



**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

2 August 2016

**Sixty-third Session
Cairo, Egypt, 3-6 October 2016**

**STRENGTHENING NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR
BETTER REPORTING OF REGIONAL CORE INDICATORS AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)**

Objectives of the event

The objectives of the event are to brief Member States on:

- reporting completeness of the 68 indicators per country for 2014 and 2015;
- outcome of the intercountry meeting which reviewed the results of the assessment and discussion of modalities for improving the reporting and quality of the core indicators;
- final results of the assessment of each country's capacity to report on the core indicators;
- existing challenges in reporting on the core indicators and technical support needed to enhance quality and reporting;
- country strategies to enhance their ability to report on all the core indicators;
- plans for the collection and reporting of the SDGs health indicators (SDG 3).

Background

The strengthening of health information systems is a priority for WHO in the Region. Intensive work undertaken with Member States since 2012 has resulted in the development of a clear framework for health information systems and identification of 68 core indicators that focus on three main components: 1) monitoring health determinants and risks; 2) assessing health status, including morbidity and cause-specific mortality; and 3) assessing health system response.

The regional core indicators were endorsed by the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean at its 61st session, and Member States started to adopt and report on the core indicators in 2014. In order to facilitate standardized collection and analysis of data and reporting of the core indicators, a concise indicator registry with key attributes has also been published.

As part of WHO's efforts to strengthen national health information systems, WHO is supporting capacity-building in death certification, International Classification of Diseases (ICD) coding and use of the DHIS 2 platform to enhance the reporting of facility-based data. Other efforts aimed at addressing data gaps include a new wave of health examination survey that has been developed by WHO. The health examination survey, which was recently conducted in Tunisia, will enable countries to report on relevant population-based core indicators, monitor progress towards universal health coverage and provide reliable evidence for decision- and policy-making. However, country efforts to regularly report on the core indicators is far from satisfactory and several factors play a role in the inability of countries to

report – fragmentation and major gaps and weaknesses in national health information systems, as well as inadequate national capacity in collecting, compiling, analysing and disseminating information at national and subnational levels.

Sources of data for regional core indicators come from a variety of sources, such as civil registration, surveys, and routine health information systems. Irrespective of the source of data for the core indicators, regular assessments of national health information systems and country capacity and future plans to report on the core indicators are warranted. This is critical within the context of the data revolution and SDGs that call for countries to foster and promote innovation to fill data gaps, as well as provide leadership and coordination, to enable the data revolution to play its full role in the realization of sustainable development.

To achieve this, a country rapid online assessment tool on capacity to report on the core indicators was developed and focuses on the following key areas: 1) core data availability; 2) frequency of reporting the core indicators; 3) main statistical methods and approaches to generate the indicators; 4) critical constraints in reporting on the core indicators; 5) inventory of all population- and facility-based surveys conducted in the last five years, as well as future plans; and 6) experience and impressions of the global estimates produced by the United Nations.

Expected outcomes

- Broader understanding of Member States with regard to the priority actions for strengthening national health information systems.
- Consensus on the next steps for addressing the gaps in generating reliable data for the 68 regional health information system indicators.
- Identification of potential facilitators or barriers to the smooth reporting of the SDG health-related indicators and action points to improve the reporting capacity of Member States.
- Development of action points for follow-up on proposed strategies to enhance quality and reporting of the core indicators.