



21 February 2022, Beirut – A cooperation agreement was signed between the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the World Health Organization (WHO) at a ceremony held on 18 February 2022. The agreement established a framework for the two organizations to work together towards continuing their support to the national AIDS control programme in leading the national response to HIV/AIDS prevention and control in Lebanon. This support is made possible through the regional Middle East Response grant from the Global Fund to IOM.

The national AIDS control programme was established in 1989 as a joint programme of the Ministry of Public Health and WHO after the steady increase in the number of people living with HIV in Lebanon following the first reported case in 1984.

“This programme did not stop operating and delivering medications to people living with HIV/AIDS despite the challenging situation of the pandemic, and the Beirut port blast that

directly affected their premises. I believe in health for all and that no one should be left behind,” said Dr Iman Shankiti, WHO Representative in Lebanon.

Despite limited financial and human resources, the national programme has been responding effectively and efficiently, prioritizing key affected populations, irrespective of nationality and status, with a range of differentiated diagnostic, prevention and treatment services including raising awareness among those who are most at risk.

The programme currently provides anti-retroviral therapy, treatment, care and support to nearly 2000 people living with HIV; along with treatment monitoring, including viral load testing to achieve the 95-95-95 global targets. Recently, it established an HIV PCR unit to add to its services in Karantina.

Through this grant, the national programme will be able to expand its reach and services through 13 thematic local nongovernmental organizations for voluntary counselling and testing and provide non-interrupted medications and consumables supplies for diagnosis and treatment until the end of December 2024.

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