, it is critical to ensure that safe and clean water supply system is maintained and available to the communities. Below is a picture of what she saw.