Reviving influenza preparedness and response in Iraq with the support of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework

23 February 2022

Cairo, 23 February 2022 – In recent months, with support provided by WHO under the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Framework Partnership Contribution mechanism, national sentinel influenza surveillance, preparedness and response system in Iraq has been strengthened during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Iraq has faced critical political, economic and health challenges in recent years that have affected its health system and had a negative impact on the health of its population. Political instability, competing health priorities and lack of financial and human resources have also resulted in the disruption of the influenza...

Jordan updates its risk communication and community engagement plan for pandemic influenza preparedness

14 December 2021

Cairo, 14 December 2021 – Jordan is currently reviewing and updating its risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) plan for pandemic influenza preparedness based on best practices and lessons learned during the COVID-19 response. A workshop to review the plan was held between 7 and 9 December 2021 by the Ministry of Health with technical support from the WHO country office in Jordan and the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. It brought together 35 participants from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Jordan Food and Drug Administration and...

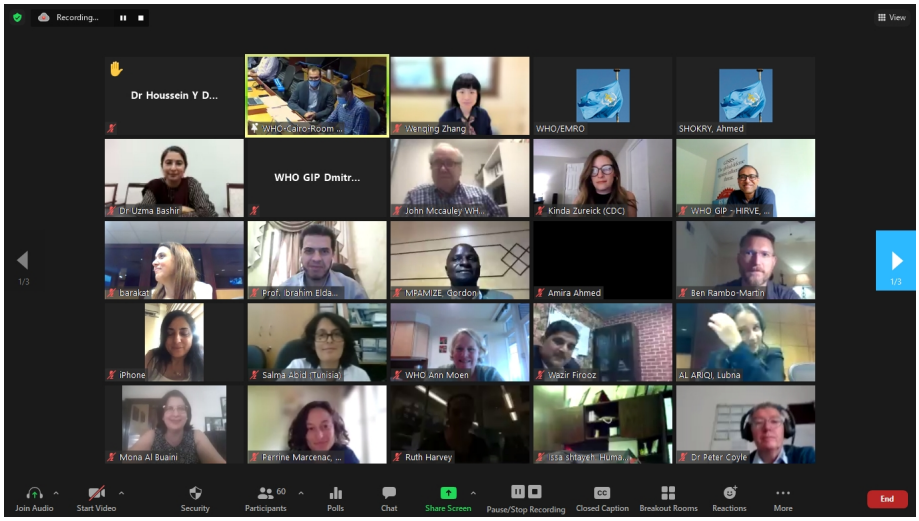
Enhancing pandemic influenza severity assessment capacities in Jordan

04 November 2021

Cairo, 4 November 2021 – Detecting and responding early to influenza and other emerging respiratory disease outbreaks can be achieved in Jordan through improved sentinel surveillance systems with proper data collection and analysis and the better use of data for public health actions. This was the main outcome of a workshop that was organized jointly by the Ministry of Health and WHO using the Pandemic Influenza Severity Assessment (PISA) tool. The participants of the workshop that took place between 26 and 28 October in Amman, Jordan included 20 health workers specialized...

Directors of national influenza centres in the Eastern Mediterranean Region meet to discuss challenges, opportunities, and the way forward for influenza laboratories

02 August 2021



Cairo, 2 August 2021 – WHO convened a meeting for the directors of national influenza centres (NICs) in the Eastern Mediterranean Region to share new laboratory techniques and methodologies for influenza virus detection and characterization and discuss challenges they face in these areas of work. The meeting took place on 15 July 2021 and was organized by the Infectious Hazard Prevention and Preparedness unit of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme at the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. Directors of laboratories in the 22 countries of the Region were invited,...

Identifying challenges and solutions for pandemic influenza preparedness in the Region

02 August 2021

Cairo, 2 August 2021 – Working on pandemic influenza preparedness (PIP) during the COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be challenging for priority countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, but WHO has been supporting these countries to address challenges in ensuring effective implementation of the PIP framework. This was the outcome of a country focal points meeting held virtually on 7 July 2021. The annual PIP coordination meeting was organized by the Infectious Hazard Prevention and Preparedness (IHP) unit of the WHO Health

Emergencies Programme at the WHO Regional Office for the...

WHO supports Syria to fight COVID-19 and reactivate influenza sentinel surveillance

03 February 2021

8 February 2021 - In 2020, the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean conducted a 3-month mission to Syria to provide technical support to the WHO country office and the Ministry of Health for their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to follow up on the implementation of recommendations from previous missions and support the Ministry to re-activate influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) sentinel sites, and establish new SARI sentinel sites. The mission, which took place from 7 August to 14 October 2020, also provided support...

Regional directors of national influenza laboratories to enhance collaboration

19 December 2019

19 December 2019 - Directors of national influenza laboratories (NICs) in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region met for two days to discuss issues and solutions for challenges in laboratory surveillance for seasonal, avian and other pandemic influenza viruses. The meeting, held in Casablanca, Morocco, on 16–17 November 2019, also included representatives of WHO Collaborating Centres and other experts from the Region. Participants from the Region's 22 countries also reviewed the current functioning of NICs and the support needed to strengthen technical capacities related to influenza surveillance, collaboration and information. The meeting...

WHO supports improvement of regional influenza sequencing and molecular phylogenetic capacity

08 December 2019

Laboratory technicians from 11 regional countries trained on influenza sequencing and molecular phylogenetic analysis. (Photo: WHO/A. Barakat) 8 December 2019 – Ensuring the availability of adequate regional and national capacities to perform genetic sequence analysis of influenza viruses is one of the priorities for WHO in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. For this reason, national influenza centres (NICs) across the Region attended an eight-day training workshop to improve the knowledge and skills of laboratory technicians on influenza sequencing and molecular phylogenetic analysis for the timely identification of genetic changes in emerging influenza viruses. The workshop...

Strengthening Iraq's influenza surveillance system

05 December 2019