



Report of the third meeting of the Programme Subcommittee of the Regional Committee

Opening of the session

1. The Programme Subcommittee of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean held its third meeting on 2–3 April 2018 at the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean in Cairo, Egypt. The Programme Subcommittee was established in response to resolution EM/RC63/R.6 (2016).

2. The meeting was attended by experts nominated by Member States to serve as members (and observers) of the Programme Subcommittee for a duration of two years, and by WHO staff. The agenda and list of participants are included as Annexes 1 and 2, respectively.

3. The Programme Subcommittee elected the following officers for a duration of one year.¹

Chair: Dr Mohsen Asadi-Lari (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Vice-Chair: Dr Majida Al-Qattan (Kuwait)
Rapporteur: Dr Badreddine Annajar (Libya)

4. An overview of the Programme Subcommittee was presented, including its establishment, terms of reference, and membership and meetings. This was followed by a summary of the previous two meetings and the objectives of the third meeting.

Draft 13th General Programme of Work 2019–2023

5. The Subcommittee was presented with an outline of the draft 13th General Programme of Work (GPW13), which was approved by the Executive Board in January 2018 and would be discussed during the Seventy-first Session of the World Health Assembly (May 2018). The presentation also highlighted linkages between the GPW13 and the *Roadmap of WHO's work for the Eastern Mediterranean Region 2017–2021*.

6. The GPW13 will come into effect in 2019, so the interim period offers an opportunity to streamline the Secretariat's support to Member States in implementing the GPW13 in the Region and subsequently moving towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

7. The participants discussed the draft GPW13, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that the regional context and more specifically national priorities are taken into consideration in implementation. They encouraged the Secretariat to continue efforts to streamline current work in line with the global approach and highlighted the need for Member States to be more proactive in communicating their needs and health challenges.

8. Participants agreed that the 65th session of the Regional Committee should be dedicated to discussing with Member States how the Region (Member States and Secretariat) will implement the GPW13 and, consequently, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, four technical papers were proposed: three dedicated to the 3 strategic priorities (universal health coverage, health emergencies and healthy lives), and one paper dedicated to optimizing the performance of the Organization and putting countries at the centre of WHO's work.

9. The aim of the proposed approach is to agree with Member States on a concrete plan of action for the Region to implement the GPW13 and contribute to the collective triple billion target. As reaching the target

¹ See [EM/RC63/8 Rev.1](#)

is a joint responsibility between the Secretariat and Member States, agreeing on the approach at regional level early in the process will clarify roles and responsibilities.

10. With this in mind, each of the papers will address how to implement the corresponding target in a comprehensive approach, across different areas of work. Multiple programmes will work together to draft the technical papers and later to implement the recommended actions. This approach will ensure that the Secretariat's support to Member States is targeted where it is needed the most, based on WHO's comparative advantage, Member State needs and regional context.

Preliminary outline of the 65th Session of the Regional Committee

11. An outline of the agenda of the 65th session of the Regional Committee was presented to the Programme Subcommittee. A list of the proposed topics for the different agenda items was shared with participants, as well as brief proposals for each topic. The Subcommittee members listened to concise presentations for the proposals. This was followed by a detailed discussion with the Secretariat and the responsible officers as necessary.

12. The proposals fell under three broad areas: a) pre-Regional Committee technical sessions; b) technical papers for the Regional Committee; and c) side events.

13. After careful consideration, members of the Programme Subcommittee agreed on topics to be discussed under each of the areas. The topics agreed are listed in Annex 3.

Other matters

14. Based on the recommendation of the first meeting of the Programme Subcommittee, five countries (one from Group 1 and two each from Groups 2 and 3)² were invited to attend the meeting as observers (Jordan and Oman were present). The aim is to ensure continuation and rotation the next year.

15. Members of the Programme Subcommittee proposed that the membership of the Programme Subcommittee increase to represent 11 Member States, four each from among Group 2 and Group 3 countries, and three from among Group 1 countries. This will be proposed to the Regional Committee at the Sixty-fifth session (October 2018) for its consideration.

16. Members of the Programme Subcommittee also proposed that the Member State hosting the Regional Committee be invited to attend the meeting(s) of the Programme Subcommittee as an observer.

