

"WHO is here to support Sudan in tackling its health challenges"



*Dr. Swaminathan speaking with members of the South Sudanese refugee community at the Almanar Health Center in Mayo, Khartoum (Photo: Simon van Woerden/WHO Sudan).*

On February 6 and 7, WHO Deputy Director-General for Programmes (DDP), Dr. Soumya Swaminathan visited Sudan to witness the launch of the country's new National Health Policy 2017-2030 (NHP), meet with representatives of Sudan's health sector and the international community, and hear from health workers and the people served by WHO's work.

On her first country visit since her appointment as DDP in October 2017, Dr. Swaminathan, a paediatrician and expert Tuberculosis researcher by trade, first addressed the dignitaries and

representatives gathered at the NHP launch for hosting her. In her remarks, she drew attention to the various overlaps and intersections between the new policy and WHO's own [13th General Programme of Work](#), including on non-communicable diseases, which are responsible for about 40% of illness in Sudan, environmental health and related issues like climate change, safe water and sanitation for which other ministries' support is essential, and more. She also called attention to WHO's new and ambitious "triple billion" goal: 1 billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage, 1 billion more people better protected from health emergencies, and 1 billion more people enjoying better health and well-being.

Dr. Swaminathan's itinerary further included a long list of key meetings, health sector partners, facilities and locations, including Sudan's Ministers for Health, Higher Education, and International Cooperation, the heads of UN agencies in Sudan, the [Mycetoma Research Centre](#), the National Medicines Supply Fund, the Human Resources for Health Forum, and a field visit to the Almanar Health Center in Mayo community outside of Khartoum.