



The EU and WHO collaborate to strengthen preparedness and response systems for outbreaks and health emergencies in Afghanistan. Photo credit: WHO/Z. Safari

23 November 2023, Kabul, Afghanistan – To combat epidemic-prone infectious diseases and strengthen health service delivery in Afghanistan, the European Union (EU) is providing €10 million (750 million Afghan afghani) to the World Health Organization (WHO). The funding will improve preparedness and response systems for future disease outbreaks as well as health and nutrition emergencies.

The long-lasting cooperation between the EU and WHO has contributed to stronger and more resilient health care in Afghanistan. The aim of the latest funding is to further improve health care in all 34 provinces, which will benefit more than 2 million people. The additional funding builds on the earlier EU-WHO partnership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic by integrating and expanding diagnostic and infectious disease management and response in Afghanistan.

On launching the additional funding support to WHO, Ms Raffaella Iodice, EU Chargée d’Affaires a.i. to Afghanistan, said: “The EU is deeply committed to protecting Afghans from disease outbreaks and other health and nutrition emergencies. Building on our ongoing cooperation with WHO in Afghanistan, the new funding helps to strengthen public health across the country and ensure the well-being of Afghans.”

Dr Luo Dapeng, WHO Representative in Afghanistan, expressed gratitude for the EU support: “This funding will greatly contribute to reduce the burden of infectious diseases among the people of Afghanistan. We will focus on strengthening surveillance, enhancing rapid response capabilities and improving the management of infectious diseases in targeted hospitals.”

### **Background:**

The EU and WHO are committed to promoting health and building resilience in Afghanistan through investments in the health security system. This continuous collaboration aims to reduce morbidity and mortality as it improves preparedness, surveillance and response to outbreaks and health emergencies.

With the new EU funding, WHO will expand the country diagnostic capacity and provide operational support and supplies to public health laboratories across Afghanistan. WHO will provide training to enhance the skills of medical staff, to strengthen and expand surveillance systems, to improve infectious disease case management and to enhance infection prevention and control. The funding will also help upgrade treatment services for children with severe acute malnutrition with medical complications.

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