

FETP NEWSLETTER

April - June, 2021

Seventh Edition

In this Issue

- p-01 Editor's Letter
- p-02 Feature Story: More of the Region's FETPs Adopt the Intermediate Modality
- p-04 A Tribute to Dr. Akbar Ali Ghangro
- p-04 Country Program News
- p-15 The FETP Hall of Fame
- p-16 Spotlight: Graduates Talk About FETPs
- p-18 Other News



Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,

GHD|EMPHNET is delighted to bring you the seventh issue of its Quarterly Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) Newsletter. This issue covers FETP news and events from April 1 to June 30, 2021. It features the FETP Intermediate programs launched during this quarter. It also contains sections dedicated to the latest news from different country programs, while highlighting the achievements of several FETP graduates and residents. These are just a few of the subjects covered in the pages that follow.

The news covered in this issue attests to the region's FETP residents' and graduates' hard work, dedication, and commitment, as well as their valuable contributions to public health in their respective countries.

We hope you find an insightful reading experience in the pages that follow, and that they serve as a source of inspiration for you all.

FETP Newsletter Editorial Team,



**WORLD FIELD
EPIDEMIOLOGY DAY**
7 SEPTEMBER 2021

ANNOUNCEMENT

September 7, 2021, marks the First World Field Epidemiology Day, and GHD|EMPHNET is joining the global community in celebrating this occasion.

Organized by TEPHINET, World Field Epidemiology Day is a global movement to recognize and raise awareness of the vital role of field epidemiologists in protecting the health of populations and advancing global health security. This movement is also set to advocate for increased investment in field epidemiology training, research, and professionals.

We invite you to join us as we celebrate the work of field epidemiologists in our region through action, communication, and advocacy. Stay tuned for more information and announcements on our website and social media!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE SEVENTH EMPHNET REGIONAL CONFERENCE

It is our pleasure to announce that the Seventh EMPHNET Regional Conference will be held between November 14 and 18, 2021.

To accommodate for the current epidemiological situation affecting both the region and the world at large, and to ensure that the conference sessions will be accessible to the region's public health community and beyond, we are excited to announce that this edition of our bi-annual event will be held in a hybrid manner.

Read the full announcement [here](#)

Feature Story

More of the Region's FETPs Adopt the Intermediate Modality

The COVID-19 pandemic has confronted health systems, uncovering gaps in the capacities of mid-level health managers. With its focus catering to this segment of the public health workforce, the FETP Intermediate modality serves to narrow such gaps. It is anticipated to strengthen capacities in the areas of planning, implementing, and evaluating public health activities, and in turn, it contributes to strengthening health systems at large. The pandemic has placed the spotlight on the significant value that FETPs in general add to country health systems, as these programs serve to improve the capacity of health ministries to identify, investigate, and respond to public health threats.

However, the significant value of the FETP Intermediate modality has been particularly amplified with the spread of the pandemic, as residents within this program are trained in the areas of surveillance, basic data analysis and interpretation, outbreak investigation and response, amongst other topics.

Throughout this year, several of the region's FETPs started implementing the Intermediate learning modality. This is a nine-month to one-year training program that adopts adult learning principles, mentored learning, and fieldwork, while adapting to specific country contexts and needs.

The FETP Intermediate modality was initiated this quarter in Egypt, Sudan, and Bangladesh. While Iraq, Afghanistan, and Tunisia's Intermediate programs continue to move forward with new cohorts.

The Egypt FETP kicked off its Intermediate training with a three-day workshop. The objective of this workshop was to introduce Egypt's first FETP Intermediate cohort to basic epidemiology and surveillance, surveillance system evaluation, and Epi Info. This workshop was preceded by an orientation day set to describe the program objectives, curriculum, and core competencies that it tackles.



Similarly, Sudan FETP, also held an orientation workshop in May, thus announcing the commencement of its Intermediate Program. The session was followed by a mentorship workshop held online, thus kicking off the first intermediate workshop.



From its end, Bangladesh FETP is still pushing forward in the needs assessment phase, thus setting the groundwork for commencing its Intermediate program. The purpose of this activity is to decide on the curriculum for the soon-to-be-launched Bangladesh Intermediate FETP.



Adapting to the lack of mobility posed by the pandemic, most of these Intermediate programs are being implemented using the blended approach, where part of the curriculum is implemented online, and supported by fieldwork.

