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WHO provides continuous support to maintain and strengthen essential health services to all people in need

HIGHLIGHTS

- Norway has generously donated 50 million NOK (approximately \$5 million USD) to WHO to support vital health services and respond to health emergencies. The funding will improve emergency care and disease control in underserved areas, as well as strengthen health system capacity. The Norwegian investment boosts recovery efforts in the country by providing health security commitments for the Whole of Syria.
- A total of 3,782 health workers were trained in 159 capacity-building sessions in different intervention areas.
- Over 285 tonnes of medical, laboratory supplies, kits, personal protective equipment, and cholera response supplies – including oral rehydration salts (ORS), IV fluids, hemodialysis sessions, and printed IEC materials – have been dispatched to 29 Ministry of Health (MoH) facilities, six Ministry of Health hospitals, the Ministry of Education (MoE), six local NGOs, two international NGOs (iNGOs), four non-governmental hospitals, and the KRC.

Health Operational Update

Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Response

- A total of 1,252 sentinel sites presented weekly reports with 86% completeness and 82% timeliness. Response was provided to 63% of alerts within 72 hours.

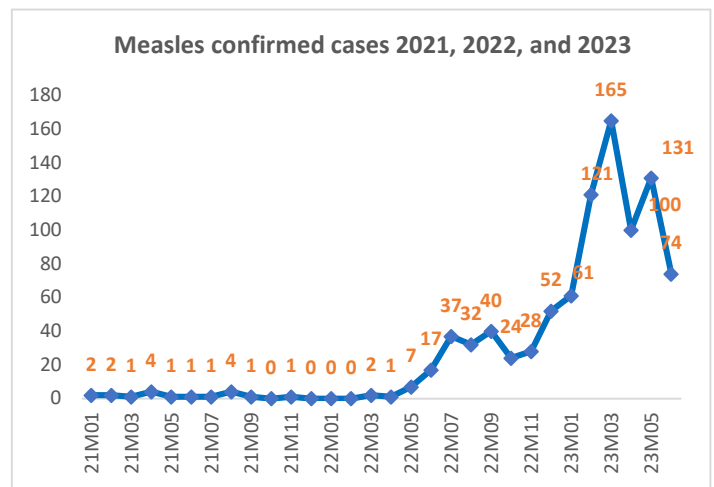
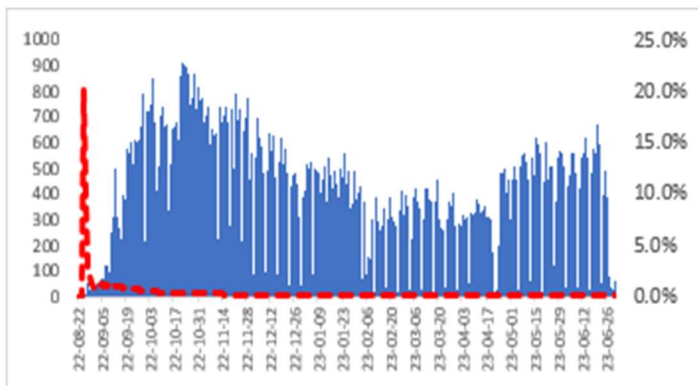
Cholera outbreak at the WoS level

- In the period from 25 August 2022 and 30 June 2023, 154,257 suspected cases have been reported from all 14 governorates. Idleb, Aleppo, and Ar-Raqqa are the most affected governorates to date.
- The estimated attack rate is 0.72, and the case fatality rate within the affected areas is 0.1%, which is well below acceptable global standards.
- 7,224 stool samples were cultured, of which 1,216 tested positive for the presence of *vibrio cholera*: a 17% positivity rate. Moreover, rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) were conducted on 6,730 samples of which 2,011 tested positive. Overall, 30% of cases are RDT-positive.

Additionally, among IDPs, there were 17,841 suspected cases and nine associated deaths.

Measles cases

- During June 2023, a total of 406 suspected measles cases were reported through the early warning alert and response system (EWARS) in 14 governorates. Measles-suspected cases decreased by 71% in June compared with cases reported in May (1,401).
- The number of confirmed measles cases in June was 74 measles cases, distributed as follows: Aleppo (37), Deir-ez-Zor (11), Damascus (5), Rural Damascus (5), Hama (4), Dara'a (4), Ar-Raqqa (3), Qunitera (2), Homs (2), Tartous (1), so far, the total confirmed measles cases in 2023 is 651.



