

WCO SYRIA BI-WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT



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1. COVID-19 Update

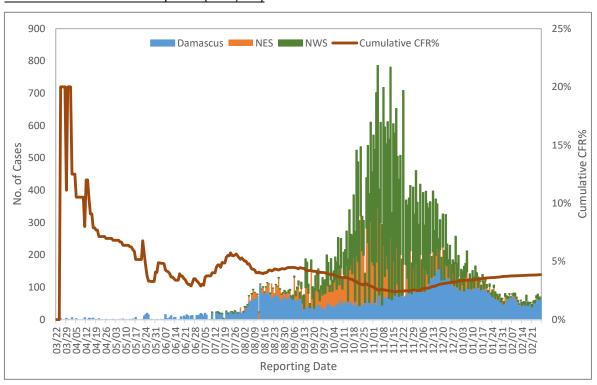
1.1. COVID-19 Statistical Summary at Whole of Syria level

As of 27 February 2021

	45 314	Total cases (including 3 907 health workers)
	14 113	Active cases
3	29 449	Recovered cases
80	1 752	Deaths
	3.9%	Case Fatality Rate (CFR)
	20	COVID-19 functional laboratories
本	179 551	COVID-19 tests done
本	880	Overall testing rate per 100 000 population
變	222.2	Incidence rate per 100 000 population (highest in Al-Hasakeh; 476.2)
-	25.3%	Positivity rate (highest in As-Sweida; 62%)

1.2. Daily Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Cumulative CFR at Whole of Syria Level

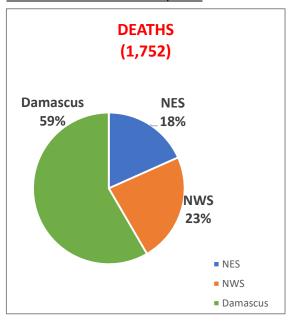
22 March 2020 – 28 February 2021 (n=45,314)

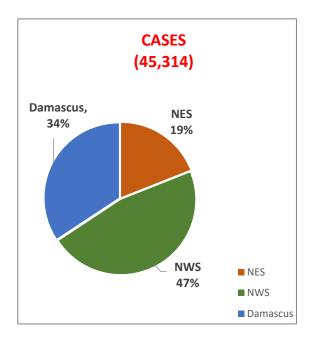




1.3. Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths at Whole of Syria Level

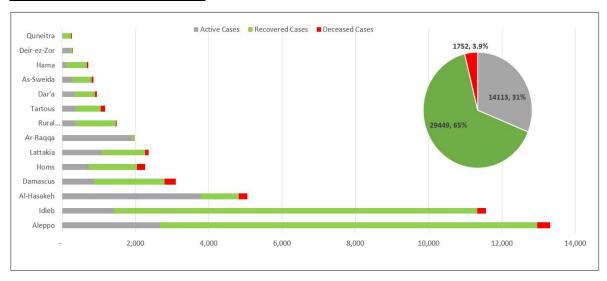
22 March 2020 - 27 February 2021





1.4. Distribution of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by Governorate and Outcome

22 March 2020 - 27 February 2021



2. WHO Response

2.1. Health Sector Coordination

- Conducted regular sub-national health sector meetings, including:
 - A regular Al-Hol camp health sector coordination meeting in Al-Qamishli.
 - A regular sub-national health sector meeting in Aleppo.
- Took part in the external evaluation of the Whole of Syria (WoS) programme.



