

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, visited the President of Egypt on 22 August to congratulate him on the country's great achievement in hepatitis C elimination made through the 100 Million Healthy Lives Initiative. They also discussed the way forward for the Presidential initiative to treat 1 million Africans with hepatitis C.

The President was presented with a copy of the WHO independent verification report for the 100 Million Healthy Lives campaign.

The Director-General reaffirmed WHO's longstanding support for Egypt in its pursuit of hepatitis C elimination, as well as for universal health coverage and promoting the health of the population. After meeting the President, the Director-General and Minister of Health and Population held a joint press conference, followed by a visit to the National Training Institute to see the hepatitis command and control centre. The software and database used for the campaign, showing real-time data, were presented, along with the WHO prequalified rapid diagnostic test used. The campaign screened around 49 million adults and 7 million school-age children for both hepatitis C and noncommunicable diseases, and was extended to non-Egyptians, with 65 000 of those screened being referred for treatment free of charge. Dr Tedros requested the Minister to dig deep when analysing the data to understand the causes of the increasing prevalence of diabetes mellitus and hepatitis C virus in certain areas of the country. The Ministry is currently at the stage of data cleaning for further analysis to answer these questions.

"Egypt has launched a massive campaign to eliminate hepatitis C. I was glad to visit the hepatitis command and control centre at the National Training Institute. I was amazed at their work to collect data on prevalence and tackle the root cause of the spread of the virus. Bravo Egypt!", said the Director-General.

"This visit is very important in its timing and value in boosting the support provided by WHO to Egypt in its journey towards hepatitis C elimination and universal health coverage", said Dr Jabbour, WHO Representative to Egypt.

WHO has undertaken to transfer the lessons learned from Egypt's successful experience globally.

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