UN provides $15M in the fight against COVID-19

12 March 2020 | News

The UN funding has been released to the WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UN Humanitarian Chief Mark Lowcock has released US$15 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to help fund global efforts to contain the COVID-19 virus.

The announcement came as the World Health Organization (WHO) upgraded the global risk of the coronavirus outbreak to "very high" – its top level of risk assessment. The WHO has said there is still a chance of containing the virus if its chain of transmission is broken.

The sudden increases of cases in Italy, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Korea are deeply concerning. There are now cases linked to Iran in Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait and Oman, along with cases linked to Italy in Algeria, Austria, Croatia, Germany, Spain and Switzerland.

The UN funding has been released to the WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It will fund essential activities including monitoring the spread of the virus, investigating cases, and the operation of national laboratories.

The WHO has called for US$675 million to fund the fight against coronavirus. There is a window of opportunity to contain the spread of the virus if countries take robust measures to detect cases early, isolate and care for patients, and trace contacts.