We wish these new cohorts of the Intermediate FETP the best of luck in their journeys, and we congratulate the country programs of Egypt, Sudan, and Bangladesh on these milestones.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. AKBAR ALI GHANGHRO

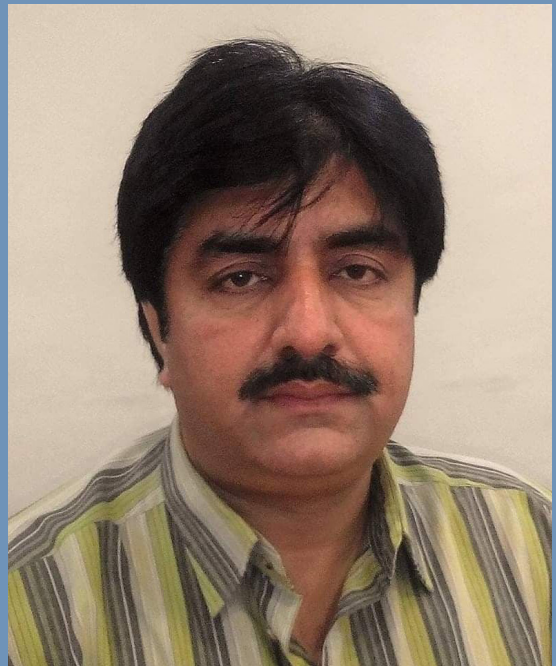
In May 2021, the region's FETP community lost one of its prominent members, Dr. Akbar Ali Ghanghro, who had lost his life to COVID-19.

Dr. Akbar Ghanghro was a senior medical officer who contracted COVID-19 while treating patients and soon lost his life after being infected with COVID-19. He was a front-line hero as well as one of the region's most renowned field epidemiologists.

He made significant contributions to field epidemiology while serving as a Pakistan FELTP fellow and a National (Stop Transmission of Polio) STOP Officer. Amongst his many other accomplishments, he generously shared his knowledge by presenting over 14 research studies at regional and global conferences.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, Pakistan FELTP, and all the FETP community in our region and the globe.

May his soul rest in peace.



COUNTRY NEWS

Afghanistan

AFGHANISTAN FETP CONCLUDES FOURTH WORKSHOP OF THE SECOND COHORT IN KABUL

From May 29 to June 3, 2021, the Field Epidemiology Training Program of Afghanistan (AFETP) conducted the fourth workshop for its second cohort. The workshop was held at the Afghanistan National Public Health Institute (ANPHI) in Kabul.

The workshop sessions focused on COVID-19 pandemic in light of the country's third wave, giving specific emphasis to sample collection, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and the management of data using Epi Info.

During the workshop, residents also discussed their group projects, and they committed to taking part in data collection in the field, following the training's close



AFGHANISTAN FETP WELCOMES NEW TECHNICAL COORDINATOR

In May 2021, the Field Epidemiology Training Program of Afghanistan (AFETP) welcomed Dr. Mohammad Hafiz Rasooly as its new Technical Coordinator.

Dr. Rasooly has rich experience in surveillance, epidemiology, and research. He is deployed in the Afghanistan National Public Health Institute (ANPHI) as part of the AFETP technical team. Dr Rasooly has worked for more than ten years as part of the surveillance technical staff's team within the Disease Early Warning System (DEWS), as well as the areas of Influenza surveillance, NDSR, and COVID-19 surveillance.

Within his new post, Dr. Rasooly's main duties include overseeing the smooth implementation of the technical aspects of AFETP.



EGYPT

EGYPT FETP RESIDENTS AND GRADUATES PARTICIPATE IN A HOUSEHOLD SURVEY TO MEASURE THE SEROPREVALENCE OF ANTIBODIES TO COVID-19

In June 2021, residents and graduates of the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) of Egypt's advanced, intermediate, and PHEP cohorts participated in a household survey to assess the seroprevalence of antibodies to COVID-19 in the general population.

The survey is designed to ascertain the cumulative population immunity and to calculate the incidence proportion of COVID-19 infection. It also serves to identify risk factors associated with COVID-19 infection. Such risk factors include pre-existing chronic conditions, smoking, pregnancy, and any history of contact with a probable or confirmed COVID-19 case. From another angle, the survey further investigates behavioral risks such as adherence to the non-pharmacological intervention.

Data was collected from each participant through face-to-face interviews. These interviews were conducted using a semi-structured electronic questionnaire administrated via the Epi Info mobile app.



