



Message from

**Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari**  
WHO Regional Director  
for the Eastern Mediterranean

on the occasion of  
**World Health Day**  
7 April 2021

On 7 April we celebrate World Health Day under the theme “Building a fairer, healthier world”. On this occasion the World Health Organization is calling for urgent action to eliminate health inequities so that everyone can enjoy the healthiest possible life.

Health is a fundamental human right. Every person deserves to live a healthy life regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, disability, economic situation or employment. Progress in tackling health disparities has been slow worldwide, including in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, where many countries face major emergencies and conflicts and we have the largest number of forcibly displaced people in the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed inequities, but it also offers a unique opportunity to promote social justice and equity in health in our Region. WHO is working hard with our Member States and partners to make sure that no one is put

at extra risk of infection because of their circumstances, and that treatment and vaccines are available to those who need them most.

We are also working to tackle the root causes of inequity. We have just launched the report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health in the Region. This provides detailed analysis of inequities among and within countries of the Region and recommends fairer policies and actions to achieve health equity. I call on all our partners and stakeholders to take these recommendations forward and ensure that no one is left behind.

WHO’s vision for the Region, Vision 2023, calls for Health for All, by All so that everyone can enjoy health and well-being. World Health Day 2021 is an opportunity to advance that agenda.

Let us work together to build a fairer and healthier world!

