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Press release

The Italian government strengthens its long-standing cooperation with UNICEF and supports Sahrawi children's access to quality health and education

Algiers, 1st February 2022

As part of the support strategy for "education in emergencies" and in order to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the Sahrawi population, the Italian government, a long-standing strategic partner of UNICEF, has allocated an envelope of 500,000 euros to continue to support the schooling of 40,000 Sahrawi children and to improve the health services in the current COVID-19 pandemic situation.

This humanitarian funding will allow UNICEF and its partners to ensure inclusive access to safe and quality education for all Sahrawi children living in the 5 refugee camps in Tindouf, including 8000 children in pre-schooling age, with special attention to the most vulnerable ones. In line with the five-year education strategy (2021-2025), the intervention will also support efforts to build the capacity of Sahrawi education personnel, including pre-school teaching staff, in order to provide a more inclusive and qualitative educational service from the very beginning.



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unicef 

for every child



Furthermore, with regard to health, this contribution from the Italian government will aim to ensure continuous access to health services, in particular to quality maternal and child vaccination for more than 20,000 children under 5 and their mothers, thanks in particular to the acquisition of essential medical equipment and the strengthening of the health personnel's capacities.

"The Italian Cooperation intends to continue to support UNICEF to guarantee and protect the essential rights of children, such as the rights to education and health. In a humanitarian context, these rights cannot be denied. Schools must be a place of learning, development, and growth for every child, without any exclusion. Health care is an obligation for every person, especially the most vulnerable one", says Mr. Andrea Senatori, Director of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) - Tunis Regional Office.

"Italy is always committed to defending and promoting human rights, also in humanitarian crises and in the most vulnerable contexts, such as that of the Sahrawi camps. We are proud to be able to contribute to the activities of a partner like UNICEF,



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capable of bringing real added value in such a delicate context,” adds the Italian Ambassador to Algeria, Giovanni Pugliese.

“I thank the Italian government for this important contribution which is essential to ensure the continuity of a programme that makes access to quality education and health a priority in the Saharawi refugee camps. But also, the renewed financial support of Italy confirms the sustainability of its strategic partnership with UNICEF”, declared Dr. Isselmou Boukhary, Representative of UNICEF Algeria.

This UNICEF intervention will have a duration of 12 months and will end in early 2023.