

Tehran, 10 April 2019 – The World Health Organization (WHO) today airlifted essential medical supplies to the Islamic Republic of Iran to respond to the growing health needs of thousands of people who have been displaced as a result of heavy flooding in many provinces in the country. The supplies include trauma, health, cholera and non-communicable disease kits and other commodities requested by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.

The floods have been caused by extreme rainfall which began on 19 March, provoking inundations in 28 out of the country's 31 provinces and causing widespread damage to municipal facilities, including health centres and hospitals. Many health facilities in affected areas are either fully or partially damaged, and the risk of water- and vector-borne diseases, including malaria, cholera and other communicable diseases is increasing, also due to the interruption of the water supply.

According to an official statement by the Emergency Operations Centre of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, over 1 660 100 individuals are in need of health care services. Seventy eight people are confirmed dead and 1137 injured; close to 300 000 are displaced.

"Together with the United Nations country team led by the UN Resident Coordinator Ms Ugochi Daniels, WHO will continue to provide full support to the Ministry of Health and Medical Education and the people in Islamic Republic of Iran to address urgent health needs and undertake recovery measures." said Dr Christoph Hamelmann, WHO Representative in the country. He also asked the international community to make further funding available. "We want to express again our deep condolences to all of those who have lost loved ones and will do our best to provide assistance to those in need."

"From the first day of the flooding, WHO has led and coordinated the health response of the UN country team in support of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education," said Laleh Najafizadeh, WHO's Health Emergency Programme Coordinator.

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