

Joint mission for national preparedness enhancement in Jordan (Amman, Jordan)

A joint mission visited Amman, Jordan in March 2015 to support the Ministry of Health to enhance its national preparedness level against threats posed by influenza and other respiratory pathogens. The mission comprised experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US NAMRU-3, EMPHINET and WHO.

Group work on research and policy gaps in influenza and respiratory diseases with pandemic potential (Cairo, Egypt)

A group work with experts on research and policy gaps in influenza and respiratory diseases with pandemic potential was held at WHO Regional Office in Cairo on 13–14 May 2015. Experts from the Regional Office and member countries, including Egypt, Jordan and Pakistan, as well as renowned academics from the United Kingdom and United States of America participated in this meeting and deliberated on various areas during the group work.

Group work on PIP Implementation with country focal points (Cairo, Egypt)

A group work on PIP PC Plan Implementation with country focal points was held on 10-11 June 2015 at WHO/EMRO. Participants included WHO Regional staff, temporary advisors from 6 PIP support beneficiary countries in EMR including Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco; in addition to WHO HQ, and representatives of partner organizations.

Group work on finalizing SARI/ILI sentinel surveillance assessment tools (Cairo, Egypt)

A group of experts and WHO staff, comprising epidemiologists and virologists involved in influenza surveillance, met in the Regional Office in Cairo on 17-18 August 2015 to review a draft package of tools on assessment of sentinel surveillance for influenza at country level.

Influenza research in the Region highlighted at the Ninth International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases (Atlanta, USA)

Influenza and respiratory disease research from the Region was prominently featured, with a specific panel session on emerging infectious diseases and three honored leaders from the Region in infectious diseases, at the ninth ICEID, held in Atlanta, USA on 24–26 August 2015. The Conference was attended by global infectious disease experts.

Training on data analysis, scientific writing and publishing (Amman, Jordan)

A course on data analysis, scientific writing and publishing was held in Amman, Jordan on 4–6 October 2015. The training was attended by epidemiologists, virologists and concerned WHO country office staff from Afghanistan, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Yemen. Training material was designed and delivered by experts from Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, St. Jude Children's Hospital and Research Center and Sultan Qaboos University Oman.

Training workshop on Laboratory specimen collection, transportation and shipment (Cairo, Egypt)

A training certification course on Laboratory specimen collection, transportation, shipment of Influenza and other pandemic prone respiratory viruses as per IATA regulations was organized for PIP priority countries in the Region, namely Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Yemen. Course was held at WHO Regional Office on 12–14 October 2015 and was also attended by Regional Office staff, partner organizations namely US NAMRU-3, Aga Khan University, VACSERA Egypt and Pasteur Institute in Morocco.

Training course on advanced epidemiological data analysis under PIP Framework (Dubai, United Arab Emirates)

A cohort of epidemiologists working with ministries of health, WHO country office staff and selected fellows from the Field Epidemiology Training Program of the Centers for Disease Control in countries of the Region, were trained on advanced epidemiological data analysis approaches in the United Arab Emirates on 23–26 November 2015. The training was a collaborative venture between WHO and Aga Khan University in Pakistan.

Training on genotyping sequencing for influenza virus under PIP (Muscat, Oman)

A laboratory training workshop on influenza virus genotyping by Sanger sequencing took place in Muscat, Oman on 6–10 December 2015. Participants from central public health laboratories of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman and Tunisia, as well as WHO regional staff and WHO collaborating centres in London, UK, attended.

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