



ACUTE WATERY DIARRHOEA (AWD) OUTBREAK IN BELET HAWA, SOMALIA

Context

The historic drought conditions in Somalia have drastically affected access to safe drinking water. In Jubaland State this has resulted in an **AWD outbreak of 8,572 cases and 57 deaths** (as of 14th of May). With respect to DRC operations in Jubaland, Belet Hawa Town one of the most densely populated districts in Gedo Region has witnessed **multiple displacements of populations** in recent years, mostly to Ajuran, Balet-Amin, Jirron, Labicad, Baarka, Idaan and Albarakat IDP sites in the town's periphery. In total, **39,707 IDPs are currently living in DRC managed sites**.

Situation Overview

Since February 2023, a **Cholera and AWD outbreak broke out with 2,159 cumulative cases and 9 deaths reported in Beled Hawa town**. Cases were identified in various places, such as **IDPs sites, sections of the town and rural villages along and outside the river**. The highest number of cases are located in Farjano Section of Beled Hawa Town.

Furthermore, **potential AWD spreading to deep rural villages is a high-risk due scarcity of water access and poor sanitary conditions**. Also, the current Cholera outbreak is taking place at the same time as other outbreaks. Indeed, **60 new suspected measles cases were reported with three deaths in Beled Haw during week 21**, according to Jubaland Ministry of Health.



DRC staff sensitizing vulnerable IDPs on hygiene and sanitation practices as part of hygiene promotion sessions to prevent Cholera and AWD cases in Jirron IDP camp, Belet-Hawo (Photo: DRC)



DRC's Response

Thanks to available funds, **DRC is aligning its WaSH activities to the needs related to the current AWD outbreak**, notably through **water quality analysis, awareness raising, hygiene promotion, safe referrals and coordination with partners.**



Water and Sanitation

- DRC conducted **technical assessments to rehabilitate 5 shallow wells that supply water to IDP sites that DRC is managing in Beled Hawa.**
- In conjunction with Jubaland line Ministry, DRC conducted **water quality testing in water sources across Belet Hawa district. The water results had no traces of bacteriological contamination.**
- DRC team **purchased 125 Kg of chlorine powder for mass chlorination of public and private water sources.** DRC will notably use it to disinfect some shallow wells in rehabilitation.



Shelter and Non-Food Items

- Between 30th of April and 9th of May2023, **DRC team distributed Non-Food Items (NFI) kits consisting of 1 plastic sheet, 1 blanket, 1 sleeping mat to 179 newly arrived households** in Idan, Albarakat, Balat amin, Ajuran and Labi cad IDPs sites.



Coordination

- DRC takes part in **monthly state level WASH cluster meetings** and **other ad hoc meetings** to address any WASH related emergencies. The WASH cluster has notably been informed that **the chlorine is available to WASH partners** intending to do any disinfections/chlorination.
- Activities are notably discussed during specific **coordination mechanisms established for cholera response.**



Capacity building

- To support raising awareness efforts and preventive measures, DRC trained **4 Community Hygiene Promoters and 49 Water Management Committees' members on good hygiene practices and preventive measures.** They will in turn conduct community awareness and help promote improved sanitation practices within communities.



Gaps

- **Risks of AWD and Cholera outbreak spreading, particularly where Case Area Targeted Intervention approach (CATI) is not implemented.**
- **Current activities are limited in scope** because proper AWD and Cholera response activities are not included in programming.
- **Cases are underreported** since cases are only monitored at Hospital level.
- **Limited access to safe water sources and sanitation services for populations in IDPs sites and out-of-camps.**

Recommendations

- **Fund a comprehensive AWD and Cholera response** to suspected and confirmed cases through the **Case Area Targeted Intervention approach (CATI)**, as recommended by the WaSH cluster and UNICEF.
- **Ensure activities for CCCM outreach workers are included in programming** to support on **AWD cases finding and listing.**
- **Monitor cases also at site level** with the support of WaSH and CCCM partners.
- **Encourage preventive measures through raising awareness and community-based approach.**



“Washing my hands is no longer a choice- it is now a must-do at all times to keep our children and ourselves safe and healthy,” says Ramla as she washes her hands following a hygiene promotion session by DRC in Iidan IDP camp, Belet-Hawo. (Photo: DRC)