THE THIRD COHORT OF THE EGYPT FETP PHEP-BFE CONCLUDES ITS SECOND WORKSHOP ON OUTBREAK INVESTIGATION

In May 2021, the third cohort of Egypt FETP Public Health Empowerment Program (PHEP) concluded its second workshop on outbreak investigation.

At the start of the workshop, residents presented their experiences and outcomes from their first round of fieldwork. This round of fieldwork focused on increasing residents' competencies in the areas of surveillance, data analysis, and surveillance system evaluation.

The session was attended by directors from the different departments of the Preventive Sector of the Ministry of Health and Population in Egypt. More specifically, representatives of the Epidemiology and Surveillance Department, Communicable Disease Control Department, Infection Control Department, and Expanded Program of Immunization were in attendance. Furthermore, the residents' mentors were present in the session to assist them in presenting their projects.

The workshop offered residents an opportunity to enhance their skills in the areas of early detection, investigation, and response to outbreaks. The event's agenda comprised a good mix of lectures, ice breakers, case study presentations, and open discussions.



IRAQ

IRAQ FETP COMMENCES ITS PHEP TRAINING

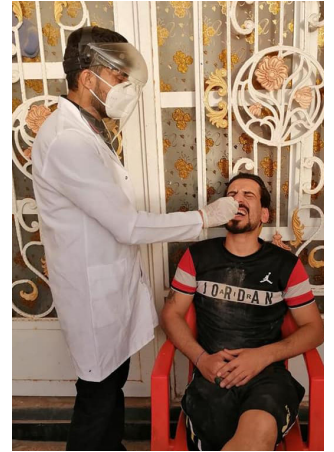
On April 5, 2021, The Field Epidemiology Training Program of Iraq (Iraq FETP) commenced its Public Health Empowerment Program (PHEP) training. This three-month training will contribute to building the capacities of 21 public health professionals from the Anbar, Muthana, and Misan areas in Iraq.

The program trains local public health professionals. Its short-span hands-on approach is effective in strengthening the capacity of countries to detect, respond to, and contain public health emergencies at the source more rapidly. As the world continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, PHEP graduates reduce the gap of qualified field epidemiologists at local levels.



IRAQ FETP IRAQ CARRIES OUT COVID-19 CONTACT TRACING PROCEDURES IN MISSAN PROVINCE

The Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) of Iraq carried out COVID-19 contact tracing procedures in the Missan Province in Iraq. Below are some scenes from the activity.



IRAQ FETP LAUNCHES THE SECOND INTERMEDIATE FETP COHORT

On June 13, 2021, the second cohort of the Iraq Intermediate FETP conducted a screening session in Baghdad with professionals from different fields of medicine and related fields in attendance. This session marked the first step towards the commencement of the new cohort of the one-year training program.

Soon after and as part of the second Intermediate cohort's recruitment process, potential candidates sat for a competitive exam. There were 132 potential candidates who applied, and 90 professionals who took the exam. A total of 32 persons were selected. These individuals will make up the second cohort of Iraq Intermediate FETP.

The Director General of the Public Health Directorate, Dr. Riyadh Alhilfi signed the official memo for the acceptance of the second Intermediate FETP Cohort, which comprises 32 residents.



IRAQ FETP INTERMEDIATE GRADUATE DESIGNS A COVID-19 DASHBOARD

Iraq Intermediate FETP graduate, Dr. Ammar Badr Muftan developed an electronic dashboard, which showcases the Epidemiological Situation for covid-19 in Iraq. The dashboard is available in both Arabic and English and is linked with live google earth, it is also downloadable as a PDF file. You can check it out [here](#).

We sat for a short interview with Dr. Ammar Badr Muften, during which he stated that he created this interactive electronic tool based on COVID-19 data collected and published by the Iraqi Ministry of Health. His purpose was to share information about the epidemiological situation in Iraq with stakeholders and anyone interested in the subject. He also wanted to assist the epidemiologists in Iraq in their mission to control epidemics. He believed that providing them with the necessary information through the dashboard's graphs, tables, and epidemiological maps will allow them to make more informed decisions.

The idea came to him while browsing existing COVID-19 dashboards developed by the Center for System Science and Engineering (CSSE) at John Hopkins University. "I said to myself, why don't we design our own dashboard, so I used what I have learned during my FETP training to design the epidemiological graphs, tables, and maps needed," he added.

