Recap of the First Day of Workshop

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WHO EMRO COVID-19 Vaccine Effectiveness Study;
Status Update and Important Considerations
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Overview

- 1. EM Regional COVID-19 VE Study: Status Update
- 2. EM Regional COVID-19 VE Network: *Challenges and the Way Forward*
- 3. Conducting COVID-19 VE Studies: What Next for Policy-making?
- 4. Role of NITAGs in COVID-19 VE Studies in the Region
- Current COVID-19 VE Data and Global Guidance on Conducting VE Studies
- 6. Antibody Testing for SARS-CoV-2 and Use in VE Studies



EM Regional COVID-19 VE Study: Status Update

Main activities

- Enhancing processes and structures
 - COVID-19 VE Study Dashboard
 - o Regional COVID-19 VE technical team
 - Regional ethical clearance
 - Data entry platform in REDCap
- Building national technical capacity in the Region
 - General vs specific capacity-building programs

Participating countries and study designs



EM Regional COVID-19 VE Network: *Challenges and the Way Forward*

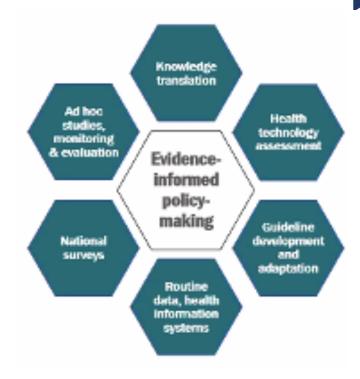
- Overall challenges
 - Common challenges encountered in COVID-19 VE studies
 - General challenges of a Regional COVID-19 VE Study
- Country-specific challenges in the EM Regional COVID-19 VE Study

- The way forward
 - strategies to address and overcome challenges



Conducting COVID-19 VE Studies: What Next for Policy-making?

- Framework for improving national institutional capacity for use of evidence in health policy-making
- EMR Countries committed to the integrated multi-concept approach for the institutionalization of **evidence-informed policy-making** for health





Role of National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) in COVID-19 VE Studies in the Region

- NITAG has a technical advisory role on topics related to vaccines and immunizations
- They make evidence-based and independent decisions and share their recommendations with the MoH
- They are <u>not involved</u> in implementation, supervision, coordination and licensing
- The structure, functioning, considerations and processes of the NITAG had to be adjusted due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- NITAGs <u>can recommend</u> COVID-19 VE studies, review proposals and use findings to guide and update existing policies on COVID-19 vaccination***



Current COVID-19 VE Data and Global Guidance on Conducting VE Studies

The most recent guidelines by the WHO for evaluation of COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness in a changing landscape of epidemiology and epidemiology (3 October 2022)

- Waning occurs against BA4/5, especially infection
- Boosters restore VE against BA4/5
- Vaccines protect against infection (for a few months) and severe disease (for many months)
- Neutralization shows slight decrease compared to BA1
- Data suggests similar or some decrease in VE for BA4/5 compared to BA1



Antibody Testing for SARS-CoV-2 and Use in VE Studies

- Serological tests for SARS-CoV-2 have multiple indirect antigen targets
- Immune responses to SARS-CoV-2 infection are heterogeneous
- Assay performance varies with products, populations, and timing of sample collection
- Correlates of protection for COVID-19 vaccines are still being investigated
- Serological tests can be used in VE studies to investigate hybrid immunity
- Feasibility needs to be assessed in light of vaccine products and population seroprevalence



Resources

 All presentations and slides from capacitybuilding trainings will be posted on the EDP website: https://www.emro.who.int/evidence-data-to-policy/covid-19-initiatives/index.html

 The most recent updates by the WHO for "Evaluation of COVID-19 Vaccine Effectiveness" can be accessed via:

https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/363344