Earthquake Response

Situation Update

- In the Latakia governorate, the operation room coordinates the earthquake-related activities and response efforts. Based on the recent coordination meeting:
 - School shelters will gradually be closed.
 - Installation of prefab houses is underway, along with the establishment of mid and long-term shelters.
 - High safety committees continue to assess earthquake-affected houses.
 - A total of 10 shelters are available (6 in Latakia City, 1 in Qurdaha, 1 in Jableh, and 2 in Haffeh).
 - Around 650 families (2,620 people) are housed in shelters while 710 families were relocated to rented houses.
- In Aleppo governorate:
 - 72,632 families (290,528 individuals) are affected.
 - 407 families are accommodated in 8 mid-term shelters, and 86 are on the waiting list.
- In Hama governorate:
 - School shelters will gradually be closed.
 - The establishment of mid and long-term shelters is ongoing with a plan for 2 in Hama, 2 in Homs, and 2 in Idlib.
 - 101 families are currently accommodated in shelters in Hama, 24 families in Homs, and 47 families in Idlib.



The WHO – supported medical point in the Sport City collective shelter, Latakia

Essential Health Services:

- Across earthquake-affected areas of Latakia, Aleppo, and Hama, seven mobile medical teams (MMTs) reached over 28,500 people with consultations, MHPSS services, medicines, and awareness-raising activities.

- In the Latakia Sport City, WHO provided 1,433 health services including consultations, MHPSS, and health.
- In Aleppo, WHO supported 3 mobile teams in collective shelters and earthquake-affected areas.

Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI)

- Technical committee meetings were held this month, including by the National Certification Committee (NCC), the Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI), and the Polio Follow-up Committee.
- The implementation of the EPI outreach/mobile teams' activities continued in all governorates to enhance routine vaccination coverage in remote and high-risk areas.

Primary Health Care (PHC) and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

- A final draft of the PHC strategy 2023-2027 was shared with MOH for review and endorsement.
- WHO supported MOH field visits to the earthquake-affected areas in the governorates of Aleppo, Hama, and Latakia to assess the health needs at the primary health care level and the outreach service delivery and plan accordingly.

Secondary and Tertiary Health Care (STHC)

- 50 health workers from the Directorate of Health (DoH) in Hama and Latakia governorates were trained on preparedness and response for the hospital sector and IPC standards for emergencies and outbreaks.
- In collaboration with its donors, the World Health Organization (WHO), delivered three oxygen generators to three public hospitals in Syria: Dara'a National Hospital, Homs National Hospital, and Dummar National Hospital in Damascus. WHO is committed to strengthening health systems in crisis-affected areas. [link](#)

Trauma Care

- More than 125 health workers from the MOH and DoH in Dara'a, As-Sweida, and Damascus have received training on Major Incident Medical Management and Support (MIMMS), Immediate Life Support and Ventilator Management, and Advanced Management of intensive care unit (ICU) patients.
- 75 health workers from Tartous, Hama, and Damascus, including prosthetics and orthotics technicians, physiotherapists, and psychiatrists attended training on disability and rehabilitation.

Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS)

- 329 MHPSS services were delivered in the earthquake-affected areas.
- In Aleppo, 426 MHPSS services were delivered to school students coming from hard-to-reach areas for their final exams.
- A further 21,323 mhGAP (mental health Gap Action Program) consultations were reported by PHCs with integrated MHPSS services.

International Health Regulations (IHR)

- WHO supported the Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of the International Health Regulations (IHR) which was conducted on 4 – 7 June. MOH, stakeholders, national NGOs, iNGOs, and UN partners worked together with 10 external experts in order to improve the country's health security and capacity to respond to any health emergencies. A National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) was drafted based on the recommendations of the JEE.

Communicable Diseases - TB & HIV

- In addition to the newly established laboratory in Deir-ez-Zor, WHO delivered and installed 16 Genexpert machines in Latakia, Homs, and Aleppo to detect antimicrobial resistance of tuberculosis (TB). During a four-day training, lab technicians were trained in molecular biology PCR technology for the detection of TB-resistant strains.
- TB mobile clinics continued to operate in Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, and Rural Damascus. Over 18,000 beneficiaries attended 54 TB awareness sessions and 113 suspected cases were tested for TB, with 26 confirmed.
- WHO trained the National AIDS Programme health workers on a new monitoring and evaluation system for collecting and analyzing data to monitor the process of activities and future projections.

