



11 July 2015, Sana'a, Yemen – A 7-day humanitarian pause began in Yemen on 11 July. This second humanitarian pause, if fully respected by all parties to the conflict, will provide desperately needed respite for millions of civilians, and enable WHO and health partners to respond to some of the most life-threatening needs.

During the pause, WHO will focus its efforts on distributing life-saving health assistance to locations in most dire need in the governorates of Sana'a, Aden, Al Dhale'e, Lahj, Hajjah, Mukalla, Marib Sa'ada, Taizz.

WHO support will include:

- distributing life-saving emergency medicines, health kits and medical supplies to the main functioning health facilities in these governorates;
- conducting field outbreak investigations for dengue fever/malaria, including verifying diagnosis and case management;
- distributing long lasting insecticidal bed nets to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and affected populations;
- distributing water jerry cans to areas hosting IDPs;
- providing water testing kits to the water authority in Aden;
- training rapid response focal points on implementing WHO standard case definition and treatment for dengue fever;
- conducting a malaria entomological survey.

Humanitarian situation deteriorating

A total of 2 374 300 beneficiaries are expected to be reached by WHO and Health Cluster partners during the humanitarian pause.

“The humanitarian and health situation in Yemen continues to deteriorate,” said Dr Ahmed Shadoul, WHO Representative in Yemen. “In some governorates, such as Aden, many people no longer have direct access to food, fuel, medical care and safe drinking-water. This humanitarian pause will allow WHO and health cluster partners to more effectively scale up their response in affected governorates by reaching populations that have been cut off from care and urgently need life-saving health services.”

Health challenges

Access to health care in many affected governorates in Yemen is extremely challenging due to ongoing conflict and the closure of more than 54 health facilities due to damages. Lack of medical supplies and a disrupted surveillance system has impeded monitoring and response to increasing suspected disease outbreaks, and essential health services, such as immunization, nutrition, Integrated Management of Childhood Illness programme and disease control interventions are limited.

On 1 July, the crisis in Yemen was designated a “Level 3” emergency by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), signifying the most critical level of emergency and triggering a system-wide activation to ensure a more effective response to the humanitarian needs of affected populations.

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