



7 February 2018 - The World Health Organization (WHO) dispatched 14 tons of life-saving medicines, anesthetics, antibiotics, emergency medical kits and other treatments to Deir-ez-Zor governorate this week to urgently respond to the critical health needs of people in north-east Syria. The shipment contains more than 303 000 treatments for ill and wounded children, women and men.

Many Syrians who have recently returned to Deir-ez-Zor have found that their homes have been damaged or destroyed, and that health care facilities in the area are closed or are only partially functioning. Recent assessments indicate that more than 40% of the governorate's hospitals and primary health centres were forced to close following heightened conflict in 2017.

WHO's shipment will help mitigate critical shortages of medicines and supplies in the overstretched health care facilities that remain functioning. Vulnerable people who cannot afford the high costs of medicines to treat chronic conditions will benefit from this shipment, as well as the large number of people who have recently returned to the area.

"It is imperative for WHO to promptly respond to the urgent health needs in all areas of Deir-ez-Zor that have experienced great adversity due to the ferocious battles that raged there," said Ms. Elizabeth Hoff, WHO representative in Syria. "This new medical shipment will boost the capacity of four national hospitals and many primary health centres. More than 93 000 people in Deir-ez-Zor are in dire need of humanitarian assistance," she added.

This is the third shipment that WHO has delivered to Deir-ez-Zor over the past 5 months. The governorate's main city, also called Deir-ez-Zor, was besieged for almost 3 years, and retaken by government forces in autumn 2017. The last WHO shipment – delivered shortly after the city was retaken – comprised more than 56 000 medical treatments and supplies to treat trauma cases.

Funding for the medical supplies dispatched by WHO to Deir ez-Zour is provided through generous donations from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID).

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