WHO EMRO | WHO appeals for funding to address increasing health needs in Yemen

14 April 2015, Cairo, Egypt – The World Health Organization is seeking US$ 25.2 million to meet humanitarian health needs in Yemen for the coming 3 months.

“WHO, working in close coordination with national health authorities, is focusing on five key activities in this response,” said Dr Ahmed Shadoul, WHO Representative in Yemen. “The first – and most urgent – is strengthening delivery of trauma care by making sure that sufficient life-saving emergency medicines, surgical supplies, and qualified medical staff are available throughout the country, especially in areas witnessing escalated violence.

Second, we will support delivery of primary health care by providing essential medicines for chronic disease and supporting mental health services, immunization activities, and access to reproductive health services, as well as strengthening the in-country supply chain for the delivery of medical goods and supplies. Third, we will conduct health assessments to identify the impact of the conflict on health infrastructure and map availability of health facilities and resources to detect in-time critical gaps in service delivery and accessibility. The fourth activity is coordinating the Health Cluster to ensure a consolidated, effective, and an efficient health response by all partners on the ground. Finally, WHO will support water, sanitation and hygiene activities to ensure sufficient safe water supply, adequate sanitation, and proper solid waste management in health care facilities and hospitals.”

The conflict has resulted in 100 000 newly internally displaced persons (IDPs). The humanitarian situation is critical, with health facilities in affected governorates reporting...
shortages in medical/surgical supplies and equipment related to trauma care, essential medicines, as well as in medical staff to cope with the influx of patients. Since the escalation of the conflict, WHO has provided essential medicines and supplies to cover the needs of 80 000 people for 3 months and trauma kits containing supplies for hundreds of major surgical operations. More supplies need to be positioned in the country to avoid disruption of the current health response.

With the current shortage of ambulances, WHO is coordinating with the Ministry of Public Health and Population to relocate ambulances to governorates with the largest numbers of injured patients. WHO is also covering the operational costs of the ambulances. Due to shortages in the number of ambulances, WHO is coordinating with the Ministry of Public Health and Population to redistribute and reposition available ambulances to governorates with the largest numbers of injured patients. Additional ambulances are also urgently needed to ensure effective trauma management and timely referral.

Electricity and fuel shortages are creating daily challenges and threatening the safety of vaccines and cold chain items with a total value of US$ 10 million. More than 200 sentinel sites and environmental health teams across the country are reporting and monitoring communicable diseases and additional environmental health teams have been dispatched to communal locations housing IDPs (such as schools), to monitor water quality and check for waterborne diseases.

Health facilities in affected governorates are reporting critical shortages in trauma and surgical medicines as well as in medical staff to cope with influx of patients “Health needs in Yemen are increasing by the day” said Dr Shadoul. “Health facilities, and health and sanitation
infrastructure, have been damaged. Power cuts and fuel shortages are threatening the provision of life-saving health services. Shortages in safe water are increasing the risk of waterborne and other communicable diseases, especially in areas housing IDPs. If we do not act now, even more lives will be at risk. But we can only do this if we have sufficient funding to continue our health response," he added.

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