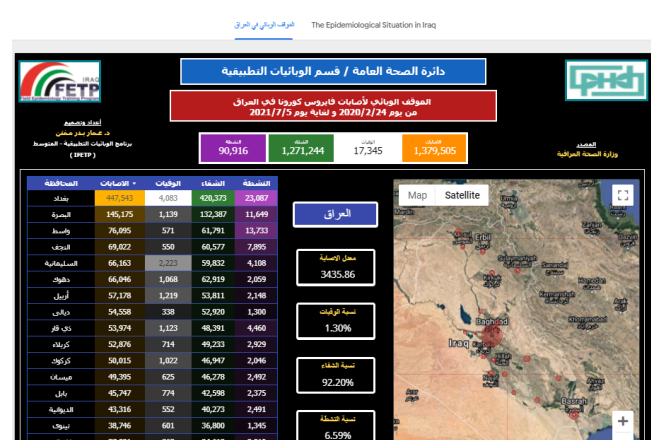
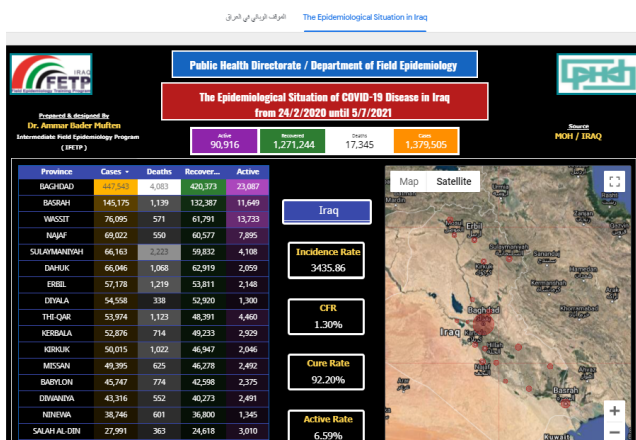
As a data analyst for COVID-19 in Baghdad Rusafa DOH, Dr. Muften created his first interactive COVID-19 dashboard for the Rusafa DOH. When the Iraq FETP Director Dr. Yasir Younis Majeed saw the Rusafa dashboard, he was impressed, and he encouraged Dr. Muften to create an interactive dashboard for Iraq.

"Using this technology has made my work much easier. Instead of making daily graphs and tables to send to the stakeholders or colleagues, now all I must do is just send them the link to the electronic dashboard. All they have to do is click on this link at any time and see the latest updates. They can even download reports if they want to," he confirmed.

Of course, there were challenges along the way, as Dr. Muften had to deal with internet connectivity issues. He also claims that dealing with extra-large data files was a bit daunting at first. However, the availability of such a dashboard will serve to improve the health system in Iraq. He states that the information the dashboard provides keeps public health professionals well informed. It will help relevant authorities in taking decisions and benefiting from lessons learned.

His future aspirations include creating a dashboard for each of Iraq's governorates and having those linked to the Iraq dashboard. Doing so will enable users to have a clearer view of the epidemiological situation across the country.

He ended his talk by saying "Iraq FETP is a great program. It changed my life, as I gained amazing experiences throughout the training. This reflected positively on my performance in my job. In addition, I had the honor of getting to know a wonderful group of amazing trainers led by our program Director Dr. Yasser and I also got to know a wonderful group of colleagues."



JORDAN

JORDAN FETP RESIDENTS ATTEND A TRAINING SESSION ON GENDER EQUITY

On June 9, 2021, residents of the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) of Jordan sat for a training session held as part of the project titled “Establishing a harmonized Reproductive Health Registry (hRHR) in Jordan to Improve Maternal and Child Health.”

The session focused on Gender Equity Integration, and System Evaluation Tools for family planning. The hRHR project aims to improve and increase access and use of reproductive health data in order to enhance family planning services.

Funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) in Canada, this project is being implemented in Mafrqa Governorate in collaboration with the Jordanian Ministry of Health.



MOROCCO

MOROCCO FETP RESIDENT CREATES NEW APP

As a way to adapt to the new challenges brought by COVID-19, Morocco FETP Advanced Resident, Dr. Mounir Rachid found it necessary for fieldwork teams to transition from the traditional pen and paper method of collecting data to integrating technology in their work.

In 2020, he used to work in the field and was in charge of contact tracing of COVID-19 cases at the regional health directorate of Marrakech. He was also responsible for transferring the data collected from paper to the electronic database. But, during his work, he noticed that a lot of time was being wasted on data entry.