Environmental Health / WASH

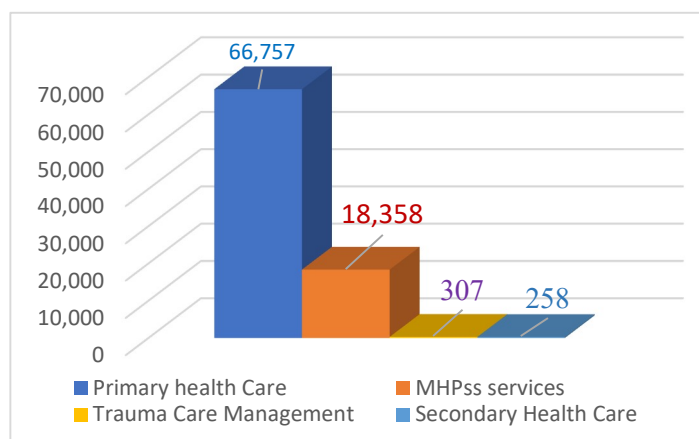
- WHO continues to monitor drinking water quality in 8 governorates. A total of 8,648 samples were tested from different resources of which 6% showed bacterial contamination. A total of 554,150 water purification tablets were distributed in host communities, IDP shelters, and other locations.
- WHO completed the rehabilitation of 15 WASH facilities at Al-Assad Hospital in Deir-ez-Zor. This hospital serves 700,000 persons and is the main public hospital in this area.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

- WHO trained 200 community health workers and outreach volunteers in the governorates of Homs, Hama, Latakia, and Tartous. Participants gained RCCE knowledge and skills, helping them raise community awareness about health risks and respond to health emergencies.

Community Engagement (NGOs)

- 8 WHO implementing partners operated 26 MMTs and 16 fixed health points across Rural Damascus, Dara'a, Homs, Hama, Al-Hasakeh, and Aleppo providing primary, secondary, and trauma care, as well as rehabilitation and MHPSS services to underserved populations.
- A total of 85,680 healthcare services were supported.



Health Systems

- In cooperation with MOH, WHO facilitated the completion of the survey entitled "Sustaining COVID-19 Gains in EMR". Syria Case study will be presented among the other Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) countries and will contribute to a better understanding of the long-term sustainability of COVID-19 response capacities and help to shape policies, programs, advocacy, and funding strategies.
- WHO introduced its new Policy and Strategy on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Misconduct (PRS) to the Ministry of Health (MoH) staff. Six sessions conducted in Aleppo, Homs (targeting Homs, Hama, and Idlib) and Damascus (targeting the southern governorates) covered more than 200 participants.



WHO-supported PRS session in Aleppo governorate

- WHO participated in the health group meetings conducted at the Planning and International Cooperation Commission (PICC) aimed at coordinating health activities and interventions with other UN organizations under the umbrella of the UN Strategic Framework (UNSF).

Health Sector Coordination

- An overview of coverage in 11 NES camps in Syria was initiated.
- The WoS team in Amman and XB partners made key recommendations to the NES health sector.
- A monitoring snapshot of the joint Health – WASH cholera response for January – March 2023 was finalized under the WoS umbrella.
- Health supplies for the “Sarmada 11” cross-line convoy to Northwest Syria, were coordinated closely with WHO Gaziantep Field Office.
- In NES, the response to the Al-Hasakeh Governor’s request for information on the implemented projects from June 2022 to present, as well as health sector response plans through December 2023, was coordinated with WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, and UNHCR.

WHO Syria Sub-Offices

Aleppo

- WHO concluded its healthcare response to students coming from hard-to-reach (HTR) areas:
 - # health workers involved: 130
 - # consultations provided: 9,413
 - # treatment courses delivered: 7,447
 - # students referred for specialized treatment in public hospitals: 850
 - # MHPSS services: 7,300
 - # RCCE services provided: 5,177
- WHO deployed seven mobile medical teams to the highly earthquake-affected areas to provide basic health care services and offer mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). The teams were also able to successfully access and deliver health services in the hard-to-reach areas of Menbij and Ain al Arab:
 - # health workers involved: 80
 - # outpatient consultations: 11,486
 - # mental health consultations supported: 9,045
 - treatment courses delivered by WHO-supported health facilities: 9,102
 - # beneficiaries reached with RCCE Activities: 7,325
- The first phase of the leishmaniasis prevention campaign concluded by the end of June. 140 workers managed to spray 60 districts, targeting more than 89,230 beneficiaries.

- WHO continues to monitor the quality of drinking water in Aleppo. 262 samples were tested from collective shelters, wells, primary health care centers (PHCs), and villages, of which 95 (36%) showed bacterial contamination.

