

15 June 2021 – In line with the regional framework for addressing air pollution and health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region 2017–2022. The Regional Centre for Environmental Health Action (CEHA), in collaboration with WHO's United Arab Emirates Desk Office and the Ministry of Health and Prevention of United Arab Emirates conducted a virtual national workshop 17–20 May 2021 to build capacities in assessing the health impacts of air pollution.

Air pollution kills more than 7 million people worldwide, including 500 000 annually from WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region. Air pollution with particulate matter has reached alarming levels in many countries of the Region, including the United Arab Emirates. Estimating the morbidity and mortality rate as a result of air pollution is considered a key step in developing and adjusting policies and measures that protect public health. In order to facilitate this process WHO developed the Air Q+ software that is a user-friendly tool for health risk assessment of air pollution.

This training workshop aimed to estimate the health impacts of air pollution mainly for fine particulate matter (PM10, PM2.5) during 2017–2020 with a focus on the COVID-19 lockdown periods using real data on air quality, health, and population. This virtual training workshop brought together 30 national health, environment, and statistics professionals together to exchange knowledge, best practices, and provide answers to questions related to air quality levels and health measurements in the United Arab Emirates.

During the workshop participants were able to:

estimate the long-term health impacts of ambient air pollution (especially PM10, PM2.5) using real air quality, health, and population data over for 2017–2020;

estimate the short-term health gains resulting from the COVID-19 lockdown period;

determine the background level for NO₂ in the UAE during the COVID-19 lockdown periods;

reach consensus on the need to update national air quality standards for PM10 and PM2.5 in Jordan as soon as possible.

The workshop provided a space for national professionals to discuss and propose applicable sustainable solutions to reduce the anthropogenic air pollution levels and its health impacts, as well as sustainable solutions for dust storms. CEHA will conduct this pilot workshop in other countries of the Region.

Related links

[Air pollution and health](#)

[AirQ+ Software](#)

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Thursday 9th of May 2024 03:13:44 AM