



A memorandum of cooperation was signed between Barka Health City and WHO in Oman on 28 February 2022 under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Isa bin Hamad Al-Azri, Governor of South Al Batinah, with a number of senior officials in the *wilayat* of Barka in attendance.

This memorandum aims to improve health and social status, promote health equality, and at the same time, achieve WHO global healthy cities standards. The initiative also contributes to creating a clean and supportive environment and a healthier population to make progress towards the targets of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

The signing of the memorandum comes within the framework of the Healthy Cities Programme that works to improve the health and social situation, promote health equality, and contribute to creating a supportive environment for health within the sustainable development agenda.

WHO has developed guidelines for common methods and activities for healthy cities and organizational structures have been established within the Organization to follow up on the implementation of these initiatives and provide technical support for them. In order to classify a city as a healthy city, 3 steps must be taken:

Request to join the Healthy Cities Regional Network: This comes by signing a letter of cooperation with the Organization, declaring its commitment to the Healthy Cities Programme, and joining the Healthy Cities Regional Network.

Community organization and mobilization stage during which the health city's management structure is formed, the health and social situation is analysed, goals are set, and a set of activities are implemented aimed at improving the health and social status of its residents and promoting health equality.

As a final step, the city requests an evaluation in order to classify it as one of the world healthy cities, and it receives a certificate in this classification from the Regional Office.

At the ceremony, H.E. Dr Jean Jabbour, WHO Representative to Oman praised the great role that Oman has played in the success of the healthy city initiatives at a national level and reiterated its role as a pioneer in the initiative to improve population health.

Paving the way for greater success, both parties are also looking forward to intensifying the existing aspects of cooperation and the progress of work in joint projects in order to achieve the

Organization's vision for the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

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