



Syrian Arab Republic Unrest

Situation Report # 7

Date: 30 June 2012

Highlights

- WHO has completed a rapid assessment to measure the functionality of 342 primary health care centres and 38 hospitals in 7 affected provinces.
- A second mobile health clinic has been renovated and equipped by WHO and is currently stationed in Rural Damascus.



64% of the children visiting the mobile clinic in Homs were diagnosed with respiratory infections
Photo: WHO

Health situation

- The Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) reports that 350,000 people now need humanitarian assistance in Idlib Governorate and 250,000 people require assistance in Homs Governorate.
- There is a reported need for medical equipment and drugs (mainly noncommunicable diseases, insulin, cardiac, and dialysis) as requested by Ministry of Health and hospitals visited by WHO. Kidney dialysis machines and consumables are a priority among all NCD drugs, followed by respirators for adults and children.
- The national surveillance system needs strengthening, especially in affected areas experiencing shortages in medical staff.

Coordination

- WHO co-chairs the health sector sub working group biweekly meetings in Damascus which are attended by UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNDP and UNRWA.
- WHO participated in an inter-agency coordination meeting in Amman on emergency preparedness and response in the Middle East and North Africa. The session focused on the humanitarian situation in Syria (as well as Yemen), with the discussion focusing on sharing of agency-specific policies and activities, as well as agreeing on a coordinated inter-agency intervention.

WHO and health partners' response

- WHO has completed a rapid assessment to measure the functionality of 342 primary health care centres (PHC) and 38 hospitals in 7 affected provinces: Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama, Idlib, Der El Zor, Daraa, and Tartous. The first six provinces were selected to assess the effect of the current unrest on health services, while Tartous was selected to assess its overburdened health facilities due to high numbers of internal refugees from other affected provinces. The survey was conducted to assess the availability and functionality of health services and resources in affected areas. Some of the main findings include:
 - More than half of PHCs are fully functioning (56%), less than half are partially functionally (42%), and 2% are non-functioning.
 - 13% PHCs are inaccessible. The main obstacles are: distance of PHC from patients (50%, mostly in Idlib), lack of safety (34%, mostly in Homs and Hama), difficulties in public transportation (8%, mostly in Tartous), temporary relocation of patients (2%).
 - 50% of hospitals are fully functioning and 34% are partially functioning due to lack of staff, equipment and medicine. There is an urgent need for infant incubators in some hospitals, CT scans, doppler, echography, anesthesia equipment, and ambulances. Antibiotics, anti-ulcer medication, sterilizers and antidotes are also urgently needed.
 - 21% of hospitals are usually accessible. The main obstacles are lack of safety related to the current situation, long distances to hospitals, and difficulties in available public transportations (12.5%). These issues exist mainly in Rural Damascus, Daraa, Homs and Der El Zor provinces.
 - The majority of PHCs and hospitals count on the national water supply system as a main source of water (88%, 87%, respectively). Around one-fifth of PHCs have no available sanitation system (17%, mostly in Hama, Der El Zor and Dara'a).
 - Only one-tenth of PHCs have usable generators; the majority has usable blood pressure apparatuses (94%); Availability of nebulizers, fetoscopes and suction machines are 44%, 30% and 18% respectively.
 - ORS packets, anti-allergic, NSAIDs, local anesthesia, disinfectants and antiseptics are available in more than half of PHCs. There are deficiencies in antidotes (Homs), antifungal (Homs and Daraa), ophthalmic (Idlib), IV fluid, gastrointestinal (Daraa), and anti-diabetics tablets (Hama). In hospitals, there were shortages in anti-diabetics tablets, ophthalmic preparations, ORS (packets), ENT preparations and anti-fungal medication.
- WHO has coordinated with WFP to distribute 1 surgical kit in Der El Zor and 1 surgical kit in Homs. Each kit consists of surgical consumables and drugs for 100 patients for 10 days.
- A mobile health clinic renovated and equipped by WHO and staffed by local physicians has been based in Rural Damascus since 5 June.
 - From 5-28 June, the clinic was visited by a total of 1142 people – an average of 54 visits per day;
 - 1137 of people visiting the clinic were provided with medical treatment;
 - 520 of the total number of cases were female;
 - 6 patients were referred to hospital, and 289 referred to pharmacies.
- A mobile health clinic renovated and equipped by WHO and staffed by local physicians has been based in Homs since 28 April.
 - From 28 April to 1 July, the clinic was visited by a total of 3780 people – an average of 66 visits per day;
 - 3619 of people visiting the clinic were provided with medical treatment;
 - 1418 of the total number of cases were female;
 - 1529 of the total number of cases were children under the age of 10;
 - 74 patients were referred to hospital, and 1451 referred to pharmacies.

- WHO is in the process of recruiting national Public Health Officers at Governorate levels, starting with those most affected by the conflict and those receiving the largest numbers of IDPs. This is being done in consultation with MoH.
- WHO participated in a UN reconnaissance mission to Homs, Hama, Dar'aa and Der El Zor to identify SARC offices that will serve as locations for UN field presences. Based on the assessments, hubs may initially be established in Homs and Der El Zor, although the deployment of staff is currently on hold for security reasons.
- WHO is a member of a mental health and psychosocial support subgroup led by UNICEF in Syria. Participating agencies and organizations include UNFPA, UNHCR, IOM, IMC, the Danish Red Cross and SARC. The main area of work supported by the group is the training of trainers and local staff through the Ministry of Health for the provision of psychosocial support at a community level.

Donors and funding

- The Syria Humanitarian Response Plan funding requirements for US\$180 million have been covered at 19.6% with donor contributions totalling US \$7.6 million. The health sector funding requirements of US\$27 584 298 have been covered at 16% with donor contributions totalling US\$4 509 025.

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