

RC64 bulletin

Issue 3 • 11 October 2017

Regional Director Dr Mahmoud Fikri presents 2016 annual report and regional roadmap for 2017–2021

On the first day of the 64th Session of the Regional Committee, hosted in Islamabad, Pakistan, Dr Mahmoud Fikri, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, presented the Annual Report of the Regional Director for the year 2016, and updated participants on progress in a number of key areas.

Looking ahead, Dr Fikri also shared his vision on the way forward for the Region through a roadmap that underpins his five-year mandate as Regional Director. Through the roadmap, Dr Fikri aims to increase WHO's capacity to meet the needs of Member States by ensuring that WHO in the Region becomes ever increasingly effective, efficient, accountable and transparent.

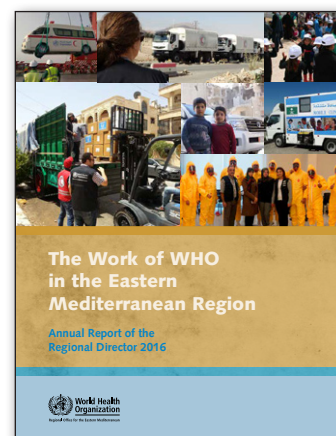
The roadmap has been developed around four interrelated pillars that translate the vision into

action to guide WHO's work: (1) public health priorities, (2) enabling factors, (3) WHO's presence in countries, and (4) WHO's working environment.

The five priority areas identified for targeted action are: (a) emergencies and health security;

(b) prevention and control of communicable diseases; (c) prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases, mental health and substance abuse; (d) maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health; and (e) health systems strengthening to achieve universal health coverage.

↓
For copies of the RD's Annual Report and the Roadmap of WHO's work in Arabic, English and French, please visit the publications booth



Special sessions on polio, humanitarian emergencies and IHR

An update on polio eradication in Pakistan and Afghanistan in the Region highlighted the success of polio supplementary immunization activities in 2017 in restricting transmission. Ensuring an end to polio transmission in Pakistan and Afghanistan in the coming low season and transmission in Syrian Arab Republic remained a challenge.

With the Region experiencing an unprecedented increase in the magnitude and scale of crises, humanitarian emergencies were also prominent on the first day's agenda; the Region more than 50% of global Grade 3 emergencies were in the Region with other countries experiencing a mix of chronic and acute emergencies. Refugees in the Region now totalled 15.7 million and 18 million people were internally displaced. Population movement was overwhelming health systems of host communities and neighbouring countries, and in some cases, reversing health gains. The high incidence of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases was impacting global and regional health security. In response, the WHO Health Emergency Programme had mobilized US\$ 293 million and delivered 920 tons of health supplies but the funding gap remained at US\$ 200 million.



Photo: ©WHO/A.S. Khan



Photo: ©WHO

Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize for 2017 awarded to Dr Yasmine Ahmed Jaffer of Oman

This year's Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize was awarded to Dr Yasmin Ahmed Jaffer of Oman, for her significant contribution to public health in Oman, particularly in the area of women's and children's health. Dr Ahmed Jaffer graduated from the College of Medicine, Baghdad University, in 1983, and received her Master's degree in mother and child health from the Institute of Child Health, University College London, in 1989.

Dr Ahmed Jaffer is currently senior consultant and advisor in the Directorate-General for Primary Health Care, Oman. From 1993 to 2014, she was director of the Department of Family and Community Health, overseeing a major expansion in women's and children's health services. Among her many achievements, Dr Ahmed Jaffer coordinated the National Women and Child Care Plan and played a pivotal role in establishing the national birth-spacing programme, helping to introduce policies to ensure the availability of contraception options to couples. During her term as director of the Department of Family and Community Health, the total fertility rate in Oman decreased from 6.9 in

1993 to 3.13 in 2007, and antenatal clinic coverage and hospital delivery were greatly expanded.

Dr Ahmed Jaffer has served on many key national committees, including those for children's rights, nutrition, school health, quality assurance, maternal mortality, and mother and child health, and has contributed to the development of many national

policies, including on population and manpower development, as well as to the Omani code for the ban on the marketing of breast milk substitutes and the national women's strategy. As a researcher, she has published in many national and international journals, particularly in the areas of maternal, child and adolescent health.



From left to right: H.E. Ms Saira Afzal Tarar, Pakistan's Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination; Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director General; Dr Mahmoud Fikri, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean; and Dr Yasmin Ahmed Jaffer, recipient of the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize for 2017

Dr Sania Nishtar of Pakistan to chair new High-level Global Commission on Noncommunicable Diseases

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has announced the establishment of a new High-level Global Commission on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) that aims to identify innovative ways to curb the world's biggest causes of death and extend life expectancy for millions of

people. The commission will support ongoing political efforts to accelerate action on cardiovascular disease, cancers, diabetes and respiratory disease, as well as reducing suffering from mental health issues and the impacts of violence and injuries.

The commission will be chaired by Dr Sania Nishtar, a prominent global advocate for action against NCDs, former Federal Minister of the Government of Pakistan, and civil society leader.



Discussion of technical papers

Key topics discussed by the Regional Committee on Wednesday, 11 October include technical papers on cancer prevention and control; women, children and adolescent health; antimicrobial resistance; and climate change and health.

The Regional Committee was invited to endorse a proposed regional framework for action on cancer prevention and control. The proposed framework will assist countries to decide which priority interventions to implement for

cancer prevention and control according to their national context.

The Regional Committee was also invited to endorse a proposed updated framework for action on climate change and health. WHO considers that climate change represents a fundamental threat to lives and well-being and has called for urgent global action to protect health from climate-related risks.

Member States were urged to translate the commitments made in the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescent

Health 2016–2030 into action by developing and implementing national strategic plans for adolescent health.

Antimicrobial resistance has emerged as a major public health problem that threatens the advances of modern medicine. The Regional Office has established a network of antimicrobial resistance national focal points for human and animal health and is focusing on supporting countries in the development of national action plans on antimicrobial resistance.



Regional Director's dinner

On the 2nd day of RC64, Dr Mahmoud Fikri, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean hosted an open-air dinner for the participants at the Shamadan Gardens, Serena Hotel, Islamabad. The pleasant atmosphere was made all the more enjoyable with gentle music and balmy evening weather. It was an ideal opportunity for guests to relax and unwind after a long day of meetings, sessions and hard work.



Follow us on WHO Social Media



@WHOEMRO and #RC64



World Health Organization
(Eastern Mediterranean
Regional Office)



youtube.com/c/WHOEMR



[flickr.com/photos/
whoemrorc64/](https://flickr.com/photos/whoemrorc64/)

© World Health Organization 2017

Some rights reserved. This work is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO licence (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO; <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo>).

WHO-EM/MAC/049/E