WHO Response to the Syria crisis in the country 2013

WHO Response

- 4.6 million direct beneficiaries through the distribution and delivery of health care, medicines and health equipment.
- The delivery and distribution of health kits served 1.5 million people.
- 1.86 million children (between 6 months and 15 years old) received measles vaccination.
- 2.2 million children (under 5 years old) were vaccinated against polio. Six vaccination campaign rounds are scheduled between December 2013 and April 2014.
- 403 sentinel sites of the WHO Early Warning, Alert and Response System (ERWARS) are at present reporting from the health facilities related to the Ministry of Health, Non-governmental Organizations and private health care providers from both opposition- and government controlled areas.
- Between June and October 2013, WHO conducted assessments in 21 hospitals in seven most affected governorates thanks to WHO focal persons and 36 partner NGOs and local health authorities.
- WHO provided support to the UN mission that investigated the Syrian chemical weapons incidents via the supply of medical and technical equipment, as well as staff.

WHO conducted trainings on:
- EWARS (512*) and EWARS data base (42*),
- Polio outbreak related training, including on how to raise awareness (100*), eradicating polio measures (50*) and sample collection (60*),
- Diarrhea case management (103*),
- Tuberculosis (122*),
- Severe Acute Malnutrition (28*) and Community-based management of acute malnutrition (56 pediatricians*),
- Diabetes management (312*),
- Health information management (80*),
- Reproductive Health (28*),
- Scaling up Mental Health support in emergencies (180*),
- First Aid (542*),
- Chemical Hazards Training (159*).

*The numbers refer to participants of trainings

Current Situation

- 64% of hospitals have been affected, out of which 24% were damaged and 40% are out of service. 62% of ambulances have been affected, impacting referral health care.
- The lack of fuel and electricity has forced many hospitals to operate under very challenging conditions.
- The health workforce has been significantly reduced as many health professionals have fled the country. There is a severe shortage of surgeons, anesthesiologist, laboratory professionals, female reproductive health professions, etc.
- The local production of medicines has been reduced with 65-70% of its capacity.
- There is an increased risk of mortality from vaccine-preventable diseases (i.e. polio and measles).
- Overcrowded living conditions (due to the high number of IDPs) and limited water supply, results in poor hygiene and increased risk of infectious diseases, including skin diseases.
- The ongoing violence has caused a severe increase in trauma and psychological distress. Over 50% of the population is in need of psychosocial support.