

Mogadishu, 8 March 2021 – On 25 February 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) country office for Somalia and the SPIDER Center (based within University of Stockholm) signed a non-financial memorandum of understanding (MOU) to formalize a partnership that aims to develop an integrated and digital health information management system (HIMS) in Somalia.

Somalia's health system has been weakened by decades of conflict and recurring natural disasters. In particular, Somalia lacks a comprehensive HIMS capable of electronically collecting and sharing information from community to national level. While WHO continues to explore possibilities of establishing an integrated disease surveillance and reporting (IDSR) system in Somalia, the SPIDER Center, alongside the Federal Ministry of Health and health authorities in Puntland, Galmudug and Banaadir, launched a 3-year project entitled "Health Alliance for Digital Development and Action". The aim of this project, funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), is to create and strengthen a HIMS in Puntland, Galmudug and Banaadir as a pilot project, which will then inform further development and expansion of such a system at national level across Somalia.

It is within this context that WHO and SPIDER have agreed to collaborate on developing this HIMS, as well as an IDSR system in the country. An audit and needs assessment will be used to determine what the best HIMS may be for Somalia, after which partners will work towards developing harmonized Standard Operating Procedures for its development. As the United Nations' lead technical agency for health, WHO will offer technical support to this project and facilitate the identification of local opportunities for resource support. Overall, this collaboration will help strengthen Somalia's health system, and how health data is stored, thereby improving health for all.

"WHO remains committed to working with SPIDER to improve the data management system in Somalia. Data remain the key for informed public health decisions. This collaboration will be pivotal in improving the capacity of the health workers in the country to collect, collate and analyze health and nutrition data in a way that helps them to measure health outcome and impact. We are hopeful that this collaboration will help the country to build its own capacity to monitor and track progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals by systematically analyzing the available health information," said Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik, the WHO Representative to Somalia.

"This collaboration is a good starting point for engagement with key actors working to

strengthen Somalia's health system. An integrated HIMS ought to serve the needs of all actors in a health system. A multi-stakeholder approach is key to achieve consensus that creates a responsive and adaptable health system in Somalia. SPIDER and Stockholm University are happy to engage in these partnerships to consolidate resources required to realise the SDGs," said Dr John Owuor, SPIDER's director.

This MOU between WHO and SPIDER is part of a new, innovative partnership between WHO, Sweden and Somali health authorities, which aims to diminish persistent health problems by creating an independent National Institute of Health, as well as by modernizing the country's HIMS. It is complementary to the MOU recently signed between WHO and the Public Health Agency of Sweden.

Related links

[An innovative and unique partnership: WHO, Sweden and Somalia work together to improve health outcomes for all Somalis](#)

[WHO and Public Health Agency of Sweden sign MoU to support establishment of National Institute of Health for Somalia](#)

Wednesday 1st of May 2024 06:40:51 AM