

Tunisia is the first country in the Region to finalize its National Child Health Policy, an outcome of country efforts undertaken within the frame of the Child Health Policy Initiative (CHPI) conceived by the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO) in October 2003.

H.E. Tunisian Minister of Public Health will sign and launch the policy document in a formal celebration to be held in Tunis on 10 December 2006, during the opening session of the Third Intercountry Workshop on Child Health Policy initiative, organized by the Regional Office Child and Adolescent Health and Development Unit (CAH).

The National Child Health Policy document developed by Tunisia relies on a thorough situation analysis described in the official document of the Ministry of Public Health “Child health situation analysis in Tunisia” developed in October 2005. The analysis was carried out as a key step to identify strengths of existing policies and child health issues which could be addressed effectively through new policies or strengthening existing ones. The aim was to bring together in one document all policies, old and new ones, which address the health and development of Tunisian children, as a further commitment to ensuring that Tunisian children develop and live to their full potential. The document covers both the healthy and sick child and addresses such issues as access to care and service provision, committing financial resources, health professional development, medicines policy and other health system elements, communication, prevention, monitoring and scaling-up of child-related programme interventions.

The policy document deals with challenges such as providing equity and equality, ensuring quality services and access to health care to all children, ensuring quality of services and personnel performance, raising preventive services, promoting child psychosocial development and disability prevention and control, allocating more financial resources to support the implementation of child health policies and eventually strengthening partnerships defining

partners' responsibilities and coordination mechanisms.

As part of its efforts to support Member States, the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean produced guidelines to help these states to formulate their National Child Health Policy. Dr Hussein Gezairy, Regional Director, confirmed the importance of such policy indicating it as “ an innovative approach that further show the government’s resolve to apply its policy effectively for the betterment of its children’s health.” Dr Gezairy will address the Third Intercountry Workshop that will be inaugurated Sunday 10th of December 2006 with the participation of representatives of 11 Member States. Three countries namely Egypt, Tunisia and Sudan will review their experiences in this field. EMRO will review a recommended process for analysis and prioritization of policy issues.

It is worth mentioning that the WHO initiative was positively received by most of the countries. Four countries pioneering the Initiative, namely Egypt, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia, were able to prepare and finalize in 2005 their child health situation analysis reports, which represent the platform on which subsequently to develop their national child health policy documents. Other countries expressed interest such as the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Jordan, Oman, Pakistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Palestine and Yemen

Saturday 20th of April 2024 12:00:46 AM