

5 May 2020, Beirut – The Ambassador of the European Union in Lebanon, Ralph Tarraf, announced that the European Union is donating 15 million Euros to WHO to support the health system in Lebanon, with a main focus on access to essential medicines to those in need for the next 2 years.

With this support, around 95 000 people from among the most vulnerable host community and refugees will be able to receive timely and free chronic disease medications, and 350 000 people using primary health care centres will benefit from medications for acute conditions.

The demand for subsidized chronic disease medications has been progressively increasing. In 2011, at the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, the chronic medications programme served around 78 000 Lebanese beneficiaries in need. Today, it serves around 200 000 beneficiaries, both Lebanese and Syrian and other nationalities.

The European Union remains the biggest donor supporting the Lebanese health care system and access to essential chronic disease medicines since 2014.

“The World Health Organization gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution of the EU towards strengthening the health care system and ensuring that vulnerable Lebanese and Syrians have access to essential medications, especially during the coronavirus outbreak. This is a key component of sustainable development, paving the road to universal health coverage and addressing inequities in society,” said Dr Iman Shankiti, WHO Representative in Lebanon.

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