Latakia

- In Latakia and Tartous, 375 health and community workers were trained in different intervention areas, including COVID-19, MHPSS, nutrition, surveillance, Baby-Friendly Hospitals (BFH), and hospital emergency preparedness and readiness for infectious disease outbreaks and pandemics.
- WHO continued to monitor the quality of drinking water in Latakia. 208 samples were collected from earthquake-affected areas, 90 of which (43%) contained bacteria.
- In the northern countryside of Latakia, WHO supported mobile medical teams. A total of 235 treatment courses were provided to more than 400 beneficiaries in 5 villages along with awareness sessions on health topics including cholera prevention, in addition to 10 MHPSS awareness sessions.



WHO-supported mobile team provides health services in the rural areas of Latakia



Delivery of health assistance in DEZ governorate

Homs

- Lamset Shifa, a WHO-funded non-governmental organization, assisted the Dar Al Kabera Family Wellbeing Health Center to provide 10,273 medical consultations and 220 MHPSS services.
- Building Community Association for Development (BCAD), a WHO-supported non-governmental organization, worked in the Sqelbiyah district in Hama and provided 870 medical consultations and MHPSS services, reaching 955 beneficiaries with awareness-raising sessions.
- Nearly 2,000 leishmaniasis cases were registered in Hama and Idlib governorates. Over 24,000 houses in Hama and 1,350 houses in Idlib were sprayed by WHO-supported partners in the most infected areas.

Deir-ez-Zor

- A joint field visit with the Austrian ambassador to Al Mayadeen Hospital recently rehabilitated with WHO support was conducted.
- WHO continues to support the nutrition surveillance program in DEZ. Regular field visits were conducted to the surveillance centers to assess the current situation, identify the needs, and provide the needed support.
- WHO monitored the quality of drinking water in cooperation with the DoH. 40 samples were tested, of which 23 (57.5%) showed bacterial contamination. WHO supported the costs of collecting the samples and transporting them to the reference lab.
- More than 10.5 tonnes of medical assistance were dispatched including IV fluids, hemodialysis sessions, medical consumables, and medicines to DOH health facilities and Al Assad Hospital.

Qamishli Hub / Northeast Syria (NES)

Coordination:

- A sub-national health sector meeting was held on June 11 and communicated and disseminated the latest updates of the NES MHPSS Technical Working Group (TWG).

Mental Health:

- An alarming increase of suicide attempts at Washokanii camp was flagged to the NES MHPSS TWG which promptly responded by:
 - Sharing a comprehensive list of mhGAP-trained doctors, which can be mobilized to provide mental health assistance at the camp.
 - Sharing several Inter-Agency Steering Committee (IASC) documents in Arabic and English to enhance knowledge and capacity regarding suicide – including tailored strategies and guidelines for addressing related challenges in humanitarian settings.

EWARS:

- Measles cases in Al-Hasakah governorate:
 - # Suspected cases: 1552
 - Lab confirmed cases: 119
- Disease alert investigations in Al-Hol camp:
 - Two suspected TB cases were reported by a field hospital of which one showed a negative result for Koch's in a sputum sample while the other didn't meet the standard definition of TB.
 - Two suspected COVID-19 cases were reported by Al Hikma Hospital but were found to be RDT-negative.
- Acute Watery Diarrhea investigation in Al Tweina camp:
 - 1 suspected case was reported by KRC but didn't meet the standard definition was RDT-negative.
- WHO continued follow-up on an HIV-positive case in Al-Hol camp and provided necessary medications.

Nutrition:

- 100 severe acute malnutrition (SAM) cases with complications were treated at Al Hikma and Al Tabqa hospitals.

Secondary healthcare:

- WHO provided secondary and trauma services for 784 beneficiaries at Al Hikma Hospital.
- WHO managed to referral of a TB patient from Al-Hol camp to Al Hikma hospital.

HIS:

- On June 14, WHO supported an inter-agency rapid assessment of the humanitarian needs of residents in Tal Odeh to update needs severity.

- A training session was held on 12 - 13 June, for the National COVID-19 online pre-registration platform.
- WHO assessed pharmaceutical needs for health partners/facilities in NES (Northeast Syria).

WASH:

- Water quality monitoring continued in 11 IDP camps, 53 collective shelters, and 37 drinking water stations. A total of 3,082 samples were tested, of which 69 (2%) showed bacterial contamination.
- WHO distributed 120,000 tablets of Chlorine (67 mg) Aqua-tab NaDCC and 40,000 tablets of Chlorine (1 g) Aqua-tab NaDCC to INGO INGO.

