10 out of 30 health facilities that will be rehabilitated have already been handed over to local authorities.

Rehabilitation of El Fasher teaching hospital (Photo: WHO Sudan).

In Sudan's five western states of Darfur, access to health facilities like clinics and hospitals is not something people take for granted. In a region roughly the size of Spain, over 9 million people share just 612 primary health care facilities. On average, one facility must serve over 15,000 people. Especially in rural areas, Darfuris often have to travel long distances to reach the facilities.

However, since the end of 2016 a new project has begun to improve this access. By rehabilitating 30 health facilities in Darfur by June 2018, this endeavor will improve the availability of health care for more than 3 million people - or about a third of the entire population of Darfur. WHO, UNICEF, UN HABITAT, and UNFPA have all joined hands with Sudan's Ministry of Health and the Darfur State Ministries of Health, and count on the generous support

of the Qatar Development Fund to do so, through the UN Darfur Fund (UNDF) Foundational and Short Term Activities (FaST).

In addition to rehabilitating 30 health facilities, the project will improve the range and quality of services provided in these hospitals, clinics and health centers. This means more and better doctors and other personnel, as well as new medical equipment where it is most needed.

Over the past months, the project recorded several important milestones. For rehabilitation, a total of 13 out of 30 health facilities are moving towards completion across Darfur. Meanwhile, more and better medical personnel are being trained: 172 medical students are attending the Academy of Health Sciences (AHSs) in Nyala, El Fasher and El Geneina. The doctors-to-be will continue their education for the coming three years, and go on to work for the health of Darfur's people. Finally, the health facilities received important equipment for Operation Theaters and Intensive Care Units, including beds, oxygen concentrators, ventilators and monitors, as well as surgical instruments and office furniture.

Once all 30 health facilities are rehabilitated, they will be handed over to local authorities from Darfur's State Health Ministries. Under their leadership, the people of Darfur will have more access to quality health care in the long run. This end goal was already achieved for 10 facilities, including most recently the Shushta health facility in West Darfur, and the Um Labassa rural hospital in South Darfur.

Saturday 20th of April 2024 06:36:28 PM