

## Current major events

### Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN)

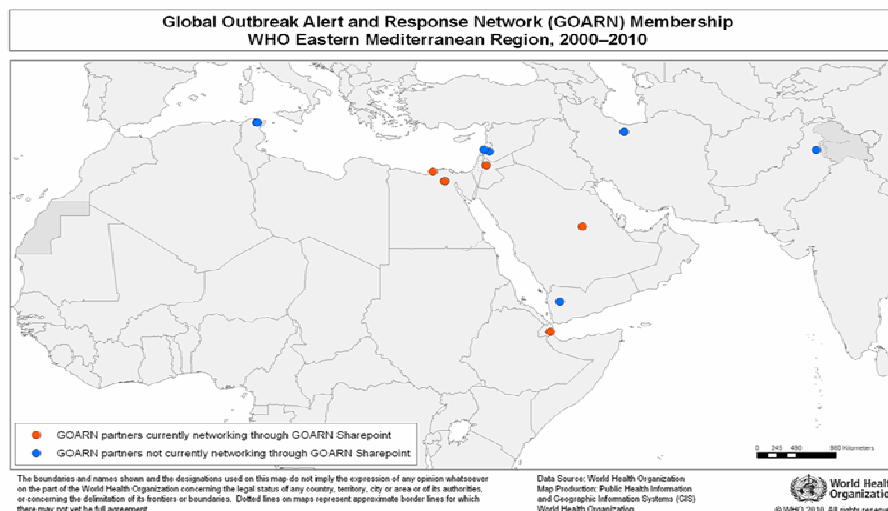
This year, WHO/EMRO participated in the regional GOARN partners' meeting of WHO Western Pacific held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 23–25 2010. The meeting coincided with the 10th anniversary of GOARN and it provided the opportunity to highlight the network's activities in the Western Pacific Region during the last decade. A total of 86 people representing partners, temporary advisors, observers/representatives, consultants and WHO participated in the meeting. The meeting included a one day planning meeting for the WEPRO's GOARN partners.

### Editorial note

This year, the annual Regional Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) meeting for the Western Pacific Region partners was held from 23–25 March 2010 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Other WHO regional offices including EMRO were invited as observers and to share their regional experiences.

The meeting coincided with the tenth anniversary since Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network was created. GOARN is a technical collaboration of existing institutions and networks who pool human and technical resources for the rapid identification, confirmation and response to outbreaks of international importance. The network provides an operational framework to link this expertise and skill to keep the international community constantly alert to the outbreaks and ready to respond. WHO acts the secretariat for the network and a number of WHO Regions have established regional branches

Efforts to establish GOARN regional branch in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region is in progress but needs more work. Several activities have been organized by the Regional office in this regard. So far, two consultation meetings of GOARN partners were held in 2007 and 2009 in which a draft GOARN op-



### Objectives of GOARN

- Combating the international spread of outbreaks
- Ensuring that appropriate technical assistance reaches affected states rapidly
- Contributing to long term epidemic preparedness and capacity building

erating guidelines and terms of reference were reviewed and is being worked on. One GOARN training was conducted for WHO country office epidemiologists in response to the pandemic influenza A (H1N1) in June 2009. Moreover, a special session of the Regional Committee called in response to the pandemic has already passed a resolution urging the Regional Director to further strengthen and develop a GOARN network in the EMR.

There are a lot of good reasons for EMR to have functional GOARN network. The EMR is plagued with frequent epidemics and humanitarian disasters that requires responses; some member states have weak government infrastructures to cope with emergencies and often during outbreaks, there are poor coordination mechanism. The Region has many institutions and untapped technical and human resources that can be used to support the member states. Local experts have a better knowledge of the culture, religion and language of the Region. In a Region where there are a lot of cultural sensitivity, local experts can offer local solutions to the problems. .

## Update on outbreaks

### in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Avian Influenza A(H5N1) in Egypt;  
Dengue fever in Sudan

### Current public health events of international concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

#### Avian influenza

Egypt	[109 (34), <b>31.1%</b> ]
Vietnam	[117 (59), <b>50.4 %</b> ]
Global total	[493(292), <b>59.2%</b> ]

#### Meningococcal meningitis

Chad	[1531(151), <b>9.81%</b> ]
Burkina Faso	[2520 (378), <b>15.%</b> ]

#### Dengue fever

Sudan	[1599 (12), <b>0.7%</b> ]
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#### Rift Valley Fever

South Africa	[ 63 (2), <b>3.17%</b> ]
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#### Pandemic (H1N1) 2009

AFRO	No of deaths: 167
AMRO	No of deaths: At least 8175
EMRO	No of deaths: 1019
EURO	No of deaths: At least 4669
SEARO	No of deaths: 1726
WPRO	No of deaths: 1727
<b>GLOBAL Total</b>	No of deaths: 17,483

CFR=Case-Fatality Rate