

Baghdad, 7 April 2012 – On World Health Day 2012, WHO is calling for urgent action to ensure that, at a time when the world's population is ageing rapidly, people reach old age in the best possible health.

H.E Dr Majeed Hamad Amin, the Minister of Health of Iraq stated that “population ageing and delivery of health care services to older people will present new and serious challenges for the national health care system in Iraq”. H.E clarified that “the number of older persons is increasing worldwide, in Iraq the number of people age 60 and above is 1 127 536; it constitutes 4% of the total population. It is expected by 2050 the number will reach 4 720 658. This will have a major implication for health and socioeconomic development”.

Good health throughout life can help older women and men to lead full and productive lives, and continue to be a source of support and wisdom to their families and communities. Today, we want to honour this day by drawing attention to the importance of taking serious action to plan for an environment and services that are conducive to healthy ageing

UN agencies are working in a coordinated manner to address the different needs of the older population, however, there is a need for a more intense collective action which should tackle the various challenges which the older population is currently confronted and that's make more useful member of society and community. (I added this again to do a link with the paragraph below)

“Realizing the significance of quality health services for the overall development of Iraq. the UN Country Team stays committed to also supporting the efforts of the Government of Iraq in addressing the extensive health-related challenges in the country”, affirmed Mr Edward Kallon, Acting UN Resident Coordinator in Iraq.

“WHO promotes a healthy lifestyle across the life-course to save lives, protect health and alleviate disability and pain in older age. Age-friendly environments and early detection of diseases, as well as prevention and care improve the well-being of older people”, said Dr Syed Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative for Iraq. He added, “WHO reaffirms its commitment to supporting the Government of Iraq in bringing the necessary reform in the health sector through an intersectoral approach and providing integrated health care for older people which will assure the achievement of socioeconomic and human development goals in Iraq.

The Iraqi Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the WHO, organized a series of events in all governorates in Iraq to celebrate this year's World Health Day 2012, with the slogan, "Good health adds life to years", in which educational materials were distributed and symposiums, field visits and various events were conducted

PR of World Health Day 2012 in Iraq is available in [English](#) | [Arabic](#)

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About World Health Day

The World Health Day is celebrated on 7 April to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948. World Health Day is a global campaign focusing on new and emerging health issues. The topic for this year's World Health Day is Ageing and Health with the theme "[Good Health adds life to years](#) ."

Ageing populations occur everywhere, but less-developed countries are witnessing the fastest change. Although older people are a vital and often overlooked resource for families and for societies, however, this transformation represents both challenge and opportunity for both policy makers and society.

Focusing on new and emerging health issues, World Health Day provides an opportunity to start collective action to protect people's health and well-being. It is an opportunity to engage in finding solutions that benefit us all.

Each year the world health day has a topic, related to a subject of major importance to global health. For 2012 the topic that will be highlighted during the campaign is "Ageing and health".

The focus is how good health throughout life can help older men and women lead full and productive lives and are a resource for their families and communities. Ageing concerns each and every one of us – whether young or old, male or female, rich or poor – no matter where we live.

About WHO Iraq

WHO has been on the ground in Iraq since 1960. WHO through its various programmes is currently work on revitalizing, strengthening and sustaining the Iraqi health system based on primary health care.

WHO works with the Government and other partners to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals through improved access to quality health services, helping support the Government of Iraq in shaping health policy, and providing technical support in a multitude of programmes and areas like maternal and child health, adolescent and school health, nutrition, tackling communicable and non-communicable diseases, strengthening implementation of the International Health Regulations and mental health.

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