

Novo Nordisk Foundation supports WHO's emergency response in Ukraine and neighbouring countries with 25 million Danish kroner/3.4 million euros



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The Novo Nordisk Foundation has donated 25 million Danish kroner (about 3.4 million euros), to WHO's emergency response in Ukraine and countries hosting Ukrainian refugees.

The funds granted by the Denmark-based Foundation are fully flexible and can therefore be swiftly used to cover urgent needs in WHO's response to the complex health emergency, where the situation on the ground is extremely fluid.

“The situation in Ukraine grows more dire by the day and requires continued awareness from the international community. With this grant, the Novo Nordisk Foundation is supporting the important work WHO is doing to ensure access to imperative health services in Ukraine and neighbouring countries affected by the invasion,” said Ms Hanna Line Jakobsen, Senior Vice President of the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

The Foundation is one of the largest philanthropic actors in the world. In 2021 alone, it awarded 8.8 billion kroner (over 1.1 billion euros) in grants. After the war broke out on 24 February, the Foundation quickly released 55 million kroner (about 7.4 million euros) for emergency relief efforts in and around Ukraine.

Taking on one of its biggest public health challenges in decades, WHO/Europe issued an emergency appeal barely a week after the war started in Ukraine. The appeal detailed priorities and funding

needs in the next 3 months: a total of 52 million euros.

As of 13 April, the appeal is more than fully funded – thanks to donors like the Novo Nordisk Foundation – and is enabling WHO to reach up to 6 million people in need.

“Contributions such as this mean that we can train health workers to tackle urgent needs, that insulin reaches those with diabetes, that hospital operating theatres remain equipped and stocked, and that tourniquets and morphine reach facilities treating the wounded. This donation and others like it save lives,” said Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe.

Based on growing needs and new developments in Ukraine and surrounding countries, and the stark fact that the ongoing hostilities have triggered some of the fastest-growing population movements in recent memory, WHO will be issuing a second appeal in the coming days.

The total number of forcibly displaced people, internally and across borders, as a result of the war in Ukraine is currently estimated at 11.4 million. Of the nearly 5 million that have sought refuge in neighbouring countries where they require basic health care, almost half are in Poland.

Within Ukraine’s borders, essential health care is disrupted, jeopardizing the treatment of chronic diseases like cancer and cardiovascular diseases. The risk of infectious diseases is significant and routine immunization has come to a halt, as has COVID-19 vaccination. Access to reproductive, maternal and antenatal care, as well as mental health care, is severely impacted due to security concerns, restricted mobility, broken supply chains and mass displacement.

To date, WHO has reached more than half a million people in Ukraine through the delivery of 180 metric tonnes of medicine and emergency medical supplies. The United Nations health agency’s priority is emergency and trauma care and continuity of essential health services in the war-torn country.

WHO has been in Ukraine since 1994. As the Health Cluster Lead Agency there, it works with more than 80 national and international partners on the ground.

From its warehouse in Lviv in western Ukraine, WHO is delivering medical supplies on a near-daily basis through an extensive supply chain across the entire country. WHO is also working to open an operational hub in Dnipro in eastern Ukraine.

The Novo Nordisk Foundation is an enterprise foundation with philanthropic objectives established in Denmark in 1924. The vision of the Foundation is to improve people's health and the sustainability of society and the planet. The Foundation's mission is to progress research and innovation in the prevention and treatment of cardiometabolic and infectious diseases, as well as to advance knowledge and solutions to support a green transformation of society. Read more at the link below.

Founded in 1948, WHO is the United Nations agency that connects nations, partners and people to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable – so everyone, everywhere can attain the highest level of health. WHO leads global efforts to expand universal health coverage. We direct and coordinate the world's response to health emergencies. We promote healthier lives – from pregnancy care through old age. WHO works across 194 countries in 6 regions of the world, including the European Region which encompasses 53 countries across Europe and central Asia. WHO staff include the world's leading public health experts, bringing together doctors, epidemiologists, scientists and managers – all champions for healthier, safer lives everywhere.

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