

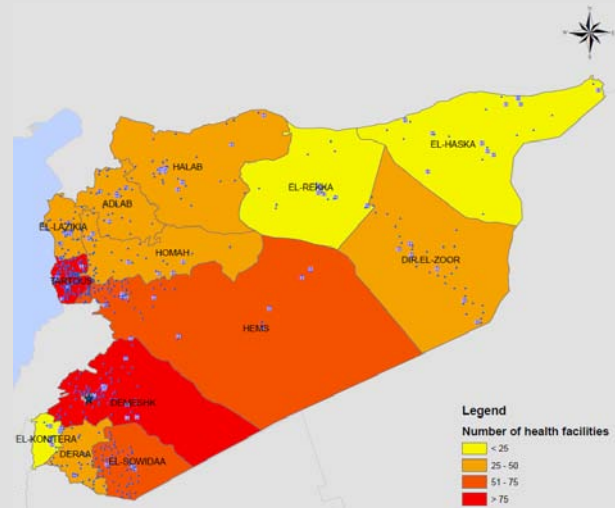
## Syrian Arab Republic Unrest

Situation Report # 4

Date: 29 March 2012

### Highlights

- WHO and the Ministry of Health are developing a disease surveillance action plan which will focus on prioritizing and defining case-definitions for high-risk diseases, as well as training a surveillance team at all levels.
- The report of the government-led inter-agency rapid assessment mission is being finalized. The UN agencies contributing their findings to the final report are WHO, UNICEF, World Food Programme (WFP), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).



### Health situation

- The overall situation remains volatile, requiring continuous situational assessment and monitoring to identify emerging priorities and unmet needs and adjust the health response accordingly. The longer the unrest continues, basic health services will be critically hampered due to lack of access for the affected population, as well as for service providers. There are increasing needs for medical supplies as the supply chain to service facilities is disrupted in some areas due to security concerns and growing economic constraints.

### Coordination

- The results of the government-led interagency rapid assessment mission are being finalized. The UN agencies contributing their findings to the final report are WHO, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, UNFPA, UNDP and OCHA.

- WHO is working with three newly-established committees in the Ministry of Health to establish better coordination on health-related issues in the Syrian Arab Republic. The committees created are for health facility assessments and identification of gaps and needs, emergency response management and for the coordination of nongovernmental organizations.
- WHO is participating in the weekly health sector coordination meetings in the Syrian Arab Republic to discuss activities, needs, implementation and the distribution of assistance by each agency. One of the issues discussed was the progress on mapping health facilities in the Syrian Arab Republic.

## WHO response

- WHO is pre-positioning medical supplies from its warehouse in Dubai to the Syrian Arab Republic. The shipment consists of surgical supplies and interagency health kits which will be distributed to the affected areas.
- WHO and the Ministry of Health are developing a disease surveillance action plan which will focus on prioritizing and defining case definitions for high-risk diseases, as well as training a surveillance team at all levels. WHO met with senior Ministry of Health staff from related directorates, including primary health care, communicable disease and national public health laboratories. During the meeting, the following points were raised.
  - Current situation of the surveillance system
  - Preparation of an action plan which will focus on:
    - prioritizing high-risk diseases sensitive to the situation
    - defining case-definition for high-risk diseases
    - training surveillance team at all levels
  - Preparedness of the national public health laboratories related to availability of diagnostic tools/kits (procurement process).

## Donors and funding

- The League of Arab States is working with WHO to support to the health needs of the Syrian population affected by the unrest. The immediate needs of the affected population will be identified by WHO and the League of Arab States, based on the results of the recent interagency assessment mission in the country. The League of Arab States will be working with WHO to monitor and implement relief efforts.
- The Government of Italy has donated 10 trauma kits to WHO for the current crisis. The kits, which are currently being shipped to the Syrian Arab Republic, will cover 1000 surgical interventions.
- The Government of Norway has donated medical supplies to WHO to support basic primary health care services, as well as for post-operative care. The supplies, which are currently on their way to the Syrian Arab Republic from Dubai, will provide post-operative care for 400 patients for 10 days and primary health care for 100 000 patients for three months.

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