



WHO has supported the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and local health authorities in the besieged town of Douma with medical assistance for over 22 600 people. Photo credit: B.Khabieh29 May 2014, Rural Damascus – WHO delivered crucial medicines and medical equipment to the besieged town of Douma in East Gouta on 24 May 2014. With support from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, the Organization was able to provide medical assistance to over 22 600 vulnerable people.

Two WHO trucks loaded with urgently needed medicines, including life-saving and chronic disease medicines to support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and local health authorities, reached Douma as part of an interagency convoy.

“This crucial delivery represents a major step forward in availing health services, including medicines, to all people in need,” Elizabeth Hoff, WHO Representative to Syria, said. She added that the WHO team interviewed doctors, including surgeons, who are operating in harsh conditions lacking basics medicines and medical equipment.

This is the first time medical assistance has reached Douma since the siege began in November 2012. Last March, the United Nations accessed the area for the first time after an agreement between the government and opposition forces, allowing in non-food assistance, hygiene kits and diapers.

Over 50 000 people are currently besieged in Douma and a large number of them are patients seeking urgent medical assistance, including surgical and life-saving treatments.

With a population of almost one million currently living in the area, besieged East Ghouta has

13 public hospitals, three of which are fully damaged and three partially operational. Rural Damascus governorate has registered one of the highest average number of people per functioning public hospital in Syria with only one operational hospital per 567 200 people.

WHO is making every effort to provide medicines and medical equipment to people in need across Syria. Since the beginning of 2014, WHO has supported more than 4.6 million people in government- and opposition-controlled areas across Syria, most recently through agency-specified deliveries to Deir ez-Zor, Ar-Raqqah and Aleppo governorates.

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