He saw that as the number of COVID-19 cases increased, it was challenging for the fieldwork team to keep up with the demand of analyzing data and updating the database efficiently in order to provide suitable guidance to combat COVID-19. Moreover, the fieldwork teams were unable to identify clusters or track positive COVID-19 cases easily. He realized that the traditional method wasn't suitable for the large number of cases the team was recording, and that it was difficult to picture the epidemiological situation of a city without an interactive app that shows real-time data..

In his capacity working at the regional health directorate of Marrakech and to find a solution for this challenge, Dr. Rachid decided to design an app to collect real-time data from the field. However, he faced a challenge with the teams he worked with, as some were not happy with the idea of using technology to collect data. This encouraged him to work on simplifying the app and designing it to be similar to an electronic form. Unfortunately, this did not convince all of the teams to switch to the new method.

Consequently, he decided to test the app with some members of the fieldwork team, where he provided them with all the data and information they needed in a timely manner. The other members who were using the traditional method were impressed by the benefits of the app and how it would assist them with their tasks in the field. Soon after, the teams began using the app and started relying on it completely.

In addition to real-time data collection, the teams were able to collect all of the information on individuals who had risk factors, were out of town, and should take PCR tests. They were also able to identify the areas with the greatest number of cases. As a result, all required data to respond to COVID-19 was available and accessible for use.

Furthermore, the information collected by the app was used by local authorities and the police to identify who breached quarantine to handle the situation accordingly. Following that success, the app was imported to two other cities in Morocco.

When asked about his proudest moments through his journey, he said it was when officials contacted and congratulated him on his outstanding work, and the significant impact that the app had on COVID-19 surveillance in Morocco.

Dr. Rachid believes that his success was a result of his hard work and his ability to consider his team's needs when developing the app, he also emphasized the importance of teamwork while working in the field. Advising anyone working in the field, Dr. Rachid went on to say, "When you come up with a new idea, you must persevere and present its benefits to those working with you". He added that being modest and considering feedback are also important.

He thanked his professors at the National School of Public Health for providing them with the knowledge they needed in the field, and the Director of Marrakech for his faith and support.

Mr. Rachid stated that for his next steps, he would work with MOH to launch another app called "Wiqaytna" to track the contacts of positive COVID-19 cases. He also mentioned that he is looking forward to completing his studies at the National School of Public Health and becoming a competent FETP graduate.



PAKISTAN

PAKISTAN FELTP WELCOMES NEW TECHNICAL ADVISOR



In May 2021, the Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (FELTP) of Pakistan welcomed its new technical advisor, Dr. Zakir Hussein.

Dr. Hussein is a qualified and experienced public health professional. He has vast experience working in difficult and resource-constrained settings. He has work exposure in the areas of disease surveillance, outbreak response, family planning services, mother and child health services, and advocacy and social mobilization.

In his new capacity, Dr. Hussein will support Pakistan FELTP by assisting in curriculum development and evaluation, the development of coursework (theoretical) and fieldwork (practical) activities and providing direct supervision of residents in the field. Furthermore, he will work with residents in the design, implementation, and presentation of research projects, as well as participate in the selection of residents, and monitoring and evaluating field activities.

PAKISTAN FELTP PUBLISHES ITS 27TH WEEKLY FIELD EPIDEMIOLOGY REPORT

Provincial Technical Officers and residents of the Pakistan FELTP assigned at the Disease Surveillance, Response Units (DSRU's) are working with provincial, and district health authorities on event-based disease surveillance and outbreak response.

On a weekly basis, DSRUs share the disease surveillance data, outbreak reports, and FELTP residents' activities to the Federal Disease Surveillance and Response Unit (FDSRU), Islamabad. These data and reports are summed and compiled into a Weekly Field Epidemiology Report.

It also covers reports and data of Communicable Disease Surveillance, such as Measles Surveillance, Dengue Surveillance, Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) Surveillance, and Extensive drug Resistant (XDR) Typhoid Fever Surveillance in Sindh Province (Excluding Karachi).

You can read the report [here](#).

SAUDI ARABIA

SAUDI FETP DISSEMINATES INFORMATION

During this quarter, the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) of Saudi Arabia published two Monthly Epidemiology Reports. The reports highlighted the distribution of diseases by region, distribution of diseases by demographics (gender, age, and nationality), and the national surveillance data trends with disease rates.

You can check these reports [here](#) and [here](#).

SAUDI FETP CELEBRATES ANOTHER MILESTONE

In April 2021, Saudi FETP celebrated another milestone by launching the Frontline Basic Epidemiology Program in Hafar AlBatin.

