



13 October 2022, Cairo – The consensus among participants in the panel discussion “Supporting Member States to accelerate the implementation of health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through joint action by UN country teams (UNCTs)”, held during the 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, was that efforts by partners must complement each other rather than compete.

Moderated by Dr Christoph Hamelmann, Chef de Cabinet at the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, Member State representatives appraised the joint actions of UN agencies in responding to national health needs.

Discussing how to strengthen UNCT support to Member States, the panellists reflected on examples of joint UN work addressing health priorities and accelerating progress towards the health-related SDGs.

Ms Elena Panova, UN Resident Coordinator in Egypt, cited WHO’s coordination role in the COVID-19 response and joint collaborative work on antimicrobial resistance and mental health as examples of how collaborations during the COVID-19 pandemic built momentum for further multisectoral action to address health needs and overcome challenges.

Ms Panova also underlined the importance of the role of Resident Coordinator in bringing UN partners together and engaging them in strategic dialogue, adding that resources should match with ambition.

Dr Laila Baker, Regional Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), pointed out

how health priorities in the area of reproductive and maternal health can only be met through the engagement of all stakeholders.

Dr Maryam Bigdeli, WHO Representative in Morocco, drew attention to the role of WHO in coordinating joint action for the health sector on the country level and stressed the importance of leadership capacity building and of working jointly with ministries of health to address needs.

HE the Minister of Health of Palestine Dr Mai Al-Kaila praised the role of WHO and UN agencies, particularly in responding to the priorities of the national authorities in humanitarian and emergency contexts. She cited several examples of the result of joint work, including the timely and effective delivery of vaccine and medicine supplies and the channelling of resources towards emergency situation responses.

In his concluding remarks, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari expressed his appreciation of the way the deliberations of the panellists and interventions of Member States had foregrounded the importance of addressing the challenges the Region faces and accelerating progress towards the health-related SDGs through country-level collaboration.

Coordination between UN agencies in responding to national priorities is key to achieving Health for All by All, he said.

Wednesday 1st of May 2024 01:39:50 AM