Beirut, 8 July 2014 – The The emergency operations centre will be a hub for operations in Lebanon during public health emergencies using state-of-the-art information technology. Lebanese Minister of Public Health Wael Abu Faour launched the newly established emergency operations centre supported by WHO at the Rafiq Hariri governmental hospital.

In compliance with the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), Lebanon initiated the preparation for effective implementation of the guidelines to detect, report and respond to events that may constitute a potential public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC).

The centre is also part of WHO's global alert and response network and is linked to the strategic health operations centre in Geneva and to a network of emergency operations centres around the world.

The emergency operations centre can be used in case of epidemic-prone and environmental public health events caused by accidental or deliberate use of chemical, radio-nuclear and natural disasters. It links the surveillance unit of the Ministry of Public Health with sentinel sites over Lebanon in real time. It has been backed up with satellite to provide continuous connection if landlines and internet fail in case of disaster.

WHO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health also developed the "Health Facilities Atlas 2013" for health facilities mapping in Lebanon using geographic information system (GIS) technology. These interactive maps can be used in responding to public health emergencies, and were integrated to the centre's information system.

These efforts have been made toward increasing the capacity of the Ministry to respond to emerging public health threats, in compliance with the IHR 2005.

Related link

Arabic | International Health Regulations 2005

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