11 December 2014, Erbil, Iraq – The World Health Organization (WHO) and World Food Programme (WFP) have collaborated to deliver eight mobile medical clinics which arrived in Erbil today. These urgently needed clinics will be immediately deployed to parts of Iraq and the Kurdistan region of Iraq. The vehicles, flown in from Amman, Jordan, were procured by WHO and have been purpose-built to address the health needs of displaced populations residing in places with limited access to health care services – in camps, informal settlements and urban areas across the country. The clinics were made possible through the support of the Government of Saudi Arabia and are the first of their kind to be brought to Iraq to accelerate response efforts.

To mark the arrival of the mobile clinics, a ceremony set to host the Ministers of Health of both Iraq and the Kurdistan regional governments, a delegation from the government of Saudi Arabia, and representatives from WHO and WFP, will be held at Erbil airport on Wednesday.

“We are very pleased about the arrival of these new mobile clinics which will provide round-the-clock health services for vulnerable populations in Iraq,” said Dr Jaffar Hussein, WHO Representative for Iraq.

“Not only are mobile health clinics swift and relatively cost-efficient, they also enable health care to be provided as close as possible to affected communities. Each clinic has the capacity to support patient examinations, vaccinations for children, diagnosis and laboratory confirmation of diseases, pre- and antenatal care, the treatment of minor conditions such as skin infections, management of minor wounds, and to address dehydration,” he said.

The delivery of the clinics has been a joint logistical effort between WHO and WFP, which has mobilized its Logistics Cluster and aviation unit in Rome to arrange and oversee the transport of the mobile medical clinics by plane.

“The World Food Programme is pleased to have contributed to the timely shipment delivery of these mobile clinics through our financial and logistical efforts. We endeavour to deliver much needed medical assistance to vulnerable refugees and internally displaced populations in Iraq,” said Uma Thapa, Deputy Country Director of WFP Iraq.
Ongoing insecurity in Iraq continues to uproot families from their homes, resulting in increased displacement. The swell in population in parts of the country, especially in the Kurdistan region, has placed significant strain on public resources and infrastructure, particularly the health system. Hospitals and primary health care centres are struggling to meet the demand of increased patient case loads, particularly in areas where health workers are in short supply and where health facilities have been attacked or damaged. In areas of intense fighting, many people have been cut off to health care altogether.

“WHO continues to support the Federal and Kurdistan Ministries of Health in increasing access to health services for host communities and displaced populations, including those in hard-to-reach areas. The clinics will be directly integrated into the health system in Iraq,” Dr Hussein said.

An additional four clinics are expected to arrive in Erbil in late January.

For media enquiries:

Joseph Swan
Communications Officer
WHO Iraq

swanj@who.int
+964 7 510 10 1487

Friday 18th of May 2018 06:09:35 AM