- Followed up on the establishment of the Reproductive Health sub-working group and sought expression of interest for membership for health partners.
- Conducted a technical meeting with the NES Forum on COVID-19 strategy in camps across the NES as well as an inter-hub meeting on the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccination.
- Developed COVID-19 Response Monitoring Framework (January to December 2021).
- Prepared and disseminated the following reports:
 - 2020 Health sector annual report;
 - Health sector bulletin for January 2021;
 - Health sector bi-weekly operational update, 1-15 February 2021.
- Updated the health sector on WHO and UNICEF produced COVID-19 materials.
- Collected inputs from health partners working in Al-Hol camp on availability/shortages of medications in the camp.
- Presented health sector updates at Al-Qamishli Inter-Sector Coordination meeting arranged by OCHA on 15 February 2021.
- Presented updates on the health situation in Al-Hol camp during Al-Hol Camp coordination meeting arranged by UNHCR on 16 February 2021.
- Organized the third bi-weekly NES inter-hub meeting with the participation of NES Forum partners on 23 February 2021.
- Participated in area-based planning workshops at central and coastal areas held on 25 February 2021.
- Co-facilitated technical meeting with the NES Forum on COVID-19 strategy in camps across the NES which brought together WHO Syria technical staff, several cross-border INGOs, UNICEF, and OCHA.

2.2. Non-Communicable Diseases and Primary Health Care

- Held Official meetings with the Directorate of Health in Lattakia to address the health needs, gaps, challenges as well as the provision of the needed supplies.
- Visited hospitals and primary health care centers in Jableh health district to assess the IPC measures implemented within the context of COVID-19, along with the needs on the ground.
- Assessed the readiness of Al-Basel National, Jableh, and Tishreen university isolation hospitals in terms of IPC, case management and dialysis capacity.
- Initiated data collection system using WHO progressive model tool at the level of Primary Health Care Measurement and Improvement in 6 governorates (Damascus, Homs, Quneitra, Lattakia, Aleppo and Deirez-Zor).

2.3. Trauma

- 40 000 treatments of life-saving medicines were provided centrally to MOH and MOHE for further distribution to public hospitals in the governorates, based on need priority to enhance their capacity for a timely and appropriate response to emergency cases, including COVID-19.
- 50 health workers from Lattakia and Aleppo were trained on "Children and Adults Life Support" to enhance their capacities in responding effectively to emergencies in the country.
- 75 health workers from Damascus and Rural Damascus (Prosthetics and orthotics technicians, physiotherapists, and physiatrists) were trained in the MOH Center of Prosthetics and Rehabilitation in Damascus, focusing on disability and rehabilitation on "Manufacturing of Knee-Ankle-Foot Orthoses (KAFOs), and "Rehabilitation of patients with upper limb amputation."
- A meeting was conducted with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, UNFPA and Agha Khan Development Network to discuss a plan to reactivate the programme "Every Newborn Action Plan".



2.4. Secondary Health Care

- In cooperation with MOHE, WHO trained 25 cancer registrars and resident doctors on cancer registry as part of the International Classification of Diseases for Oncology (ICD-O-3). Thetraining took place at Al-Bairouni Oncology Hospital in Damascus.
- 4 hemodialysis machines were installed at Harasta National Hospital.

2.5. Mental Health

- Followed-up with partners (UNHCR, UNICEF, IMC, DORCAS, AAH, MEDIAR, QUESTSCOPE, UNFPA, UNDP, GOPA, SSSD) in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Technical Working Groups (MHPSS TWGs) on MHPSS referral pathways and dissemination of new guidelines for COVID-19.
- Closely coordinated with OXFAM, Medair, INTERSOS on MHPSS capacity-building in the first and second quarters, in addition to adopting mental health in the workplace at country offices.
- Conducted 7 capacity-building activities for NGO implementing partners (All Noor Foundation, Al Tamayouz and Al Sham Association) covering the Mental Health GAP (mhGAP) programme and basic psychosocial skills for COVID-19 responders.
- Finalized capacity building activities for Q1 and Q2 for mhGAP programme at the PHC level and the health directorate in the Ministry of Education.
- Delivered the newly received psychotropic shipment to the Ministry of Health, North-east Syria and Northwest Syria.
- Actively participated in the regional workshop for Gender-Based Violence (GBV) 2021 Country Work Plans, presenting the Syrian Work Plan and the way forward.

