



Abdifatah Mohamed Shidane, fellow in the WHO Health Emergencies/Infectious Hazards Preparedness programme, 20 October 2019-20 August 2020

It was a great opportunity being able to participate in this fellowship. It helped me enhance my

professional capacity and shaped my personal attitude. I also had the chance to explore new areas and become more familiar with the field of public health and the work of WHO.

I am a medical doctor and have a Masters degree in clinical tropical medicine from Mahidol University. I have been working in the field of public health since I graduated from university. I am very enthusiastic about improving public health.

### **What inspired you to come to work everyday?**

Every day was just a new opportunity to learn and build my personal and professional skills. In addition to that, the workplace was full of very committed energetic people willing to help.

### **What are your future goals?**

For my short-term goals, I want to continue working in the field of public health and use the knowledge and skills I gained from this fellowship to improve public health in my country – Sudan. In the long run, I want to be a champion in this field and dedicate myself to work and support ongoing efforts to make the world a better place, not only for us but for future generations.

### **What were your major contributions during the fellowship?**

I had the opportunity to get involved in several activities, including, but not limited to:

- assisting the workstream team in documenting, analysing and providing reports on active outbreaks in the Region;
- assisting in writing, formatting and editing weekly and monthly publications of the infectious hazards management programme;
- contributing to development of a comprehensive mapping tool to expand the regional GOARN network to strengthen collaboration and support Member States of the Region;
- attending daily meetings of the regional Incident Management Support Team and taking the action and discussion points;
- supporting the health information management/surveillance pillar, particularly the COVID-19 modelling group;
- currently working on a manuscript regarding the use of the EWARN system for COVID-19 surveillance.

### **What is your takeaway from this fellowship?**

It's important to work hard and continue to learn new skills and knowledge as every challenge leads you to a new opportunity.

### **What were your fun experiences outside the office in Cairo?**

I have always wanted to visit Cairo; the city is full of historical places. The people were so friendly. The food was amazing. Exploring all of Cairo with other fellows made my experiences even more memorable. I look forward to seeing the great pyramids of Giza, watching the sunset near the Nile river and many other things again.

### **Any tips and suggestions for the future fellows?**

Try to engage fully, explore new areas and learn new skills. Everything you need to grow is there, try to seize it. Do not hesitate to reach out to other colleagues for any help. Above all, be creative, prioritize your tasks and have fun.

Being a member of this fellowship at the Regional Office during a global pandemic was a lifetime experience.

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