Dr Abdullah Al Rabeeah, Supervisor General of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre and Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus WHO Director-General 5 March 2020 –The World Health Organization (WHO) and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) have signed a joint cooperation agreement for US$ 10.5 million further bolstering malaria prevention and control efforts across Yemen. The agreement was signed during the recent humanitarian conference in Riyadh, this is the second time the conference convened dignitaries from all over the world to discuss humanitarian response support and the development nexus.

Today, Yemen accounts for 17% of the regional malaria burden. In the war-torn country, a total of 18.2 million people are at risk of malaria. In 2019, Yemen reported almost 203 062 malaria cases in public health facilities; however, the estimated number of malaria cases by WHO is noted at 842 226 cases. The governorates of Al Hudaydah, Hajja, Aden, and Taizz report the highest numbers of cases with incidence rate at 8.5 confirmed cases per 1000.

“As a result of this generous support from KSrelief, WHO will be able to continue the fight against malaria and focus on building response capacities in the areas of clinical case management focused on training health care providers to effectively manage and treat cases, and vector control to stop the spread of the disease in communities”, said Altaf Musani, WHO Representative in Yemen. Preparedness efforts will also be scaled-up — surveillance strengthening and establishing a total of 7 febrile treatment centres in Aden, Lahj, Taizz, Al Hudaydah, Hajjah, Shabwa and Hadhramout is in the plan as well as training of 1000 health workers to improve malaria and dengue preparedness and response.

“Malaria is a serious health problem in Yemen, and it kills. Internally displaced people, malnourished people especially children under 5 and pregnant women living in malaria transmission areas and in emergency situations in several regions in Yemen are the most vulnerable for malaria infections and its serious complications. This grant will enable WHO to expands its malaria preventive and control and scaling-up the fight against malaria”, said Dr Adel Al-Jasari, WHO malaria officer.

Over 1.2 million malaria and dengue tests will be procured and WHO will support the implementation of the integrated community case management plan in 10 districts and the distribution of antimalarial medicines to 1496 health facilities in all governorates.

This generous injection of funding to support an important yet historically underfunded programme now allows WHO to protect 1.6 million people through indoor residual spraying, and 4 million people against dengue through space fogging, source reduction and risk communication. Moreover, internally displaced people will be receiving 658 000 mosquito nets.

Almost 5 years of sustained conflict in Yemen have left over 30 million people in need of some form of humanitarian or protection assistance. Approximately 19.7 million people need health assistance, as Yemen’s fragile health system continues to struggle. Half of Yemen’s health care facilities are either only partially functioning or closed. Almost one fifth of the country’s 333 districts have no doctors. Tens of thousands of health care workers have not been paid for the past 3 years. These funds will go a long way towards eliminating malaria in Yemen.

Related link

Malaria factsheet

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Saturday 27th of April 2024 01:38:52 AM