Sana'a, 23 August 2015: In response to the growing humanitarian crisis in Tiaz and Hodeida governorates, and the rising number of civilian injuries in the southern governorates of Yemen, WHO is coordinating a rapid response to provide emergency health access to the injured, internally displaced persons and host communities.

Thousands of people have been injured in Taiz since the start of March 2015 with over 350 causalities recorded in the last one week alone. The escalating crisis in the governorate has seen a breakdown in the health system; health facilities have been damaged, close to half of the health facilities have closed down and medical supplies are quickly being depleted.

Today, WHO donated 2 WHO Yemen local trauma kits sufficient to conduct 1000 surgeries, one surgical supply kit, 15 dressing kits, 40 first aid bags and anaesthesia medicines to treat the increasing numbers of injured patients in Tiaz.

And in Hodeida governorate and Tehama region, where the crisis has equally escalated, WHO has donated emergency trauma kits, interagency emergency health kits and other medical supplies sufficient to treat over 4500 patients in Al Thawra hospital and Bajel renal dialysis centre to address the immediate health needs. Shortly after the delivery of the supplies to the hospital, 25 major surgeries were carried out as a lifesaving intervention for the injured.

"WHO is committed to ensuring that all Yemenis continue to have access to health services, including those in the hardest to access areas through the provision of emergency lifesaving medicines, trauma kits, interagency emergency health kits, diarrhoeal disease kits and blood bank supplies which currently are urgently needed," said Dr Ahmed Shadoul, WHO Representative for Yemen.

"In Taiz, the ongoing crisis has led to the closure of many health facilities and access to health facilities for the injured civilians and doctors is almost becoming impossible; shortages of basic and lifesaving medicines, medical supplies, laboratory reagents in the health facilities are fast dwindling with limited access for replenishing; in all this, WHO is determined to meet the huge gap in supplies; this requires lots of financial resources," added Dr Shadoul.

Since March 2015, WHO has supported treatment of an estimated 23 000 trauma and surgical cases countrywide. The agency has also supported 18 hospitals in 7 of the most affected governorates with physicians, surgeons, gynaecologists, psychiatrics and nutritionist to manage the increasing patient caseloads.

In light of WHO's response and the growing health needs, the agency is appealing for US$ 132 million to support health interventions until the end of 2015 but has only received US$ 25 million, leaving a funding gap of 81%. In the coming month, the health situation is expected to deteriorate further among the displaced people and host communities due to the continued crisis and escalating needs.