



Mogadishu, 4 February 2021 – Yesterday, the European Union (EU) launched a €5 million multi-year project to support the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Federal Government of Somalia to prevent further community spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and to strengthen the health services delivery across the country as Somalia’s health systems start recovering from the aftershock of the pandemic.

“We are grateful for our collaboration with WHO which has made all involved actors work as a

team in this pandemic. In the path towards a prosperous and stable Somalia, COVID-19 should be seen as an opportunity to develop better public services and make Federal and States' institutions work together in a more coordinated way," said Nicolás Berlanga Martínez, EU Ambassador to Somalia.

"In addition to saving lives and preventing the spread of COVID-19, this project will help us build a legacy for Somalia's health systems," said HE Dr Fawziya Abikar Nur, Minister of Health and Human Services, Federal Government of Somalia. "We are grateful to our partners, the EU and WHO, who are supporting us to reduce the burden and effects of deadly and communicable diseases, save lives of our community members, and make our health systems stronger and more effective."

"We are leaving no stone unturned. Together with the EU, and the Federal Government of Somalia, we are redoubling our efforts to ensure everyone, everywhere in this country is safe and protected from COVID-19 and other health threats. Building integrated disease surveillance systems and the capacity of health care workers on disease detection and surveillance will remain key to achieving the impact of the project. Strengthening coordination and operational capacity for risk communication, delivering people-centred primary health care services will ensure access and availability of health services for marginalized and vulnerable populations. This will contribute immensely for building blocks of the health systems," said Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik, WHO Representative in Somalia.

The project, entitled 'Emergency operational response to COVID-19 in Somalia to support the prevention of large-scale community spread through public health systems strengthening', aims to contain and suppress the COVID-19 epidemic, and other disease outbreaks, in locations where signs of virus circulation and transmission continue. The project, which was signed in December 2020, will contribute to preventing large-scale community transmission of COVID-19 and further spread and/or resurgence of the virus, as well as other epidemic-prone diseases, while, also, helping health systems recover better and stronger. WHO and the Federal Ministry of Health will jointly implement the project.

Over a 3-year period, the project will support institution and capacity-building of the health workforce in the country, such as establishing integrated data management and surveillance system and launching a new services availability and readiness assessment (SARA) survey, which will consolidate information on all health facilities and services available across the country. This information will be useful to better understand how the project is having an impact on its beneficiaries by improving health and keeping them safe and protected.

A complementary EU-funded project for UN-Habitat, which aims at supporting preparedness, response and mitigation activities for reducing the negative impacts of COVID-19 on health, public hygiene and livelihoods was also launched at this event.

### **Note to editors**

This new and vital multi-year partnership stems from a Bilateral Technical Coordination Mechanism previously established between WHO Somalia and the EU Delegation to Somalia, which sought to strengthen operational response capacities for COVID-19 and other health emergencies. Additionally, US\$ 1.9 million was provided by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) to WHO in January 2020, in support of WHO's COVID-19 preparedness and response operations in Somalia.

### **Related links**

[EU and WHO Somalia sign multi-year agreement to combat COVID-19 and strengthen health systems](#)

[WHO and EU unite to fight COVID-19 in Somalia](#)

[EU and WHO unite to deliver critical life-saving supplies to flood-affected areas in Somalia](#)

[European Union and WHO Somalia deliver more emergency hospital supplies](#)

[EU and WHO deliver emergency life-saving supplies to flood-affected areas in Somalia](#)

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