
Vision 2023 for the Eastern Mediterranean Region



Update on progress during 2019




In October 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) in the Eastern Mediterranean Region launched *Vision 2023*, a new vision for health in the Region. The vision identifies the Organization's strategic priorities and is supported by a strategy outlining the actions needed to meet those priorities.






This short report highlights progress towards achieving the vision in the first year since it was introduced. It is designed to be as clear and straightforward as possible so that everyone can see what WHO is doing. It consists of two tables focusing on a list of 10 key initiatives for 2019 that was set out in the vision and a plan developed by WHO's Regional Office to implement the vision in its first year. The report uses simple indicators to show progress on each item: green for substantial progress, amber for some progress and red for no substantial progress. Where no substantial progress has been made on an item, text in italics shows the planned action that has not yet been accomplished. These outstanding actions are being carried over to the new operational workplan.

You can find the full text of *Vision 2023* plus the related strategy and other relevant documents on WHO's website at: www.emro.who.int/about-who/vision2023/vision-2023.html.








The 10 key initiatives for 2019




Key initiatives	Status as at December 2019
1) Forming an Alliance for Health for All by All with key partners and stakeholders in the Region	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A preparatory meeting for the Regional Health Forum was held in November 2019; the launch of a Regional Health Alliance is planned for the Regional Health Forum in 2020.• The Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All, a worldwide initiative to improve collaboration for health among multilateral agencies, is being piloted in five countries of the Region; discussions have begun in three additional countries.
2) Establishing a leadership and health diplomacy development programme	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WHO's African Region is planning to hold its next leadership and health diplomacy course jointly with the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; the course is scheduled to take place in Cairo in April 2020.• The Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean partnered with the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) to deliver a course on country leadership on health and well-being in February 2019.





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We partnered with Harvard Medical School to deliver a course on health system strengthening for universal health coverage in March 2019. • A sub-regional course on health leadership was conducted jointly between WHO, UNSSC and the Gulf Cooperation Council in November 2019.
<p>3) Addressing the Sustainable Development Goals by revitalizing the community-based initiatives programme including healthy cities, healthy villages, healthy markets and health-promoting schools</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regional framework on community engagement in health was drafted and peer reviewed by global and regional experts through a regional consultation in January 2019. • A new technical unit responsible for community-based initiatives was established as part of restructuring of the WHO Regional Office in August 2019. • Regional and sub-regional meetings were held in 2019 to scale up the Healthy Cities Programme in the Region, strengthen the national healthy cities network and share experiences, with greater involvement of mayors, local governments and communities. • Registered cities in Eastern Mediterranean Regional Healthy Cities Network (EM/RHCN) increased from 62 to 76 cities in 2019, showing growing political commitment to promote multisectoral action for health and well-being at national and city levels. • Healthy schools and universities initiatives were introduced in two countries in the context of the Healthy Cities Programme. • WHO's school mental health package is now being implemented in five countries through the School Health Implementation Network: Eastern Mediterranean (SHINE).
<p>4) Launching regional essential health service and intersectoral packages to support the achievement of universal health coverage</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft package is ready and will be published in 2020; the WHO Regional Office will be working with countries to guide adaptation/implementation. • A guidance package on integrating mental health into PHC will be published in 2020.
<p>5) Promoting the Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative in the Region</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The third edition of the <i>Patient safety assessment manual</i> is being prepared for publication. The substantive content aligns with the requirements of the International Society of Quality (ISQua) and was validated at a meeting in July 2019. • Ten countries (Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Libya, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Yemen) have adapted the manual to implement the PSFHI, including countries experiencing emergencies. A similar tool is being developed for primary health care in emergency contexts and will be piloted in a few countries in 2020. • A tool for assessing and improving water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in health care facilities has been developed with a focus on emergencies.






