



World Health Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Eastern Mediterranean

Syria crisis

## WHO'S RESPONSE IN AL-HOL CAMP, AL-HASAKEH GOVERNORATE

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WHO staff visit Al-Hol camp in Al-Hasakeh to review the overall health response.  
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67,000

Internally displaced people in Al-Hol camp

10

medical mobile teams, health units and medical points supported by WHO

1300

Health care services and consultations provided on average each day

65

Tons of medical supplies airlifted

558

Patients referred to WHO-supported hospitals in Al-Hasakeh

### SITUATION

- The humanitarian situation in Al-Hol camp continues to be worrying. The camp, originally established to hold 10 000 people, is now hosting more than 67 000, most of whom are women and children.
- New arrivals are no longer forced to sleep in the open, since large tents have been erected in the reception area. Nonetheless, the cold weather, lack of water, sanitation and hygiene and the shortages of health care services in this area leave them vulnerable to hypothermia and waterborne and other communicable diseases.
- As of 14 March 2019, 120 deaths were recorded. Children under five years of age accounted for 80% of fatalities.
- Referral services are severely overstretched and nearby hospitals have very limited capacity.
- A total of 146 children with severe acute malnutrition have been referred to the nutrition stabilization centre at the WHO-supported Al-Hikma private hospital in Al-Hasakeh city.
- Urgent health sector requirements include:
  - A 20-50 bed field hospital

- Round-the-clock health care clinics and mobile medical teams in different sectors (phases) of the camp as well as in transit sites (Al Sewar and Omar oil field).
- Financial support to cover the operational costs of Directorate of Health (DOH) teams that are providing vaccination, nutritional screening, disease surveillance and specialized health care services across the camp.
- Additional support for five mobile teams providing mental health and psychosocial support services.
- Strengthened trauma care, secondary health care and referral services to support patients in need of specialized care.
- Regular deliveries of medicines and medical supplies to support the continuity of services of mobile medical teams and clinics.
- Continuous scale-up of services to accommodate the ever-growing numbers of new arrivals.
- Sustained and predictable access to the Foreign Annex.
- Enhanced coordination between the Health, Protection, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene sectors.

#### **WHO priorities:**

- Support the establishment of a 20-50 bed field hospital in two stages: 1) establish 15 beds; 2) increase capacity to 50 beds.
- Support round-the-clock medical services to screen and triage new arrivals in the reception area.
- Deploy two surgeons and two nurses from Al-Hikma hospital to support triage services in the reception area.
- Carry out a detailed assessment of the main health conditions of the camp inhabitants and the status of health care services, water and sanitation facilities and hygiene practices; prepare recommendations to form the basis of a health sector work plan.

#### **WHO response:**

- WHO has delivered medicines, supplies and equipment to four NGO partners operating health care services in the camp. The supplies (enough for 67 700 treatments) include trauma kits, diarrhoeal disease kits, antibiotics and medicines to treat communicable and noncommunicable diseases. Equipment includes defibrillators and monitors, portable X-ray machines and blood glucose meters. Some of these supplies were delivered through cross-border operations.
- WHO has airlifted 65 tons of medical supplies to Qamishli to scale up the health response in Al-Hol and other camps in the area.
- 146 children with severe acute malnutrition with medical complications remain hospitalized in Al-Hikma private hospital in Al-Hasakeh.
- A WHO-supported deworming campaign for children from six to 15 years of age will take place from 17 to 31 March.
- WHO has supported two mental health training courses for camp health workers (one on WHO's Mental Health Gap Action programme and one on counselling).
- WHO-supported vaccination teams are immunizing children in the reception area and in phase 7.

- More than 600 cases of diarrhoea were detected through screening activities in the reception area and phase 7.
- During the reporting period 370 cases of acute diarrhoea were reported through the disease early warning and response system (EWARS).
- WHO-supported health workers have screened 10 patients with acute watery diarrhoea. Samples from 31 diarrhoea patients tested negative for cholera. WHO has sent five stool samples to Damascus laboratories for further testing. WHO-supported teams are continuing water quality screening.
- In collaboration with the DOH in Al-Hasakeh, WHO has established a fixed medical point to diagnose and treat patients with leishmaniasis. Thus far, 582 patients have been registered and are being treated.
- WHO-supported teams are going from tent to tent to conduct screening for tuberculosis (TB). Thus far, 43 people suspected of having the disease have been identified and five have been confirmed following tests conducted at the TB specialist centre in Al-Hasakeh. The total number of confirmed TB patients in the camp now stands at 15. All patients have been enrolled in the TB treatment programme.

#### **Referral services:**

- The two WHO-supported private hospitals in Al-Hasakeh are saturated and struggling to manage the influx of new patients.
- A total of 140 patients remain hospitalized (103 in Al-Hikma hospital and 37 in Al Hayat hospital). A total of 558 patients have been referred to these two hospitals since 25 February 2019.

#### **Advocacy:**

- Negotiate an urgent scale up of camp health care services with the different local authorities, the Government of Syria and the Kurdish Red Crescent.
- Secure regular access to the Foreign Annex. WHO is tracking all instances when medical teams were denied access to the Foreign Annex.