



22 September 2021, Damascus – This week stakeholders from the Ministry of Health, Foreign Affairs, Education, Higher Education, Finance, Local Administration and Environment, Social Affairs and Labour, Water Resources, Agriculture, Defense, Interior, and Transportation will collectively assess the country’s capacity to address health threats and public health emergencies through a joint external evaluation (JEE) as part of the International Health Regulations (IHR)’s monitoring and evaluation framework.

Syria adopted IHR in 2007 and committed to enhancing the national core capacity to prevent, detect, assess, notify and report events, and promptly and effectively respond to public health risks and public health emergencies of international concern. The first JEE self-assessment in Syria was completed in December 2019, and this week’s consultative meeting of national stakeholders aims to update the self-assessment, reflecting the significant efforts and developments Syria has made while collectively responding to COVID-19 pandemic.

“Diseases have no borders, hence we must address health issues through partnerships. Health is everybody’s business and it affects our daily lives, economy, and the future of our children, especially now in the times of pandemic,” stated Dr Akjemal Magtymova, WHO Representative, in her opening remarks. “A founding member of the World Health Organization, Syria has collaborated with WHO across all sectors in addressing public health issues through the years of peace and crisis. Syria has a voice in steering the contemporary issues related to global health agenda,” Dr Akjemal Magtymova noted.

Throughout the next 2 days partners will assess the current national capacities to ensure health security across 19 technical areas, such as surveillance, immunization, points of entry and other, through a comprehensive multisectoral approach by prioritizing opportunities and developing recommendations for enhanced preparedness and response to health threats.

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