January 2018 – Shaiga, 20, and Qumri, 15, sit on a bed close to each other in the post-surgical room of Al-Jumhori hospital in Sa’ada. In September of last year, the 2 sisters were wounded due to shelling near their home in Tallan, Sa’ada governorate of northern Yemen.

The bombing took the lives of their sister and 3 brothers. Their mother and 8 relatives were also wounded. All injured family members were transferred to Al-Jumhori hospital, 2 hours away from their home.

Supporting a fragile health system

Al-Jumhori hospital is the main public hospital that receives around 600 patients every day. Patients come to the hospital from Sa’ada city and the neighbouring districts as well as other governorates which are several hours away.

The hospital is supported by The Emergency Health and Nutrition Project (EHNP) funded by the World Bank and implemented by WHO and UNICEF. The project actively supports the health system in Yemen, allowing hospitals and health facilities to keep their doors open to provide health care to those in most need. The EHNP receives grants from the International Development Association IDA – the World Bank's fund for the world's poorest countries.
Saving one life at a time

Qumri sustained wounds in her right thigh, while Shaiga was wounded in her right leg. In the hospital, they received three operations and are still expected to go through other follow-up surgeries.

Qumri and Shaiga are 2 of 175 patients who received surgical intervention and consultations in the hospital in October. On a monthly basis since July 2017, WHO has been providing trauma medicines and supplies enough for 100 surgical interventions thanks to the EHNPP.

These trauma supplies are critical to treating beneficiaries like Qumri and Shaiga, as they include life-saving medicines, anesthesia drugs, IV fluids, and renewable surgical supplies. The medication is used for the patient even after the operation.

Providing the rarest commodities — fuel and water

As a result of this conflict, fuel and water, basic commodities for a country in times of peace, have become rare essentials in times of war. Hospitals need fuel and water to keep running. For Qumri and Shaiga’s father, Hasan Salah, the sky-rocketing cost of fuel has made travel to hospitals cost-prohibitive.

As both sisters say, they go through difficult living conditions because their father has no job.

“I am a poor man now. I feel grateful for everybody helping me at this difficult time. I am happy that the treatment and care my daughters are receiving at the hospital is for free,” says the father.

Hasan mentioned that the trip from their village to the hospital costs 50 000 Yemeni Rial, (US$ 120) “an amount of money that I can hardly afford,” he shared. Salah was working in farms and he had cattle of his own. Since the beginning of the conflict, he was no longer able to get work every day. His cattle died in the same shelling last year and he has spent all his savings.
As part of EHNP, WHO also provides fuel to the hospital to enable its activities and operations. The aim now is to provide the hospital with a water supply and medical equipment. The EHNP continues to provide critical support to 64 other hospitals in Yemen.

Friday 8th of March 2019 08:39:18 AM