



Norwegian Red Cross

Finnish Red Cross



The detection of Rotavirus through community-based surveillance by Somali Red Crescent Society volunteers Mudug region, Somalia

The Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS) and the Norwegian Red Cross have implemented CBS activities in several regions in Somalia since 2018.

The SRCS Galkayo branch in Mudug region has more than 100 volunteers trained in Epidemic preparedness, response and CBS. They detected numerous infectious diseases since the start of the project and collaborated with the Ministry of Health (MoH) on the successful response to prevent large scale outbreaks.

Following heavy rains during the first week of April 2023, SRCS **volunteers based in Kulmiye Internally Displaced People (IDP) camp that hosts more than 150 vulnerable households, sent 7 reports on acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) via SMS to the CBS platform Nyss on the 12th of April.** They were cross-checked by the volunteers' supervisor for verifying the community case definition the same day and an alert was escalated to MoH. In the meantime, SRCS volunteers provided oral rehydration solution (ORS) and hygiene promotion to the affected patients and families.



SRCS and MoH investigate alerts on AWD. Staff collecting samples from and distributing ORS to the affected people.

Immediately the next day, 13th of April, MoH surveillance officer and SRCS staff visited the site to investigate. They collected the first samples from the affected people to test for cholera, but the results were negative. Therefore, they tested further for rotavirus which was confirmed positive through laboratory analysis. Investigations of the sources of the infectious disease identified a lack of basic water sanitation necessities including latrines and clean water for the affected community. Residents had to defecate openly, and water had been collected from a single public water tap.

Case management and hygiene promotion activities

SRCS volunteers mobilised the community on hygiene promotion practices including elimination of human excreta from communal environments. The volunteers also distributed water purification tabs to provide the community with sufficient safe water.

SRCS with the support of the Finnish Red Cross rehabilitated 12 communal latrines and water sources of the community to prevent the further spread of the disease.



(Top): SRCS volunteers conducting hygiene promotion activities (water treatment and hand washing practice). (Bottom left): Latrines before and after being rehabilitated by SRCS (bottom right).



Water collection points before and after the rehabilitation

Impact of early detection and early action

The number of cases had declined immediately after the integrated response that included case management, hygiene promotion and WASH interventions, were implemented by SRCS with the support of its partners – Norwegian Red Cross and Finnish Red Cross – and in collaboration with MoH and the community.

No further case has been reported since the last week of April.