Saudi FETP residents and graduates will continue to develop epidemiological capabilities and capacities in areas such as surveillance and outbreak investigation at the Saudi Ministry of Health and other sectors through this program. Below are scenes from the launching event.



SUDAN

SUDAN FETP PARTICIPATES IN THE INTERACTION REVIEW FOR COVID-19 WORKSHOP

The residents of the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) of Sudan attended and participated in the Interaction Review for COVID-19 Workshop in Khartoum. This workshop was held from June 15 to June 16, 2021. Its goal is to review the actions and steps undertaken during COVID-19 preparedness and response activities implemented in the country. The interaction review creates an open and honest communication environment for stakeholders to evaluate best practices, lessons learned, challenges, and next steps.

During the workshop, Sudan FETP residents from the Advanced and Intermediate cohorts, as well as graduates, attended the training. They joined various groups, including the surveillance, vulnerable group, risk communication, COVAX, and coordination and partnership working groups.



SUDAN FETP SUCCESSFULLY ESTABLISHES AN E-PORTFOLIO

With the global shift towards the usage of online learning platforms, Sudan FETP successfully conducted a training session on establishing and utilizing an electronic portfolio (e-portfolio). The training took place at the General Directorate on May 29, 2021.

Using this e-portfolio, residents will be able to upload their fieldwork activity reports and presentations to this platform as the Sudan FETP's second Advanced cohort is currently running. The e-portfolio also provides an opportunity for the residents to access learning materials and resources from in-class modules while also showcasing their achievements by sharing pictures from their fieldwork.

The residents, mentors, and the Sudan FETP can use the e-portfolio to share documents and materials such as published articles and protocols that are relevant to FETPs. Moreover, the residents will also be able to participate in regular discussion forums that will be facilitated by Sudan FETP.



SUDAN ADVANCED FETP COMPLETES ITS FIELDWORK ONE ASSESSMENT

On May 22, 2021, the Advanced Sudan FETP residents attended a one-day assessment workshop in Khartoum to present their first round of fieldwork activities.

A panel of experts in the field of Epidemiology evaluated and assessed the presentations. During the workshop, each resident presented two field activities that he or she has completed. These activities included outbreak investigations, quality audits, and surveillance system analysis.

As fieldwork forms an integral component of the two-year program, the panel of experts provided feedback and recommendations to participants. This feedback was aimed at further enhancing the program.



TUNISIA

TUNISIA FETP LAUNCHES ITS FIRST PHEP-BFE COHORT

In June 2021, the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) of Tunisia commenced the first cohort of the Public Health Empowerment Program for Basic Field Epidemiology (PHEP-BFE) with an online introductory workshop. This workshop kicked off a three-month in-service training designed to build the capacities of frontline surveillance officers.

In light of the current situation that Tunisia is facing against COVID-19 and the surge of COVID-19 cases, the launch of this program is critical. As the program aims to strengthen and improve the basic skills and competencies of front-line teams in areas of surveillance, detection, and outbreak response.

It will also build their capacities to respond, at both the provincial and district levels, and manage epidemics and outbreaks at the local level. The program is a basic training program co-funded by the National Observatory for New and Emerging Diseases (ONMNE) and EMPHNET.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. On the left, a presentation slide titled "FETP : Approche pyramidale" is displayed. The slide content includes:

- L'approche actuelle du FETP comprend trois niveaux afin de répondre aux besoins de formation en épidémiologie à différents niveaux du système de santé d'un pays : FETP de première ligne (Frontline ou PHEP-BFE), FETP-Intermédiaire, et FETP-Avancé.

Below the text is a pyramid diagram with three levels:

- Top level (orange): Niveau 1 (0-12 ans)
- Middle level (green): Niveau 2 (13-25 ans)
- Bottom level (blue): Niveau 3 (26-65 ans)

At the bottom of the slide, it says "IGHZ and EMPHNET. Working together for better health".

