



Dr Christoph Hamelmann, WHO Representative in the Islamic Republic of Iran, praised the efforts of the volunteers and their response to the crisis. Tehran, 3 May - As Islamic Republic of Iran works to control the spread of COVID-19, volunteers have been mobilized to produce tens of thousands of masks and other protective gear for health workers and regular citizens.

To organize such volunteers particularly in underprivileged areas of Tehran, the Cultural and Art Organization of the Municipality of Tehran provided space and equipment to run workshops. The masks made there are distributed for free to those who cannot afford them.

"During this devastating crisis, Iranians have stepped up to help their health workers, and each other," said Dr Christoph Hamelmann, WHO Representative in the Islamic Republic of Iran. "We are touched by their hard work and the solidarity they are showing."



More than 1600 volunteers work at 185 workshops organized by Khavaran Cultural and Art Centre in the southeast of Tehran. The volunteers brought their sewing machines from home.

The workshops, which began making protective gear in the last week of February 2020, have produced 52 800 three-layered masks, 60 820 five-layered filtered masks, 1 232 000 normal surgical masks, and 57 800 gowns for health care workers as of 28 April, according to the Khavaran Cultural and Art Centre.

Funds for purchasing raw materials were collected through individual donations. Unpaid

volunteers serve for one of two 8-hour shifts each day in the workshops.

WHO is adding to the volunteers' efforts shipments of protective gear, testing kits, and other essential COVID-19 supplies. Starting on 6 February, WHO has shipped tens of thousands of masks, N-95 respirators, gloves, goggles, and more to protect the country's health workers. WHO has also delivered medicines as part of the "Solidarity" clinical trial for COVID-19 treatments.

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