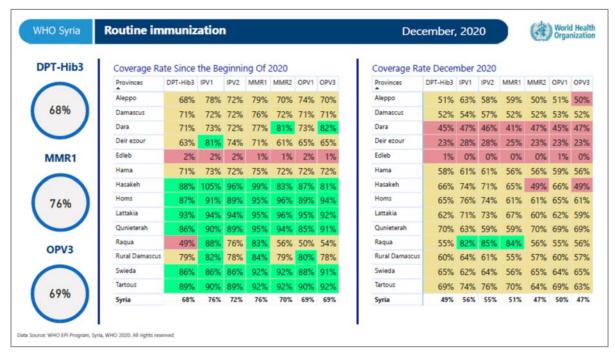
2.6. Tuberculosis (TB) / HIV

- Two TB mobile clinics provided health services in both Aleppo and Rural Damascus governorates including testing 95 TB suspected cases in which two cases were confirmed positive.
- Conducted 18 awareness sessions on TB for 426 beneficiaries.
- Followed-up on the routine activities for TB and AIDS programmes, including conducting field visits to the TB centers in both Tartous and As-Sweida governorates.
- Conducted two educational sessions for youth on AIDS and shipping of samples in Damascus.
- Al-Sham NGO continued outreach activities for HIV high-risk groups; 487 beneficiaries were targeted through 49 awareness sessions. As part of this partnership, 418 volunteers were tested for HIV and no positive cases were recorded.
- TB/HIV team conducted a field visit to Lattakia to follow up on the Middle East Response (MER) grant ongoing activities. The mission included meeting with the concerned officials at the Directorate of Health to address health needs, gaps, challenges in both TB and HIV programme.

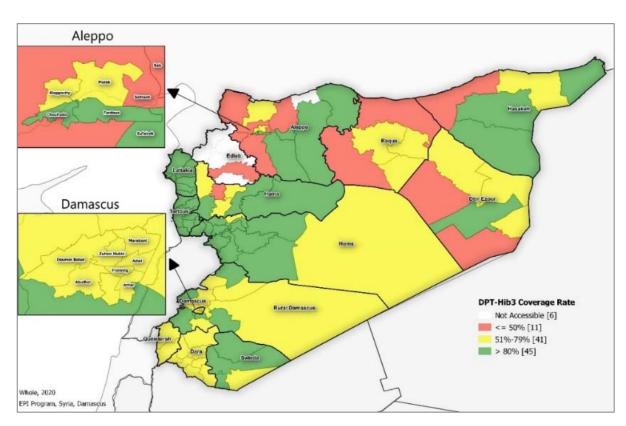
2.7. Immunization

- The National Polio vaccination campaign is planned from 7 to 11 March 2021.
- WHO finalized the Routine Immunization report for 2020. The vaccination coverage of Diphtheria-Polio-Tetanus (DPT)-Hib3 was 68%.

5



DPT-Hib3 Vaccine Coverage by District in Syria, 2020



Map of Syria showing DPT-Hib3 vaccine coverage rates



- WHO supported the following activities:
 - Training of Trainers for Extended Program of Immunization (EPI) officers on surveillance.
 - Quarterly workshop for Acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) surveillance conducted in hospitals selected by MOH to follow up on AFP cases.
 - Polio committee of national experts met to follow up on the Acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) cases.
 - The National Certification Committee (NCC) met to develop the national polio certification report for 2020.
 - Conducted a seminar on the surveillance at the MOE School Health Department.

2.8. Environmental Health

- To identify pathogens, WHO monitored the water quality to check chemical and biological contamination of different water sources, such as water networks, ground wells, reservoirs, water tanks, and jerry cans.
- 48 tests were conducted in seven villages in Rural Aleppo (Northern and Southern part), 34 tests in Rural
 Damascus, and 530 tests in North-east Syria (Al-Hasakeh, Ar-Raqqa, and Deir-ez-Zor) including eight IDP
 camps and collective shelters, among which 34 water sources in Rural Aleppo and 17 water sources in Rural
 Damascus were found biologically contaminated and were sterilized.
- WHO delivered 4 million chlorine tablets to north-east Syria and 100 items for the APT (Adenosine triphosphate) test to the partners.

