



Thanks to support from the Government of Japan, WHO has supported 20 diphtheria treatment centres in Yemen, including at As Sabeen Hospital in Sana'a

28 February 2021 – The humanitarian emergency in Yemen has forced the health situation into a critical state. The ongoing conflict in several areas of the country has negatively impacted the functioning of health facilities as medical staff have fled the country or become displaced. Since 2015, health workers have not regularly received their salaries.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the situation, further complicating the population's access to health care services at a time when the need for health care is critical.

At the same time, several high-threat infectious pathogens continue to be endemic in Yemen, posing public health threats to the population. Data from 2020 show that cholera, dengue, and diphtheria were the top 3 diseases aside from COVID-19, resulting in significant morbidity and mortality among the population.

In March 2020, the World Health Organization and the Government of Japan joined forces to strengthen the emergency response to meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations in Yemen. With the generous US\$ 363 636 contribution from the Government of Japan, WHO has been able to implement a comprehensive disease prevention and control programme to combat high-threat infectious pathogens in the country.

Within the project timeframe, WHO provided life-saving medications to the population affected by diphtheria, including internally displaced communities and host communities. A total of 24 309 diphtheria patients and their contacts across Yemen were reached with essential diphtheria medication. Twenty health facilities were supported with diphtheria medication to ensure essential medication for vulnerable people.

