WHO supports logistics response to IDP crisis in Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province

The World Health Organization's support of emergency health logistics operations is helping address Pakistan's internally displaced people's (IDP) crisis in North West Frontier Province (NWFP).

Essential medicines, drugs, emergency and trauma kits, medical equipment and hospital supplies are essential requirements in health emergencies. But the logistics chain is incomplete without the availability of warehouses where these vital supplies are stored.

NWFP’s ongoing crisis, sparked by conflict, is causing a massive demand of medicines, supplies and equipment due to the displacement of millions of people from several areas, including Orakzai, Malakand, Mohmand and South Waziristan Agency. With the insecurity shifting to different areas of the province, there is a critical need to replenish supplies of life-saving drugs, medical equipment and supplies at functioning health facilities that were not damaged or looted during the conflict. Thousands of people have been displaced by new conflict in Orakzai at the same time as hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis displaced by earlier violence elsewhere in the region are returning home.

WHO has supported this massive response with a constant supply of medicines and related health equipment needed in any health emergency and it has also built the warehouses for their storage. "The existing storage infrastructure was not that capable to cope with the magnitude of essential medicine, equipment and supplies," says Mr. Naeem Sarwar, WHO Pakistan's Emergency Humanitarian Action Logistics Coordinator. "Therefore after a careful selection based on the most suitable locations, WHO built two warehouses in Mardan and Peshawar districts. These warehouses, equipped with environment and temperature control facilities, will not only support the medicine, supplies and equipment load in the respective districts but will also give additional support to neighboring and out-of-reach districts in the province." "From these warehouses we are delivering medicines, supplies and medical equipment to hospitals, basic health units, health corners at IDP camps, rural health centers and mobile health clinics. These warehouses have made the whole logistics mechanism smooth and cost effective." Further added Mr Sarwar. Moreover, patients are shifted by ambulance to hospitals from areas affected by emergencies, as well from one health facility to another for the sake of better treatment. WHO has provided 21 ambulances supported from European Commission for Humanitarian Aid to the conflict effected districts of the province. These ambulances, equipped with emergency supplies and equipment, will help treat people needing emergency health services as well as refer patients to higher levels of care in NWFP’s Mardan, Charassada, Peshawar, Swabi, Nowsehra, DI Khan and Tank districts.

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