2.9. Points of Entry

- WHO supported MOH to enhance the national capacity of preparedness and response to health emergencies and ensure health security under International Health Regulations (2005), including strengthening the core capacity at points of entry (POE).
- WHO has supported screening efforts at the designated POE by providing PPEs, infrared thermometers, barriers, registration forms and one thermal scanner camera.
- Among 15 Government of Syria (GOS)-designated POE, eight have now partially opened for international travelers, including airports in Damascus, Aleppo and Lattakia. At the Nasib ground-crossing, the movement from Jordan to Syria has been open including travelers, but the movement from Syria to Jordan has been limited to commercial conveyances.
- A medical point in Al-Boukamal ground-crossing is under construction by DOH Deir-ez-Zor. MOH and WHO
 are working on equipping the point with medical devices and furniture to be functioning for providing
 health access to travelers.
- WHO supported MOH in conducting two workshops in the MOH premises on enhancing the preparedness
 and response capacity of POE, specifically IPC measures and risk communication based on the Intra Action
 Review recommendations conducted last December. Throughout the two workshops, a total of 50 officials
 of the Directorates of Health in Tartous, Lattakia, Damascus and Rural Damascus, who are at the forefront
 of the response at POE were trained.

2.10. Nutrition

- WHO monitored Nutrition Surveillance, Newborn Care at Home, IMCI (integrated management of childhood illnesses) in Damascus, Aleppo, Lattakia, Dara'a, Rural Damascus, and Tartous.
- WHO collected January 2021 data from: 25 stabilization centers for treating children with acute malnutrition, where the number of admissions was 102 with the highest number being in Aleppo (18 admissions). 356 health centers implemented the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses programme: out of 77 006 children, 15 565 received special care and 262 were referred to hospitals.



- 46 hospitals in 12 governorates implemented the neonatal resuscitation programme; the total number of deliveries was 6998.
- WHO held discussions with WHO Regional Office team on the 2021 Nutrition Plan, Syrian Table Food project and the implementation of Early Childhood Development in Humanitarian Settings.

2.11. Information Products and Related Activities

- WHO updated COVID-19 Dynamic Infographic Dashboard for Syria:
 - Online item tracking system for COVID-19 in Syria;
 - EMRO Key Performance Indicators (KPIs);
 - HeRAMS key information on health facilities; and
 - Maps for health sector interventions.

2.12. External Relations and Communication

- WHO Syria's digital and social media channels are regularly updated with new information on COVID-19 and other public health resources. Over the course of 15-28 February, the office reached 39 100 readership and viewership, which is 58.4% more comparing to January 2021.
- A meeting was conducted with the concerned NGOs to start implementing the Solidarity Initiative focusing
 on psycho-social support to parents, caregivers and children through 'My Hero is You' coloring book. The
 initiative will be conducted in the governorate of Rural Damascus in cooperation with the Ministry of
 Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MoSAL). Training materials are in the process of
 development. The training for two selected NGOs will start in two weeks.
- WHO in cooperation with UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health in preaparing for a launch of its new
 initiative "Towards Healthier Society One Week without Sugar". The campaign aims at raising awareness
 among the community on the best nutrition practices including the bad effects of using white sugar.
- Through the partnership with EMRO, WHO followed up with UNICEF, MOH and MOI to better understand
 the ongoing efforts, successes and challenges related to social listening and community feedback to
 provide the needed support in this regard.

2.13. Community Engagement (NGOs)

- Strengthened the provision of life-saving and life-sustaining health care services on a referral basis. The
 number of beneficiaries from trauma care services is 135, and from advanced surgical intervention in
 north-east Syria is 66 who are mainly from IDP camps and informal settlements. Only 12 benefited from
 Damascus and Homs.
- Boosted primary health care services, including medical consultation and medication on child health, reproductive health and chronic diseases to reach people in need. The total number of health services provided in Damascus and Homs governorates was 4 762.
- The number of people who benefited from rehabilitation services, inclusive of physical rehabilitation and assistive devices in Homs, was 118.
- The number of MHPSS (mental health and psycho-social support) services provided inclusive of group psychological intervention sessions, individual psychological interventions and recreational activities were 449 services.

