Sudan's Minister of Health, Bahar Idris Abugarda (r) and WHO's Representative for Sudan, Dr. Naeema Al Gasseer (l) at the third Health Sector Partners Forum.

August 9, 2017 - Bridging the gap between saving lives in emergencies, and building lives with resilience and development: Sudan is one of the global leaders on this key issue, as demonstrated at a high-level gathering in Khartoum today.

After a country recovers from a national or local crisis, people can begin living their lives again without worrying about survival. But, moving from emergency to development can be a daunting challenge, and fragile progress in peace, development, and health can fall apart. To make sure that countries can move from humanitarian recovery to development, ensuring a strong nexus between them is essential. Connecting relief and development is also a key priority and condition to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Today, this key issue was the focus of the third Health Sector Partners Forum, Sudan's highest health decision making body. Led by Sudan's Minister of Health, Bahar Idris Abugarda, the Forum brought together the Government of Sudan (including Ministers of State for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and Health) with all the key humanitarian and development actors (including UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA) and representatives from NGOs, civil society, academia and the private sector.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Abugarda stated: "Sudan is committed to connecting humanitarian recovery and development, leaving no one behind. While Sudan needs humanitarian relief in some areas, at the same time we are moving forward with development. For example, we have signed on to the Global Compact, made important progress , and established the National Health Council, where all levels of Government meet with representatives of civil society and three-year humanitarian development strategy on the the private sector, to discuss intersectoral issues as brought together in what we call 'Health in All Policies'."

The Forum further discussed linkages of health to development. Minister of State for International Cooperation, Dr. Somia Ukud, stated full ministry support, including updating the Sudan Compact Health Document to align with new global developments.

Dr. Naeema Al Gasseer, WHO's Representative for Sudan, commented: "Sudan is one of the first countries in the world to take concrete steps towards achieving the nexus between humanitarian and development work. The Government of Sudan deserves recognition for taking strides in achieving this nexus, and ultimately securing that lives are saved, while the country as a whole continues to develop on the road to achieving the SDGs."

, which includes the roadmap of work for the Eastern Mediterranean Region for 2017–2021 The leadership of Sudan on this issue also supports the strategy laid out in WHO's key priority to "ensure a coherent public health approach to an emergency response" as well as "preparedness and health security".

According to Dr. Zafar Mirza, WHO's Regional Director of Health System Development, "Sudan is ready to move forward and operationalize today's Health Partners Forum recommendations. This means that, in cooperation with key actors from the humanitarian and development fields, projects can be scaled up which include the nexus between relief and development, and focus on early recovery, refugees, returnees, lack of financial protection of vulnerable populations."

In his keynote presentation, Dr. Andr Griekspoor, WHO's Senior Policy Advisor, stressed the need for implementing new ways of working and efforts to galvanize predictable and flexible humanitarian and development funding to support the Humanitarian, Development and Peace Nexus.

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