17. The Subcommittee agreed to hold its fourth meeting in Khartoum, Sudan, on 15 October 2018 prior to the Sixty-fifth session of the Regional Committee. Additional meetings may be arranged if needed.

Closing of the session

18. After thanking members of the Programme Subcommittee for their attention and valuable feedback and the Regional Office for its support, the Chair closed the session.

² Group 1: Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia. Group 2: Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen. Group 3: Afghanistan, Djibouti, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic.

Annex 1. Agenda

1. Opening session
2. Adoption of the provisional programme
3. Overview of the Programme Subcommittee of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean
4. Election of office bearers of the Programme Subcommittee of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean (April 2018 – April 2019)
5. Overview of the draft thirteenth general programme of work (GPW13)
6. Preliminary outline of the 65th Session of the Regional Committee, including proposals for pre-RC sessions, technical papers, and side events
7. Next steps and recommendations for the work of the Programme Subcommittee of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean
8. Closing session

Annex 2. List of participants*Members of the Programme Subcommittee and observers*

Afghanistan	Dr Wahid Majrooh ³
Bahrain	Dr Mariam Ebrahim Al-Hajeri
Djibouti	no nomination received
Egypt	Dr Soad Abdel Megid
Iraq	Dr Muhammed Jabber ³
Islamic Republic of Iran	Dr Mohsen Asadi-Lari ⁴
Kuwait	Dr Majda Al-Qattan
Libya	Dr Badereddin Al-Najjar
Jordan	Dr Haytham Al-Dwairi
Oman	Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari

WHO Secretariat

Dr Jaouad Mahjour	Acting Regional Director and Director of Programme Management
Dr Basel Al-Yousfi ⁴	Director, Regional Centre for Environmental Health Action
Dr Hoda Atta	Acting Director, Communicable Disease Prevention and Control
Dr Maha El-Adawy	Director, Health Protection and Promotion
Mr Hatem El-Khodary	Director, Administration and Finance
Dr Zafar Ullah Mirza	Director, Health System Development
Dr Arash Rashidian	Director, Information, Evidence and Research
Dr Ayoub Al-Jawaldeh	for Director, Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health
Mr Christopher Maher ⁴	Manager, Polio Eradication and Emergency Support
Dr Mamunur Malik	for Director, Regional Emergency Programme
Ms Rayana Bou Haka	Manager, Country Focus Support
Ms Catherine Foster	Editor, Editorial, Graphics and Publishing Services
Dr Olla Shideed	Technical Officer, Office of the Director of Programme Management
Ms Hala El-Shazly	Senior Administrative Assistant, Office of the Regional Director
Ms Samah Afana	Administrative Assistant, Office of the Regional Director
Ms Rana Al-Naggar	Team Assistant, Office of the Regional Director

³ Unable to attend⁴ Via WebEx

Annex 3. List of topics agreed for the 65th session of the Regional Committee

Lead(s)	Proposed title	Comments
Technical papers		
IER and HSD	Advancing universal health coverage	
WHE and DCD	Protecting populations from the impact of health emergencies	
HPP and NMH	Promoting health and well-being	
DAF and CFS	Optimizing WHO's performance: countries at the centre	
HSD	Private sector engagement in the EMR for advancing UHC	
Pre-RC technical sessions		
IER	Improving the quality and coverage of mortality statistics in the EMR	
HPP	Optimization of the use of cesarean section in the EMR	
HSD	Development of a regional strategy for the hospital sector in the EMR	
HSD	Building resilient health systems in the EMR as part of the Humanitarian Development Nexus	
DCD	Integrated management of vector-borne diseases in the EMR	
NMH	NCD Surveillance Training Package to implement the WHO Framework for NCDs	
Panel discussion and side events		
HSD	Strengthening pharmacovigilance in the EMR	
HSD	Launching of the EMR Health financing Atlas	
IER	Unified Medical Dictionary (UMD) new edition 2018	
IER	Improving access to health information and knowledge resources	
DCD	Side event on the Global Fund	
DCD	Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance side-event	
HSD	40th Anniversary of Alma Ata Declaration on Primary Health Care	Panel discussion
