



24 January 2019, Sana'a, Yemen — With a generous donation of 2 million euros from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, the World Health Organization (WHO) is scaling up efforts to meet health needs in Yemen through the health service delivery mechanism known as the Minimum Service Package. This is the first time since the start of the crisis in Yemen that WHO has partnered with the Agency.

This critical support will allow WHO to reach more than 600 000 of the most vulnerable people in need of essential health services in hard-to-reach areas of Al Hudaydah, Amanat Al-Asimah and Hajjah governorates. The objective is to provide health services through the Minimum Service Package while strengthening the health system with support from health partners across the entire country, ensuring the “right to health” for all Yemenis.

The lifeline of the Minimum Service Package

Yemen's health system is on the brink of collapse due to health and non-health factors impacting accessibility and delivery of health services.

“Pre-existing vulnerabilities have only been further exacerbated by the conflict, now in its fourth year. There are doctors in only 18% of districts across the country and only 50% of health facilities are fully functioning — which is why we are grateful for the timely and critical support from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation and the Government of Italy,” said Altaf Musani, WHO Representative in Yemen.

The Minimum Service Package is the lifeline by which health services are being provided to millions in need across Yemen. Health facilities in the most vulnerable districts are equipped, and essential health care services are provided free of charge. Equipping district hospitals increases community access to health care, ensuring that people do not have to travel hundreds of kilometres to receive treatment.

Strategic partnerships ensuring “health for all”

Through its local implementing partner, the Social Development Foundation, WHO, with the generous support of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, will be able to maximize available resources (i.e. medical, supplies, financial) in operationalizing the Minimum Service Package. This includes employing health care workers with disabilities, empowering them to provide support to those who need it most.

The crisis in Yemen is an emergency that demands coordinated efforts by humanitarian and development actors. Life-saving interventions and delivery of basic health services are part of the Yemeni people's right to health, supporting the global initiative of universal health coverage for all, thanks to support of WHO partners such as the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

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