2.14. Pharmacy

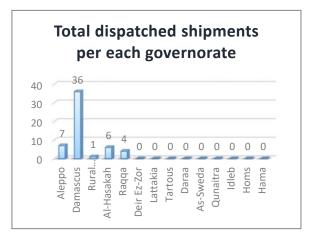
• Followed up on preparation for the 2021 EML (essential medical list) workshop which aims at discussing and specifying the requirements of medicines and supplies during 2021.

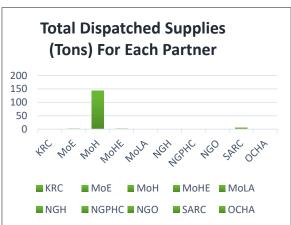


- Held joint discussions with MOH on the capacity building plan and the way forward in the area of pharmaceuticals issues.
- Supported responsible technical officers at MOH to attend the "WHO Virtual Workshop on COVID-19 vaccines Safety Surveillance" which was conducted jointly with WHO headquarters and Eastern Mediterranean Reional Office (EMRO).
- Participated in the Gender with Age Marker (GAM) training.

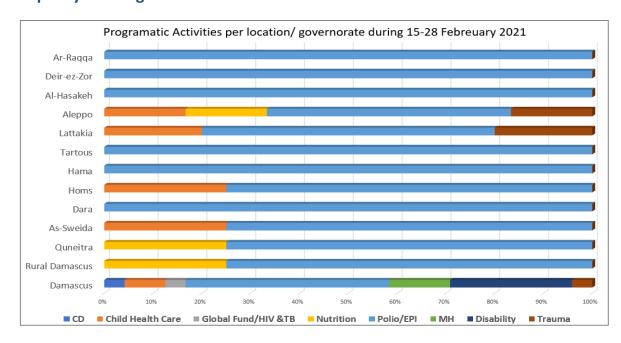
2.15. Operation Support and Logistics

- Dispatched 152.56 tons of medical, lab, nutritional, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and ICT supplies, kits, equipment, and printing materials covering 5 governorates (Aleppo, Damascus, Rural Damascus, Al-Hasakah and Ar-Raqqa).
- The recipients included MOH, MOE, and MOHE facilities, as well as MOLA, NGOs, SARC, KRC.
- The total number of treatments is 408 409 and 450 Trauma cases.