On the right, a grid of participants is visible. The participants listed are:

- saidi bechir: DR...
- GHD | EmpHNET
- Ben yahia ali
- rasma amria
- Hajer Letaief
- DR Rebell Lajili e Je...
- Lamia Ben Fekih
- Madiha Damak
- chiraz hammi
- hayet agrebi
- Dhaouadi maha...
- Ilhem Bouaziz
- DR JARRAYA JI...
- Naouar Hasna
- Ikram TOUATI
- saldane mokhtar
- Nejib CHARAA
- Meriem Sekrafi
- Emna Mziou
- Souha Bougatef
- Dr Grira Samia
- Hind Bouguerra
- salah amor

YEMEN

YEMEN FETP STARTS PREPARING FOR THE FOURTH DELIVERABLE

In June 2021, the fifth Cohort of the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) of Yemen started preparing for the fourth deliverable in their two-year training. This deliverable entails conducting planned studies. As part of the preparation, the residents attended a three-day workshop on protocol writing.



YEMEN FETP CONCLUDES THE THIRD WORKSHOP FOR COHORT 12 OF PHEP

On April 26, 2021, Yemen FETP concluded the third workshop for cohort 12 of the Public Health Empowerment Program (PHEP). This workshop is part of a three-month training program aimed at strengthening the skills and capacities of epidemiological surveillance coordinators.

The Yemen Deputy Minister for the Primary Health Care Sector attended the closing ceremony. The cohort consists of 20 graduates who are epidemiological surveillance coordinators in 20 different districts of Hajjah governorate.



MORE YEMEN FETP NEWS IN PHOTOS:

YEMEN FETP SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES ADVANCED EPIDEMIOLOGY AND ADVANCED EPI INFO WORKSHOPS



YEMEN FETP PARTICIPATES IN POLIO NATIONWIDE DOOR-TO-DOOR VACCINATION CAMPAIGN REACHING CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Location: Sana'a city, Sana'a governorates, Amran, Dhamar, Ibb, Taiz, Al Baida, Al jouf, Hajja, Raimah, Al hodaida, Saadah.



THE FETP HALL OF FAME

In this quarter, Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) graduates and residents have made admirable contributions to their country's health systems. They achieved multiple successes in different areas. In this section, we showcase their many achievements and accomplishments.

FETP GRADUATE GETS NOMINATED FOR THE ARAB DOCTOR AWARD FOR THE YEAR 2021

Iraq FETP graduate, Dr. Kamal AbdulRazzaq Kadhim was nominated for the Arab Doctor Award for the year 2021, representing Iraq. Dr. Kadhim is a graduate of the Sixth Cohort of Iraq FETP and holds a Bachelor of Medicine and a Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB). During its 54th session, the Council of Arab Ministers presented him with a certificate of appreciation in honor of his substantial contributions and efforts in the fields of applied epidemiology and his work within the immunization programs.



FETP RESIDENT WINS FOURTH PLACE FOR THE PHOTO CONTEST ORGANIZED BY 10TH SOUTHEAST ASIA & WESTERN PACIFIC BI-REGIONAL TEPHINET SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

Yemen FETP resident, Salwa Yahya Mohammed Al-Eryani won fourth place for the photo contest organized by the 10th Southeast Asia and Western Pacific Bi-regional TEPHINET Scientific Conference. The photo submitted showed a scene of intervention during a measles outbreak, where a Yemen FETP resident was giving vitamin A supplements for measles contacts in Amran, Yemen, on March 17, 2021



**WORLD FIELD
EPIDEMIOLOGY DAY**
7 SEPTEMBER 2021



September

7

In celebration of World Field Epidemiology Day, EMPHNET will be holding a webinar dedicated to the occasion. The webinar is titled “Implementation of the Global Field Epidemiology Roadmap in the EMR”, and will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, from 17:00 to 18:30 Amman Local Time (UTC +3).

Mark Your Calendars!



JOIN US

SPOTLIGHT

GRADUATES TALK ABOUT FETPS

We had a short talk with FETP graduates who were attending a regional (Rapid Response Team) RRT workshop held early June in Amman, Jordan, and this is what they had to say about the program.



We Learn as We Teach

- Jordan FETP Graduate, Dr. Ashraf Aqel.



Dr. Ashraf Aqel joined Jordan FETP in the year 2016 and he graduated from the program two years later. Now he is the Jordan FETP Coordinator, and he works in the field of community medicine within the Jordanian Ministry of Health. Speaking more about his role in the program, he says, “I began working with the Jordan FETP last year. So far, it has been a good experience. I learn a lot from working with current residents and even giving lectures. Each presentation I give adds something new to my knowledge and my experience.”



Dr. Aqel went on to say that the COVID-19 pandemic helped shed light on the Jordan FETP. Speaking more about the role of Jordan FETP residents and graduates in responding to the pandemic he stated that, the program was involved in the response even before the pandemic hit the Kingdom. “We planned for training sessions related to protection and response and we were amongst the first teams to carry out surveillance activities in the Airport. We then moved on to prepare a rapid response plan, and we were also involved in the distribution of PPEs.”

