

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
Sixty-ninth Session
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October 2022

**THE REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL
HEALTH SECTOR STRATEGIES ON HIV, HEPATITIS AND SEXUALLY
TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS 2022–2030**

Objectives of the event

On 11 October 2022, a high-level side event will be held on the new global health sector strategies (GHSS) on HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The objectives of the event are to:

- present the regional action plan for the implementation of the Global Health Sector Strategies on, respectively, HIV, hepatitis and STIs 2022–2030; and
- discuss ways to support its implementation.

Background

In May 2022 the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly noted with appreciation the Global Health Sector Strategies (GHSS) on, respectively, HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs 2022–2030, and requested the WHO Director General to report on progress made in their implementation.

WHO Member States of the Eastern Mediterranean Region expressed some concerns over the appropriateness of certain terminology to the cultural context of the Region and requested that it be adapted to the Regional context. After extensive consultation, a regional action plan for the implementation of the GHSS was finalized in September 2022.

Challenges in the Region

The Eastern Mediterranean Region is facing a growing HIV epidemic marked by low coverage of testing and treatment (41% and 27% of people living with HIV, respectively). Hepatitis B and C responses are nascent in most countries of the Region and coverage of testing and treatment is very low, with the exception of the hepatitis C response in Egypt. Hepatitis B birth dose vaccination coverage is only 34%, although coverage of the third dose of vaccine exceeds 80% in most countries. STIs remain a neglected domain, with very limited data available in the Region.

Despite the efforts of Member States and substantial HIV funding to lower-income countries from the Global Fund, progress in addressing HIV, hepatitis and STIs remains sluggish in the Region. Millennium Development Goal target 6 as well as the 2020 targets set in the United Nations General Assembly Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS (2016) were largely missed by Member States of the Region. Furthermore, with the current pace of progress and the increasing challenges to health systems due to COVID-19 and other emergencies, the Region is likely to miss SDG target 3.3 on ending the AIDS epidemic and controlling hepatitis and STIs by 2030.

Expected outcomes

- Member State focal points are informed about the finalized regional action plan.
- Support for implementation of the plan is mobilized.