15 May 2015, Amman, Jordan — The World Health Organization (WHO) is scaling up its provision of medicines and medical supplies into Yemen during the current humanitarian pause. More than 20 tonnes of medicines and medical supplies have been flown from WHO's humanitarian hub in Dubai to Djibouti, where they will be loaded on a UN vessel departing for Hodeida today. The shipment contains international emergency health kits, trauma kits, surgical supply kits, emergency diarrhoeal disease kits, and water, sanitation and hygiene items for more than 120 000 beneficiaries. WHO is also providing a shipment of anti-malaria medicines from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria sufficient for 44 950 treatment courses of malaria.

An additional 74 tonnes of medicines and medical supplies from WHO's warehouse in Sana'a will be distributed to 14 locations (Sana'a, Taiz, Aden, Al Baida, Shabwa, Sa'ada, Lahj, Abyan, Al-Dale, Hodaidah, Hadramout, Hajjah, Marib and Aljawf).

WHO is scaling up its activities on the ground during the pause, including providing primary health care services through mobile health clinics in Aden, Sana'a and Hodeida and expanding vaccination activities to previously inaccessible areas. WHO is also providing more than 251 800 litres of fuel to 13 hospitals, 2 kidney dialysis centres, 2 vaccine centres, oxygen factory, national laboratory and ambulances to ensure continued functionality of health services, as well as providing safe water to hospitals and locations hosting internally displaced persons.

"In addition to giving WHO and other humanitarian partners the chance to scale up their response on the ground, we hope that this pause will provide much-needed respite from the insecurity and allow populations, especially pregnant women and children, to safety reach health facilities and receive the urgent care they need," said Dr Ahmed Shadoul, WHO Representative for Yemen.

Dr Shadoul and WHO's emergency coordinator for Yemen Dr Iman Ahmed are currently in Yemen as part of an interagency mission, and are meeting with local health authorities, WHO national staff and health cluster partners to discuss gaps and urgent needs.

"Our discussions with national and local health authorities and WHO staff on the ground are allowing us to immediately identify and respond to urgent health needs," said Dr Shadoul. "We are working closely with local and international nongovernmental organizations that have continued to support the communities in Yemen during this difficult time and are taking full advantage of the pause to provide health care services for all vulnerable people, especially those in areas trapped by the violence."

As of 11 May, more than 1700 people have been killed and nearly 7075 injured by the conflict in Yemen. More than 300 000 have been newly displaced since March, and almost 8.6 million people are in need of health services around the country.

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