



27 June 2021, Damascus – More than 30 representatives from key Syrian national media outlets took part in an information session organized by the Syrian Ministry of Health and the WHO country office in Syria to address rumours and misinformation and increase public acceptance of COVID-19 vaccines.

“Fighting the pandemic and misinformation requires a whole-of-society approach and since the pandemic started, access to reliable, consistent, and accurate information has been critical. In addition to supporting national authorities to develop and disseminate public health messages, media professionals play an important role in ensuring that the public can make informed decisions about critical issues that affect their health and well-being by tracking and addressing rumours and misinformation related to vaccines, along with their core responsibilities of

accurate reporting and evidence-based coverage,” said Dr Akjemal Magtymova, WHO Representative in Syria.

Effective communication around COVID-19 vaccines requires open engagement with communities. The information session presented new approaches for the media to deliver effective and consistent messages, so that individuals can understand the risks associated with vaccine-preventable diseases, the benefits and risks associated with vaccines, and know where to find accurate, trustworthy and clear information.

The session allowed participants to openly share challenges, lessons learned and best practices from their coverage of COVID-19 vaccines over the past months. The discussion focused on the importance of effective risk communication and community engagement as key factors towards improving compliance with public health and preventive measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.



WHO EMRO | Strengthening partnerships with the Syrian media to improve communication around COVID-19