



27 March 2019 – Under the auspices of H.E. the Minister of Health of Iraq Dr Alaa Alwan and the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, in collaboration with WHO country office in Iraq, a national workshop was organized to facilitate assessment of and planning for national public health capacities required under the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005). Implementation of core public health capacities under the IHR is an obligation for national health authorities and requires the involvement of all sectors under a one health approach.

International and regional multidisciplinary experts from WHO headquarters and the Regional Office, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network and regional academic institutions conducted the comprehensive joint external evaluation (JEE) and development of the national action plan for health security to support the strengthening of Iraq’s preparedness and response capacity to prevent, detect and rapidly respond to public health risks.

As part of the process, in January 2019, a pre-assessment mission was organized with the support of WHO bringing together experts and national authorities and stakeholders to conduct the initial mapping of Iraq’s capacities. From 11 to 20 March 2019 based on their related areas of expertise, participants and experts worked hand in hand to conduct the JEE review process at national and provincial levels. Through insightful discussion and field visits, the resulting recommendations and priority actions informed the development of the national action plan for health security, a country-owned planning process based on a multisectoral one health approach for all hazards. The action plan translated into action, national priorities for health security, bringing all concerned sectors together and identifying needed resources for health security capacity development.



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