



COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan by Health Work Committees



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Introduction:

As COVID-19 cases continue to increase and spread worldwide, Health Work Committees (HWC) is adapting their operations to help keep the community safe and supported. Responding to all communities needs by mobilizing the sector and providing the latest information, resources, medical help and aid efforts for enduring to this crisis.

Our support to the sector:

As the total number of confirmed cases in the occupied Palestinian territories continue to increase, detecting 205 cases as of 4 April with 21 recovered cases and one death. HWC adapted an emergency response plan to reach vulnerable communities – from refugee camps and marginalized areas, to conflict zones in the oPt.

The health care system and health organizations are under an immense amount of pressure to fight the rapid spread of COVID-19. Thus, HWC in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the health cluster contributed to Inter-Agency COVID-19 response plan for the next 3 months. Within this plan HWC prepared a list of needs to combat this epidemic in case of increased number of cases in the West Bank.

Internally:

- **HWC prepared a full centralized emergency response plan**, in addition to a customized local plan for each health center to optimize our services for the best prevention and wellness of our people and health staff.
- **HWC health centers halts its clinics services** and continue providing emergency services only.
- **Ensure that good quality communication and accurate information updates are provided to all staff.** As the WHO recommended, it's essential to provide support to our health and staff and to implement flexible schedules for workers who are directly impacted or have a family member affected by a stressful event.
- **Orient all responders, including nurses, ambulance drivers, volunteers, case identifiers, and community leaders**, on how to provide basic emotional and practical support to affected and unaffected people.

- **Medical tents were set up in Halhoul, Tubas and Qalqelia** next to our health centers, as a first line of defense to meet the urgent need for illness identification and treatment.



- **HWC collaborated with the Centralized Emergency Committees in each governorate.** In Tubas, HWC's Tubas hospital building has been made available to the governorate and the MoH to be used and equipped as a diagnosis, treatment and quarantine facility for the affected cases of in Tubas.



- **Equipped an intensive care room unit inside Ahmad Al-Maslamani Hospital in Beit-Sahour.** After a case that visited the hospital tested positive for the coronavirus, the

second floor of the hospital was transformed into a quarantine facility for 6 of HWC's health workers who were in contact with the affected patient.



HWC activities during the out-break

HWC reviewed all action plans and reformed funding to deal with COVID-19 threats, standing ready to respond to the extraordinary needs that this crisis is generating. And with the changed context of the COVID-19 pandemic, our programmes need to pivot rapidly to respond to different and additional needs, while coping with restrictions on travel, lockdown requirements and health concerns.

- **HWC purchased medical disposables and supplies** to cover the needs for preventive, sterilization, protective gear supplies.
- **Provide awareness services and psychosocial support** using different ways of communication.
- **We're sharing content with the public through leading digital and media platforms** that relate to prevention, health tips and awareness materials.
- **COVID-19 emotional and psychosocial support helpline.** Social workers phone numbers are made available for easy access to health information.
- **Offer phone consultations and information sharing** for pregnant women and chronic disease patients. Whereas psychologists at women cancer center offer support for its beneficiaries. People with disabilities and their families receive support through social workers, and workers at Beit-Sahour Elderly Club contact the club beneficiaries to share information and provide support for the elderlies in need.
- **HWC team produced several awareness videos**, targeting women, men, people with disabilities, and children and shared them on HWC's social media platforms.

- **Provide relief items and distribute hygiene kits** that include: masks, sanitizers, alcohol-based soap, antimicrobial wipes, etc.
- **HWC’s Oasis center delivered and distributed food parcels to mentally or physically disabled beneficiaries** in Bethlehem governorate as part of an awareness campaign that targets marginalized groups in the Palestinian society. The campaign took place in partnership with representative of the emergency response committee “khalid Abu-Aita” and the Palestinian Security Services.



- **Partnered with the Ministry of health (MoH)** to perform tests and detect cases in the gradual return of Palestinian workers in Israel and Israeli colonial settlements to their homes in the West Bank.

In conclusion, through this pandemic we need cross-sector collaboration to connect our respective areas of expertise and capacities across the private sector, governments and civil society. COVID-19 Action Platform provides us with this opportunity for collaboration and a rapid mobilization and sharing of innovative ideas and identification of creative solutions. The global humanitarian community must be at the forefront of responding to the rapidly escalating humanitarian needs around the globe – saving lives and so much more, through this pandemic and beyond.