



The Ministry of Public Health in Qatar, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), organized a multi-regional workshop aimed at building national capacity for formulating comprehensive, multisectoral public health responses to dementia. Dementia experts from 16 countries across the WHO Regions of Africa, Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean attended this multi-regional workshop, which was held in Doha, Qatar from 9 to 11 May 2022. Countries included: Armenia, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Zimbabwe.

Dementia is the seventh leading cause of death and a leading contributor to disability worldwide. Over 55 million people have dementia, with one third living in the WHO Regions of Africa, Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. Dementia poses an enormous burden on individuals, families, and society overall, and much of this burden falls on women. Women have higher rates of dementia and are more likely to provide care to people living with dementia.

In 2017, the World Health Assembly adopted the Global action plan on the public health response to dementia 2017–2025 to support Member States in developing their national responses. While the action plan reached the halfway point, some progress has been made, but much remains to be done so that dementia is prevented and people with dementia and their carers receive appropriate care and support. In his opening address, Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean stated that “this multi-regional workshop is critically important to speed up implementation of the global action plan on the public health response to dementia.”

Country representatives, civil society, and WHO attended this workshop, participating in 11 sessions, which provided an opportunity for cross-country and cross-regional exchanges on good practices and lessons learnt in areas such as dementia policy, risk reduction, diagnosis, treatment, care and support, support for dementia carers, information systems for dementia, as well as dementia research and innovation.

This multi-regional workshop represented an important opportunity to develop and foster collaborations in the area of dementia across the three regions. Dr Kristine Galstyan, a participant from Armenia, summarized the significance of the workshop as follows: “This workshop shaped us as professionals, allowed us to share knowledge, equipped us with professional confidence in the field, and increased our self-efficacy through exchange of good practices and lessons learnt, to become active actors in the field”.

From this workshop, participants gained rich insights into country needs in relation to strengthening national dementia responses and monitoring efforts. WHO will continue to work closely with key global and regional partners, people with dementia and their carers to speed up implementation of the actions embedded in the Global action plan on the public health response to dementia in Qatar, as well as other Member States across the Region.

## **Related links**

[Address by Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean to the multi-regional workshop to speed up implementation of the Global action plan on the public health response to dementia 2017–2025](#)

[Dementia](#)

[Global action plan on the public health response to dementia 2017–2025](#)

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