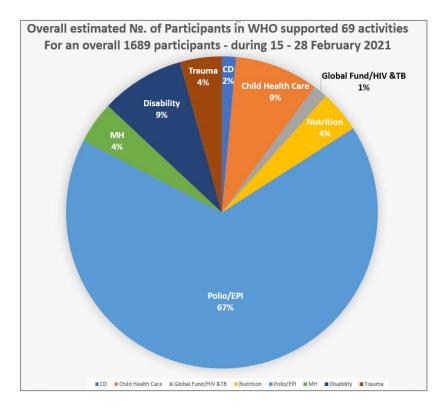




2.16. Capacity Building







2.17. Aleppo Sub-Office

- A sub-national health sector meeting was held on 17 February 2021 with the participation of 19 UN agencies, NGOs and INGOs.
- WHO followed-up with the sub-national health working group in Aleppo, and updated the map of Non-State Actors (NSA) Health Facilities, Public Health Facilities and Mobile Medical Teams supported through sub-national health sector partners in north-west Syria. The number of health facilities is 62 including: 22 primary health centers, 37 MMTs and 3 trauma and rehabilitation centers. The final list will be discussed with the Directorate of Health (DOH) and modified accordingly.
- Accomplished the prioritization of areas of intervention in 2021 with the health cluster coordinator.
- Within the functions of the tuberculosis mobile clinic, 306 people benefited from 8 awareness sessions on TB; 70 suspect cases were tested but none were confirmed.
- "Al-Sham" NGO continued to provide awareness sessions in Aleppo to HIV high-risk groups. A total number
 of 132 beneficiaries were targeted through 14 awareness sessions. Also, a total of 92 people took the
 voluntary test for HIV. No positive cases were registered.
- Followed-up on the implementation of "Al-Sham" NGO activities regarding promoting mental health and delivering psycho-social support for people-in-need.
- Distributed psychotropic items to partners after a need-assessment was conducted.

2.18. Homs Sub-Office

• The total number of people who left Al-Rukban transiting through Homs shelters remains at 19 977 people, of whom 329 people left the camp supported by UN/SARC. On 15 February, all six males left Abdul Rahman Shatter shelter towards areas of their choice, and the shelter is reportedly empty.

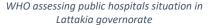


- The total number of reported positive cases in Homs since the onset of the outbreak is 2 253 cases confirmed by PCR test with CFR 9.54%. While in Hama, 713 cases were confirmed by PCR test with CFR 5 6%
- A ten-day workshop took place in Homs under the IMCI program for health workers in 10 villages in 4th health district. The training included both preventive and curative elements that are implemented by families and communities as well as by health facilities.
- WHO supported 3 medical mobile teams to cover health needs in north-east Hama and south-west Hama.
 The total number of provided medical consultations was 1 288, in addition to 65 psychosocial support (PSS) services during the reported period.
- WHO supported a health project in Homs, with Lamset-Shefa LNGO. The family wellbeing center in Dar-Al-Kabeera as well as the two medical mobile teams in the north and east rural areas of Homs provided primary health services, secondary health services, and management of mental health and psychosocial conditions among people who are suffering from psychological distress and survivors of domestic violence at the community level. The total number of consultations reached: 32 000 medical consultations and 9322 mental health consultations.
- WHO supported Al-Sham Association with a health project "Prevention and Promotion for Health and Mental Health on HIV to the most at-risk population in Syria". Within this initiative, two teams formed in Homs and Hama conducted awareness-raising sessions amongst prisoners in both governorates. A total of seven sessions were completed with a total number of beneficiaries equalling 340.

2.19. Lattakia Sub-Office

- Conducted a joint meeting with the heads of primary health, secondary and tertiary health, communicable
 diseases and mental health programme heads at the Directorate of Health in Lattakia to discuss priorities
 and work plans in 2021.
- Conducted a bilateral meeting with Al-Sham NGO team in Lattakia to discuss the ongoing awareness of AIDs as well as the monthly work plan to cover high-risk groups in Lattakia governorate.







WHO - DOH Lattakia Joint Meeting on 2021 priorities

- Conducted an assessment visit to the under-rehabilitation National Hospital in Lattakia to assess its medical needs, specifically in the emergency room and intensive care units.
 - Conducted an assessment visit to Jableh, Al-Haffeh and Al-Qurdaha public hospitals to evaluate the situation on the ground and proceed in establishing, in collaboration with the Health Information Unit (HIS), an online system connected with MOH.



- Conducted an assessment visit to the tuberculosis lab in Lattakia to follow-up on the functionality of the lab and the GeneXpert machine provided by WHO, as well as to ensure that patients are being followedup.
- Supported two workshops on Integrated Management and Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) and Baby-Friendly (BF) Hospitals, in addition to two workshops on strengthening the hospital surveillance for health workers in Lattakia and Tartous.