Northwest Syria (NWS)

Health Operational Update

- In addition to existing gaps in primary, secondary, and specialized health care, escalation in hostilities exacerbated existing gaps in vital trauma services and rehabilitation management.
- Suicide rates continue to rise as a result of ongoing conflict escalation and deterioration of basic services, multiple displacements, and earthquake-related post-traumatic stress.
- WHO is deeply concerned by the potential devastating impact of the non-renewal of UN Security Council Resolution 2672 (UNSCR 2672), which allows cross-border humanitarian operations through Bab Al Hawa border gate into the Idleb Governorate until July 10. WHO also welcomes the strenuous effort of the international community to advocate for the renewal of the UN mandate to serve vulnerable populations in NWS.
- Under the coordination of the Syrian Immunization Group (SIG), WHO and UNICEF conducted phase II of the Oral Cholera Vaccination (OCV) campaign. In 10 days, 1,092,362 people above one year old (98% of the target) were reached. House-to-house vaccination was carried out across eight sub-districts by 935 teams and 238 supervisors through support from GAVI, The Vaccine Alliance.
- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) continue to be major contributors to mortality and morbidity. Integration of NCD case management into primary care, including enhancing early detection, provision of quality

treatment, availability of long-term management and follow-up, and awareness raising is vital to improve health outcomes.



Phase II of the OCV campaign in NWS

Delivery of Essential Medicines and Supplies

- Since the earthquake of 6th February, WHO has continued cross-border delivery. Over 5.6 million treatment courses have been dispatched by 81 trucks.
- In case of non-renewal of UNSCR 2672, WHO has pre-positioned health supplies and equipment in NWS to cover the upcoming three months after July 10. The UNSCR enables a robust and well-established health supply chain system that prevents aid diversion and interference, making medicine and pharmaceutical distribution participatory and concerted.

Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Response

- 225 sentinel sites make the surveillance system available. In June, the three EWARN labs maintained their functionality, and all the sentinel sites submitted their weekly report. The completeness of the reporting of the sentinel sites in the northwest was 100% in Aleppo and 98% in Idleb. The timeliness is 98% in Aleppo and 97% in Idleb. During the reporting period, 951 suspected measles cases were reported which showed a decrease of 10% compared with the previous month. 2745 cutaneous leishmaniasis (CL) were reported which showed a decrease of 0.2% compared with the previous month. 348 Acute Jaundice syndrome cases were also reported in the month of June.

HIS

- For the EQ response in northwest Syria, the WHO data hub was established and has been updated with new features and health information products - [Link](#).

RCCE

- 11 partners reported their RCCE activities, reaching a total of 272,454 beneficiaries. 826 Community Health Workers and mobile teams were engaged in 27 sub-districts. RCCE interventions focused on cholera, leishmaniasis, scabies, and other communicable diseases broken down as follows:
 - Face-to-face awareness sessions reached 41,590 households, benefiting 97,263 individuals.
 - Individual awareness sessions were conducted for 17,393 individuals, reaching 18,980 beneficiaries.

- Group awareness sessions reached 143,593 beneficiaries.
- Mothers and caregivers of children were reached through awareness sessions and messages, with a total of 11,033 beneficiaries.
- Community leaders (950) and religious leaders (592) were also engaged and provided with relevant information.
- CHW training and refresher RCCE training continued for 43 CHWs and social mobilizers. In addition, WHO RCCE interventions raised awareness about leishmaniasis and scabies cases in NWS. The CHWs referred 599 suspected cholera cases and 1,324 other cases in need of medical intervention, including sexual reproductive health (SRH), child health, internal medicine, leishmaniasis, scabies, and malnutrition to appropriate health facilities or services in the targeted communities.

MHPSS

- In June, WHO launched four mental health projects to respond to the mental health needs in NWS. Project scopes include capacity building and supporting mental health clinics and teams. Programs launched in June include training for 120 health workers in the detection and referral of substance abuse and disorders and mhGAP, 240 health workers on self-help plus (SH+), and 2,200 humanitarian aid workers in psychological first aid (PFA). These activities were made possible by USA and Kuwait, and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

Useful links

[HeRAMS public hospitals](#)
[HeRAMS public health centres](#)
[WHO-Syria Summary of HRP indicators reported through the 4Ws](#)
[WoS key performance indicators](#)
[MHPSS dashboard](#)

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