

9 May 2012 -- A high-level parliamentary delegation from Iraq is visiting the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean to take part in a 2-day workshop that aims at continuing the practical steps of a health sector modernization programme in Iraq. The workshop will be held on 9–10 May 2012 in the Regional Office.

The Government of Iraq is currently engaged in a Public administrative reform process. As part of this process, the Iraq Public Modernization Programme has been supporting three key service delivery sectors: health, education and water and sanitation since 2010. The 5-year programme (2010–2014) was designed in two phases. The first phase will conclude by the end of May 2012 and is dedicated to developing a baseline and diagnostic of the current situation in the three key service areas.

By the end of the first phase, each sector will have a road map defining an action plan for the next phase. In the second phase, starting in the second half of 2012, a plan will be developed to support the elaboration of a long-term strategy and improve the operational efficiency of the sector and its service delivery.

This pragmatic approach, based on a collaborative process with the Iraq Ministry of Health, both central and from the Kurdistan region (KRG), and WHO, aims to ensure the engagement of all concerned stakeholders around the plan and strategy, facilitating an effective decision-making process. To activate the reform plan, key meetings have been held in Erbil and Baghdad.

WHO and the Ministry of Health of Iraq have organized the workshop as a major milestone for the health sector reform process in Iraq. In the workshop, members of the Ministry of Health and Parliamentary Committee on Health and Environment of Iraq will engage in a dialogue with WHO experts for an enhanced understanding of the health system, issues facing the health sector and strategies for overcoming the challenges of the health sector, particularly with regard to legislation and regulation in Iraq. The workshop will also be an opportunity for sharing findings of the assessments from the modernization programme and getting inputs for the road map for change and modernization of the health sector.

The workshop will also assess the progress of Iraq towards achieving the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), paying special attention to the areas of health sector development, setting health development priorities and strategies, decentralization and

enhancing cooperation with the private health sector.

Dr Ala Alwan, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, will inaugurate the workshop on Wednesday, 9 May at 8:30 in the Regional Office. Dr Syed Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative in Iraq and WHO experts in the field of health systems development will also participate in the workshop.

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