2017 AWD*/Cholera Outbreak in Somalia

A WASH situation on the brink:

Compounding crises over the past year have caused a rapid increase in WASH vulnerability in Somalia, resulting in a severe AWD/cholera outbreak that has infected over 51,000 people and killed 782 since the start of 2017. A large funding shortfall for the WASH response is amplifying an already dire situation.

The AWD/cholera outbreak continues to spread at an alarming speed. While there was a slight reduction in the number of cases during the first weeks of May, there are signs that the number of new cases has again started to rise, with new cases occurring in villages and districts previously unaffected by the outbreak. The risk for new hotspots and increased AWD/cholera transmission remains high.

People affected by drought-driven displacement remain acutely vulnerable to the spread of AWD/cholera. Over 739,000 drought related displacements have taken place since November 2016, a significant factor to the wide spread and explosive nature of the outbreak.

The El-Nino induced drought has severely reduced the availability of safe water sources in Somalia. Forced to confront extreme water scarcity, people have two options: purchase water from private water vendors at highly inflated rates, or use unprotected and unsafe water sources, putting themselves at further increased risk of AWD/cholera.

Even with limited humanitarian access in some regions, overall WASH partner coverage remains at an all-time high in most districts. However due to funding shortfalls, agencies lack adequate resources to scale up the response. From April to May of this year, the Somalia WASH Cluster has reported a 33% drop in the number of people reached with access to temporary safe water supply.

Shortfall in WASH funding for the 2017 Somalia HRP

Of the $ 111.6 M required, only $ 30.3 M (27%) has been received as of June 19, leaving an $ 81.5 M (73%) gap in funding to support the WASH response.

Underfunded critical WASH Activities for AWD/Cholera Response

- Scaling up emergency sanitation and hygiene in high risk IDP settlements
- Extension of the Integrated Emergency Response Teams for mobile WASH/Health/Nutrition joint response to cholera hotspots
- Institutional WASH to support improved infection prevention & control in Cholera Treatment Centres and Units, schools, and Therapeutic Feeding Centres
- Supporting the return to more sustainable water supply to reduce reliance on water trucking

The intensifying public health crisis will continue to threaten the most vulnerable people in Somalia unless urgent action is taken to improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene services. This ongoing crisis requires immediate international action from WASH agencies to scale up the response.

*AWD : Acute Watery Diarrhoea