



WHO Somalia/Khurram Sajjad.

Mogadishu, 9 May 2022 – In their continued and collective efforts to improve health system resilience, the Ministry of Health and Human Services of the Federal Government of Somalia, World Health Organization (WHO) and the Embassy of Italy have joined forces and officially launched a €3 million multi-year project entitled ‘Improving essential health services in Somalia using a secondary hospital-based care approach.’

The project is designed to improve delivery of essential health services at the secondary level care in Somalia by focusing on building strong and resilient hospital-based care at Hudur General Hospital in South West state and Dhusamareb General Hospital in Galmudug state – both of which are currently unable to meet the health care demand and needs of populations within their respective catchment areas. Developed under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of Health, in close partnership with WHO and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), the project aims to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) through strengthening hospital-based care for integrated delivery of secondary and critical care services, as well as improving hospital management system for better stewardship and effective service delivery.

“We would like to express our sincere thanks to the Government of Italy for their very valuable support as they are a key donor supporting secondary care and hospital management in Somalia. This support will help Somalia to make strides in the provision of critical care for patients and strengthening of referral systems, as well as for improving the overall credibility of and trust in the public health facilities –a crucial goal for Somalia’s health system,” said HE Dr Fawziya Abikar Nur, Federal Minister of Health and Human Services.

“In 2019, only 27% of Somalia’s population had access to essential health services,” said Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik, WHO Representative and Head of Mission to Somalia. “Thanks to the support from the Government of Italy and AICS, with this project we will have the opportunity to change this narrative by offering crucial, life-saving services to more Somalis, particularly those who are vulnerable and live in remote locations. Moreover, the services offered are aligned to the revised essential package of health services for Somalia.”

“The project will contribute to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDPN) in Somalia, by linking the short-term goal of improving secondary level care to the long-term development goal of the government-to improve essential health services. It will also foster peace and development among the communities being served by contributing to addressing the root causes of tension and marginalization, and increasing health equity,” said HE Alberto Vecchi, Ambassador of Italy to Somalia.

Over a 2-year period, among other things, this project will aim to: optimize basic primary care services; fill in existing gaps in the provision of specialized, secondary health care (e.g. emergency, critical, surgical care); offer referral services to at least 5 districts in each state; use solar power to deliver oxygen; refine waste management systems; ensure gender balance in capacity development and employment; improve hospital management and ownership by the local health authorities; and improve the capability of health personnel to better respond to emergencies. Overall, and in addition to being in line with the new Essential Package of Health Services (EPHS) 2020 for Somalia, this project will complement efforts towards achieving the target of UHC and ensuring health for all.

The official announcement follows a previous signing ceremony and a high-level commitment ceremony held on 21 April and 11 January 2022, respectively, in Mogadishu. During the latter, the Federal Ministry of Health, WHO, Embassy of Italy and Mr Luca Maestripieri, Director of AICS and Minister Plenipotentiary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, collectively agreed to work together in 'Improving essential health services in Somalia using a secondary hospital-based care approach' into the future across Somalia.



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Note to editors

This new and vital multi-year project stems from a continued partnership established between WHO, the Embassy of Italy in Mogadishu and AICS Somalia, whereby a total of €1.4 million has been provided to WHO since 2019 to support emergency response activities, as well as mental health and psychosocial support services for vulnerable populations and victims of improvised explosive devices at Hudur General Hospital.

For additional information, please contact:

Khadar Hussein Mohamud, Head of Coordination and Communications, Ministry of Health,
Federal Government of Somalia

Massimiliano Bertollo, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Italy in Mogadishu

Santa Molè, Director, AICS Somalia < segreteria.mogadiscio@aic.gov.it >

Kyle DeFreitas, Lead – External Relations, WHO Somalia

Fouzia Bano, Communications Officer / Chief of Staff a.i., WHO Somalia

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