<p>6) Launching a health innovation programme and advancing the use of information technology by introducing the latest tools and innovations</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A health innovation programme has not yet been launched. However, several innovations were introduced in 2019 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – paperless meetings of all WHO’s regional governing bodies (Regional Committee, the Programme Subcommittee and the Technical Advisory Committee) – expanding engagement with non-health stakeholders such as young people (adopted a new Youth Engagement Strategy), parliamentarians (established a Regional Parliamentary Forum for Health and Well-being) and legislators (established the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Forum of Road Safety Legislators).
<p>7) Scaling up contributions by WHO collaborating centres in the Region</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regional meeting of directors of WHO collaborating centres was held in January 2019, and national meetings were held in Egypt, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. • Several in-house meetings were also conducted to improve internal processes. • A Regional Collaborating Centre Oversight Committee was established in May 2019 to review new applications and ensure better management and performance of designated collaborating centres in the Region. • Four new collaborating centres were designated recently and three more are going through the designation process.
<p>8) Accelerating functional reviews to strengthen WHO’s country offices and the Regional Centre for Environmental Health Action (CEHA)</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation of CEHA was completed in January 2019. • Systematic functional reviews of WHO offices in 17 countries were completed by early December 2019; the last such country functional review is scheduled for January 2020. • A dashboard to monitor progress in implementing recommendations from these reviews has been developed. • A summary report on key findings was discussed by WHO’s senior management in the Region in October 2019 and a draft plan for next steps was prepared. • Functional reviews were also conducted in the Regional Office in 2019, including reviews of the Emergencies and Polio programmes and of communications, resource mobilization and partnership functions. Reviews of the other departments are scheduled for 2020.
<p>9) Expanding rosters of human, institutional and financial resources in the Region, including experts, partners, research and academic institutions and donor agencies</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Developing a regional roster of potential donors and partners.</i> • <i>Launching a development partners forum for collective health action and advocacy in emergency countries.</i> • <i>Establishing resource profiles to show each country’s available resources (according to the Regional Office’s definition of resources) that can be availed to other countries in the Region.</i>
<p>10) Building capacity among future public health experts by promoting and streamlining the WHO internship and junior professional officer programmes</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fellowship@EMRO programme was launched in August 2019. More than 1000 applications were received over the summer; following a rigorous screening process, 17 early-career health professionals were recruited for a 3-month period and placed in various departments in the Regional Office.

Short-term plan of action, November 2018 to October 2019

Area of work	Deliverable	Status as at December 2019
Strategic planning		
1) Strategic documents	a) Four strategic documents are finalized.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The documents were prepared and finalized in March 2019.
2) Medium-Term Plan of Action 2019–2023	b) A Medium-Term Plan of Action 2019–2023, with specific objectives, targets, activities and indicators, is developed.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategy was launched at the 66th session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in October 2019.
Cross-cutting issues		
Strengthening partnerships	a) Memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with key regional entities are signed and implemented.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An SDGs learning platform has been developed jointly with the Social Research Centre at the American University in Cairo (AUC), sponsored by the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research.
Regional technical strategic priorities		
1) Expanding universal health coverage (UHC)	a) Regional Technical Advisory Group on Universal Health Coverage (TAG-UHC) is established.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first annual meeting of the TAG-UHC was held in September 2019.
	b) Evidence on public financial management (PFM) is gathered.	 <p><i>Selecting one or two countries and doing the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Assessing PFM alignment with requirements of the health financing system.</i> <i>Analyzing the health budget structure and its relevance to enhance performance and efficiency in the health sector.</i> <i>Conducting a fiscal space analysis.</i>
	c) Financial protection profiles are developed for at least three countries of the Region.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A workshop was conducted in September 2019 to assist seven countries (Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine and Tunisia) in measuring financial protection.
	d) Curriculum on UHC for undergraduate students is developed.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A curriculum has been drafted and was peer reviewed in 2020.