2.20. Al-Qamishli Sub-Office / NES Response

- Conducted a monitoring visit to Al-Areesha camp to assess the scabies outbreak in the camp. WHO Qamishli focal point reviewed the patients' registers, discussed with health workers their awareness of scabies, and reviewed the list of medications. He also visited the patients in their tents to have a direct assessment of cases. The assessment report was prepared and the following actions were recommended to camp management to prevent further spread of scabies cases in the camp:
 - Make sure sufficient quantities of scabies medications are available in the camp at all times. The current stock of medications is sufficient, but WHO will continue following up to address potential gaps, taking into account the stable number of scabies cases reported in the camp (as per EWARS).
 - Initiate a discussion to conduct an awareness-raising campaign in the camp, in partnership with UNICEF.
 - If needed, arrange a technical refresher training by WHO focal points on how to manage scabies cases, focusing on all health facilities in the camp.
 - Replace the NFIs for the reported families (UNHCR's support would be needed).



WHO providing health services at Al-Hol Camp

- Arranged a WHO field mission to Al-Hol camp on 15 February. The
 objective of the mission was to conduct a survey to assess the perceptions about the COVID-19 Treatment
 Facility in the camp and to look into the reasons behind why there were no referrals of any suspected
 COVID-19 cases in the past two months to this facility. The survey results are currently being analyzed.
- A presentation was made at the WoS Strategic Operational Review Meeting providing an overview of WHO response in north-east Syria, including information on delivery of supplies, service provision, coordination structures and challenges, and the ways forward.
- The mortality report for Al-Hol camp is being drafted and will be finalized in the coming weeks.
- Regular EWARS updates have been provided during the Al-Hol camp health sector coordination meeting.
- HIS/HeRAMS: updating NES Isolation and Quarantine centers in RAQ, DEZ, HAS, also Menbej and Ain-Al-Arab.



WHO team conducts an assessment visit to Al-Areesha Camp



2.21. Deir-Ez-Zor Sub-Office

- To follow up and evaluate the activities of newborn care at home and at NCH programmes (Health Villages), as well as to discuss the activities, achievements and challenges of fieldwork; the Directorate of Health, supported by WHO, conducted two evaluation meetings, on 14 and 15 February, with 20 Community Health Workers (CHWs) from the villages of Mu-Hassan, Bu-Leil, and Al-Tob; and 20 CHWs from the villages of Husseinyah, Mazlom, and Marrat. During the meetings, two COVID-19 RCCE sessions were presented to CHWs.
- Supported by WHO and within the plan of expanding the nutrition surveillance network, DOH conducted
 5-day workshop between 14 and 18 February to train



WHO supports a surveillance workshop

- a 5-day workshop between 14 and 18 February to train/re-train 25 health workers on nutrition surveillance guidelines and practice. As an output of this training, eight new PHCs have been added to the nutrition surveillance network in Deir-Ez-Zor governorate. During the meetings, a COVID-19 RCCE session was presented to trainees.
- Supported by WHO, the Directorate of Health (DOH) conducted two training workshops (16-18 February, and 23-24 February) for 25 newly engaged staff, and 25 surveillance teams in hospitals including private hospitals. Besides, one seminar was conducted on 25 February for surveillance officers in private sectors. A COVID-19 RCCE session was presented to participants.
- WHO conducted a coordination meeting with the environment directorate to outline the water quality monitoring project work plan in Deir-Ez-Zor governorate.
- Planned, in coordination with DOH, for an indoor residual spraying campaign to control the spread of cutaneous leishmania disease which is prevalent in Deir-Ez-Zor governorate.
- Followed up with DOH on rehabilitation projects as well as the provision of equipment to Al-Mayadeen National Hospital, Public Health Labs, and COVID-19 Labs, in addition to equipping the medical point at Al-Bukamal POE on the Iraqi borders.

3. Vaccine Updates

For COVID-19 vaccine updates, please visit:

Update on COVID-19 Vaccination in Syria - 16 February - English



4. Useful links

- Syria Interactive Dashboards
- Syria Page In Health Cluster Site
- Syria Page In EMRO Site
- EMRO Dashboard
- COVID-19 Situation In EMRO Region Reports
- Latest Global WHO Weekly Update On COVID-19
- WHO COVID-19 Country And Technical Guidance
- United Nations Office For The Coordination Of Humanitarian Affairs

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