



**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

9 August 2014

**Sixty-first Session
Tunis, Tunisia, 19-22 October 2014**

DEVELOPMENT OF A PUBLIC HEALTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Objectives of the event

The objectives of the event are to brief representatives on the development of the public health leadership programme and its components.

Background

In 2013, the Regional Director's Technical Advisory Committee reaffirmed WHO's commitment to revive and re-establish a leadership programme to address the current gap in public health leadership in the Region. The aim of the programme is to establish a critical mass of public health leaders capable of addressing global, national and local health challenges.

In addition to prevailing geopolitical and socioeconomic challenges and their influence on public health, other challenges include: 1) the changing demographic and epidemiologic profile in countries of the Region and increasing awareness and expectations of populations; 2) the role of civil society and the for-profit private sector in public health; 3) the importance of social determinants of health, multisectorality and the need to build partnerships with different stakeholders; 4) the increasingly important role of non-medical as well as non-health professionals as leaders in public health; and 5) the importance of globalization and health and growing importance of global health diplomacy.

The purpose of the programme is to prepare public health leaders who can influence national health policies, strategies, plans and programmes, as well as play a proactive role in global public health for the health and socioeconomic well-being of populations.

The programme will enrol up to 25 participants, comprising 80% mid- and senior level managers in ministries of health with participants from ministries of planning or social welfare dealing with health issues, and the remaining 20% senior staff of think tanks and civil society organizations working in the health sector and leading public health professionals from academic institutions. The programme will endeavour to ensure that 30% of its participants are women.

The programme will define eligibility criteria, and applicants will be selected based on assessment but suggested criteria include: prior training in public health, preferably with a master's degree; at least 10 years' experience of working in management and/or leadership positions; age less than 55 years; objectively assessed demonstration of high performance, e.g. in a public health project or programme, training or research.

The 12-week programme will rely on a range of learning modalities with time divided between modules and other activities in WHO and time spent in the home country. It is expected to commence in January 2015.

The programme will be organized and coordinated by the WHO Regional Office in its initial years. Institutions of repute with wide experience in offering leadership in public health programmes at regional and global level were identified and modules will be offered in conjunction with these institutions. The leadership and management and health system development modules will be offered in collaboration with the Harvard School of Public Health, and a global health diplomacy module will be offered with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Future modules will include a strategic health planning module offered in collaboration with the Nuffield Institute at the University of Leeds and a module on social determinants of health offered in partnership with the University College London and Social Research Center, American University in Cairo.

Subsequently, the programme will be transferred to a regional institution with capacity to organize and offer the programme, with continued backup and support from WHO. Contacts have already been initiated with leading institutes in the Region to develop their institutional capacity.

Certificates will not be awarded, and hence, completion of the programme will not require formal endorsement by a degree awarding institution. Participants who successfully graduate will be considered as WHO Fellows in Leadership Development for Public Health.

The programme is a collaborative initiative between WHO and Member States. WHO will provide the initial seed resources, estimated at US\$ 0.5 million, to develop the programme and will continue to provide technical support. Member States will provide funding to cover the cost of participation to ensure programme sustainability, estimated at US\$ 0.4 million to implement the programme for 25 participants in the first year.

Expected outcomes

Delegates will be fully briefed on the public health leadership programme and preparatory work undertaken thus far. The session will provide inputs for the next steps in programme implementation and will encourage the commitment of Member States to allocate resources to cover the cost of participation in the programme.