

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 15 June 2017 – The World Health Organization (WHO) and the King Salman Centre for Humanitarian Aid and Relief have signed an agreement for almost US\$ 8.3 million to support the ongoing health response to the cholera outbreak in Yemen.

This support from the King Salman Centre will ensure that 7.3 million people in 13 priority governorates are reached with life-saving health services as part of coordinated efforts by all health partners to conduct prevention activities and provide treatment.

Specifically, this support will enable WHO, health authorities and health cluster partners to:

- strengthen and improve surveillance for early detection, investigation and response;
- ensure implementation of treatment measures based on national treatment protocols and international standards;
- ensure safe isolation and infection control practices in health facilities;
- empower household and communities to improve health-seeking behaviour and apply safe hygiene, sanitation and food safety measures;
- strengthen logistics capacity for swift procurement and distribution of health supplies, especially medications;
- ensure efficient and effective national and subnational cluster coordination is in place to manage the outbreak.

“While cholera is usually a disease that can be easily prevented and treated, millions of people in Yemen are at risk as a result of limited health, water and environmental sanitation services. This funding from the King Salman Centre for Humanitarian Aid and Relief to the people of Yemen under the umbrella of WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean comes at a critical time and provides us with an opportunity to continue building on our response to contain and control this serious outbreak,” said Dr Mahmoud Fikri, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean.

United Nations reports indicate that in Yemen almost 19 million people – more than two thirds of the total population – are in need of humanitarian assistance, and that 14.5 million people lack access to clean water and sanitation. The country is facing outbreaks of cholera, measles and dengue fever, and malnutrition rates are alarmingly high, with almost 3.3 children and women acutely malnourished.

“The Regional Office expresses its gratitude to His Royal Highness Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, for the continued support provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through the King Salman Centre for Humanitarian Aid and Relief to the health response in Yemen. Saudi Arabia has always provided support to health and relief programmes run by WHO. This reflects the strategic partnership between WHO and Saudi Arabia in order to support the activities and work of the Regional Office in this area,” said Dr Fikri.

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