



3 March 2024, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran – The 28th Technical Meeting of the Group of Five (G5), on “Women and Family Health”, in collaboration with WHO, convened in Tehran on 13–15 February 2024. Esteemed leaders and experts took part in the meeting, marking a milestone in regional health cooperation.

The inaugural session featured speeches by esteemed figures including Dr Ensiyeh Khazali, Vice President for Women and Family Affairs; Ayatollah Rashad, Head of Research Institute of Islamic Culture and Thought; Dr Bahram Eynollahi, Minister of Health and Medical Education; Dr Shakiba Mohebbi Tabar, Secretary of National Population Task Force; Mr Darzi, Director General for Sustainable Development and Environment Affairs; and Dr Syed Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Dr Hanan Balkhy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, delivered an inspiring video message emphasizing the importance of regional partnerships in addressing health challenges.

Opening ceremony highlights included Dr Balkhy’s call for joint research and capacity-building initiatives among G5 members to address local health issues. Dr Khazali stressed women’s pivotal role in family health and highlighted the Islamic Republic of Iran’s provision of 99 free services to pregnant mothers and online consultations for maternal and child health. Ayatollah Rashad emphasized that men and women are equal and that there is no difference between men and women in humanity.

Dr Eynollahi highlighted the commonalities among G5 countries and stressed the importance of cooperation to address shared health challenges and disasters. The meeting involved 3 technical panels, focusing on maternal health and youth, women and family mental health, and spiritual health.

Each day began with country reports followed by insights from WHO technical officers and Iranian experts. Priority actions were identified and collectively endorsed by participants at the close of each panel.

In his closing remarks, Dr Hussain reaffirmed WHO's commitment to support the G5 mechanism as a platform for subregional collaboration. Participants also engaged in discussions with Dr Jamileh Alamolhoda, wife of the Iranian president, and Tajikistan announced its intent to host the next G5 event.

Established in 2005, G5 fosters cooperation among Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq and Pakistan, with Tajikistan as an observer, to address shared health challenges. Under the slogan "Joint work for solving joint health problems", G5 continues to lead regional efforts to advance women's and family health.

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