	e) Elimination of vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs) and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) is verified as per targets.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The elimination of measles and rubella was verified in Bahrain, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Oman. • Lymphatic filariasis elimination was verified in Yemen. • For the first time, the Islamic Republic of Iran reported no indigenous cases of malaria for two years running in 2018 and 2019. Countries can request certification of elimination after three consecutive years of reporting no indigenous cases.
2) Addressing health emergencies	a) Post-conflict contingency recovery function is incorporated into the work of the Regional Office.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft regional implementation framework for post-emergency recovery was discussed at an expert meeting in June 2019.
	b) Use of health as a bridge for the emergency-development-peace nexus in countries of the Region affected by war is initiated.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An interdepartmental team in the WHO Regional Office drawn from the divisions of Health Protection and Promotion, Health Systems Development and Health Emergencies (DHP, HSD and WHE) is developing an <i>Implementation guide on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus for health</i>; a related meeting was held in November 2019. • Work has been undertaken on the Health for Peace (HoPE) Initiative, which aims to promote health for peace and catalyze action on health diplomacy through peace in conflict-affected settings. A multilateral consultation was organized jointly by Oman, Switzerland and the Regional Office in November 2019, and preparations are under way for a side event on health and peace sponsored by Oman and Switzerland at the Seventy-third World Health Assembly in May 2020. • Training of WHO country teams was conducted on health diplomacy for peace-building in conflict-affected countries in September 2019. • A meeting of staff from all three levels of WHO – global, regional and country offices – on health and peace was conducted in November 2019. • Work is under way in Somalia on health and peace-building. Staff in other conflict-affected countries are being trained in peace skills.

3) Promoting healthier populations	a) A Ministerial Forum on Health and Environment is conducted.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Joint Ministerial Forum on Health and the Environment was not held, but WHO coordinated with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the League of Arab States (LAS) to support the technical high level meeting of the joint Arab ministerial meeting on the progress of implementation of the Arab Strategy and Action Guideline on Health and Environment (2017–2030) in July 2019, including stewarding national development plans and a strategic priorities matrix.
Transforming WHO		
1) Creating a healthy work environment	a) The work environment in WHO's offices in the Region is improved.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Office became a plastic-free workplace in January 2019. The WHO Values Charter was launched in May 2019. The regional transformation taskforce was expanded in July 2019. The WHO Regional Office was restructured in August 2019. Staff support services were expanded to include a Peer Support Volunteer network and a Psychosocial Support Programme, and a staff screening programme for hepatitis and noncommunicable diseases was conducted in the Regional Office as part of the Egyptian national screening initiative. The Medical Services unit conducted joint assessment missions with Staff Health Insurance and concluded agreements with health care providers in the Region. The Staff Association conducted a range of recreational activities.
2) Strengthening WHO's presence in the Region	a) Country cooperation strategy (CCS) development processes are accelerated and CCS documents completed for three countries.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As at December 2019, 10 countries had a valid CCS (Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine and Saudi Arabia) or a near-finalized CCS (Egypt, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia and Tunisia) and six more had been initiated (Djibouti, Islamic Republic of Iran, Qatar, Jordan, Sudan and United Arab Emirates).
	b) Delegation of authority (DOA) is expanded and accountability at different levels in the Region is strengthened.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding the DOA was discussed at the second annual meeting of WHO senior management in the Region in July 2019.

3) WHO performance	a) Performance of the Organization in the Region is improved.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A set of key performance indicators (KPIs) that aligns with GPW 13 has been established for the Regional Office and country offices, to monitor key activities, improve operational efficiency, transparency and accountability, and better demonstrate achievements.
4) Strengthening communications	a) Regional communication strategy to improve WHO's image and visibility is developed.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new Communications, Resource Mobilization and Partnerships unit has been established as part of the restructuring of the Regional Office and an associated budget centre has been created. A regional communication strategy has been developed through a series of meetings and will be launched in 2020.
5) Resource mobilization	a) A regional strategy for resource mobilization in the Region is developed.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new Communications, Resource Mobilization and Partnerships unit has been established as part of the restructuring of the Regional Office and an associated budget centre has been created. A 2-day video conference on planning and capacity development with focal points for resource mobilization from WHO headquarters, the Regional Office and country offices was held in December 2019.
6) Improving policy effectiveness and measuring impact	a) Improved capacity for knowledge generation and evidence-informed decision-making.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regional framework for improving national institutional capacity for the use of evidence in health policy-making, 2020–2024, was developed with support from regional and global experts, and adopted by Member States at the 66th session of the Regional Committee in October 2019. The regional knowledge management platform has been reviewed and revised, and will be launched in January 2020.
	b) Improved data and measurement of impact.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessments of health information systems were conducted in three countries in 2019, with more planned for 2020. A regional health observatory was launched in December 2019. A series of country profiles setting out progress on the health-related SDGs in 2019 were developed and will be launched in February 2020.

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