



Conduct FETP (PHEP-MERS) cohort in KSA

Project Information

- ◆ Department: Center of Excellence for Applied Epidemiology
- ◆ Unit: Workforce capacity

OBJECTIVES

The project goal is to strengthen epidemiologic capacity at the national and sub-national level of the EPI and EOC staff in KSA by improving the staff's ability to detect, investigate, and response to vaccine preventable diseases and events of public health importance or international concern.

REGIONS OF WORK

The project will be implemented in KSA.

BENEFICIARIES

The targeted beneficiaries are the Epidemiological Surveillance staff at the national and sub-national level, with a focus on those involved in surveillance of respiratory surveillance.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Public Health Empowerment Programme (PHEP) training in Saudi Arabia (KSA) will focus on enhancing local capacities in epidemiological tracking, contact tracing, and health communication strategies related to MERS-CoV, which remains a significant public health concern in the country, with most global cases reported there. This cohort will include 30 residents and 10 mentors, beginning with a mentor workshop, followed by a series of workshops and fieldwork activities. Participants will be trained in preventive strategies, including infection prevention and control (IPC) and community engagement. The goal is to strengthen KSA's ability to respond to MERS outbreaks and reduce the risk of transmission, especially during high-risk events like the Hajj pilgrimage. GHD|EMPHNET will provide technical support for KSA's FETP program and training development. Additionally, technical support will be provided to one FETP fellow to conduct a MERS surveillance analysis. This comprehensive approach is designed to bolster the country's preparedness and response to future MERS outbreaks.

PROJECT PHASES

This project will have two phases as follows:

Phase 1- Planning: The project will start by assign technical advisor and technical coordinator to support KSA FETP frontline cohort mainly focus on MERS-CoV. They will be adapting the PHEP-MERS curriculum and training materials based on need and country context. The streamlined curriculum will be translated to Arabic.

Phase 2- Implementation: GHD|EMPHNET along with the technical advisor following the finalization of the curriculum, the program will start by conducting the mentorship workshop followed by the workshops and field visits.

Phase 3- Monitoring and closing: GHD|EMPHNET along with the technical advisor will closely monitor the program,

Project Start and End Date	03/1/2025 – 07/31/2025
Funded by	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Collaborators	KSA Ministry of Health (MoH) and Public Health Authority

Currently . . .

MERS-CoV continues to be a notable public health challenge in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, especially given its implications for respiratory health and potential for large outbreaks, notably in the context of mass gatherings such as Hajj and Umrah. The presence of MERS-CoV alongside other infectious diseases such as tuberculosis (TB), hepatitis, and dengue fever, and compounded by the annual influx of pilgrims and the risks posed by natural disasters and industrial accidents, underscores the urgent need for robust public health preparedness and response mechanisms.

What's next . . .

GHD|EMPHNET will continue implementing the first cohort
Through this 3-month in-service training program GHD|EMPHNET will make sure to improve the capacity of the MoPH to prevent, detect and respond to public health priorities.

OUTCOMES BY NUMBERS

A total of 30 PHEP-MERS from KSA will be graduated.

1

PHEP-MERS curriculum was developed

1

Technical committee was established

GHD|EMPHNET Information: Global Health Development (GHD) and Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) works at achieving its mission by responding to public health needs with deliberate efforts that allow for health promotion and disease prevention.

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