After the first positive COVID-19 case was recorded in Jordan, the Jordan FETP residents and graduates carried out contact tracing activities. They were also involved in raising community awareness, as well as media and risk communication efforts. “Today, FETP graduates, and mentors play a central role in vaccination-related activities and evaluation. They are involved in the distribution of vaccines across the Kingdom and the supervising of the vaccine operation, as well as checking for side effects” he adds.



We Learn to Analyze Data in Order to Make Decisions

- Afghanistan FETP Graduate, Dr. Abdul Shakour Karimi.



Afghanistan FETP Graduate, Dr. Abdul Shakour Karimi explains that the Afghanistan FETP is one of the younger programs in the region, as it was just established in the year 2019.

“Some of the main skills we had gained from this program include outbreak investigation, epidemiology methods, management, planning, how to respond to crises, and how to analyze data. Most importantly, this program taught its residents how to use the data gained from the field.”



Today, Dr. Karimi holds the position of Immunization Supervisor within the Afghanistan Ministry of Public Health, where he attributes his success to the knowledge gained from his FETP training.

“I work mostly with data. We get daily and monthly reports from the field that need our quick action” he added.

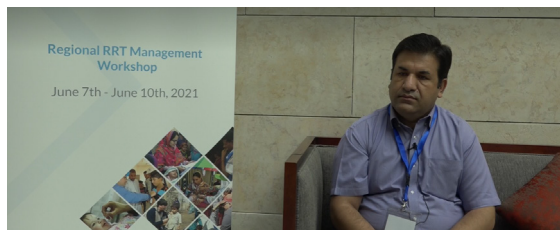
Dr. Karimi also stated that mentorship is another unique aspect distinguishing FETPs “Mentors play a big role in educating the mentees. Today, I am a mentor for two residents of the second cohort, but because the program is new, you don’t find many experts in field epidemiology in Afghanistan, and this is a gap we hope will be filled as the program advances.”

He ended his talk by stating that “All in all, the FETP is different than any other program because it forces residents to get out of the hospital, home, or office, and to work in the field. The theoretical training is always followed by practical training.”



We pass on what we know

- Pakistan FELTP Graduate, Dr. Zakir Hussein.



Pakistan FELTP Graduate and Current Program Technical Coordinator, Dr. Zakir Hussein thinks back to the day he was a resident in the program and says “The program enhanced my skills in epidemiology, and it provided me with an opportunity to gain global exposure. It enabled me to present my work at global conferences and write papers. It also allowed me to be a successful epidemiologist and to lead programs.”

He has been mentoring residents for the past five to six years, “Mentorship is not an easy task. But the program gave us the opportunity to mentor residents who were just like we used to be. The best experience in this is that you are going to pass on what you learned in your FETP training” he adds.

Dr. Hussein also points out that FETP graduates usually move on to work in disease surveillance units after their graduation, but that it is up to them to keep themselves updated by referring to CDC, WHO, and international journals. They should also focus on networking with other international experts as well as professional bodies and organizations.



But epidemiology still needs to be utilized in a better way

- Sudan FETP Technical Advisor, Dr. Shahd Osman.



Dr. Shahd Osman, an epidemiologist, and Technical Advisor for Sudan FETP worked within the program since its inception in 2017. To date, the program graduated one cohort at the advanced level, and now the Second Advanced Cohort and the First Intermediate Cohort are in training.

According to Dr. Osman, 75% of the program is in the field, and this makes the program unique. In the case of epidemics, FETP residents and graduates are the first-line responders, and they are the people on the ground.

Reflecting on the COVID-19 Pandemic and how it placed FETPs in the spotlight, Dr. Osman says “The pandemic made people know what an epidemiologist does, but field epidemiology still needs to be utilized in a better way. The pandemic made us see the world as one unit and it made us realize the value of field epidemiology, and we need to work across all FETPs for better readiness to respond to future epidemics.”



We deal with reality using the scientific method

- Egypt FETP Graduate, Dr. Ibrahim Saed.



2006 Egypt FETP Graduate, Dr. Ibrahim Saed Ibrahim states that the name field epidemiology implies that the program is about work on the ground. It forces us to deal with people, reality, and daily challenges” he adds.

According to Dr. Ibrahim, the program also offers an unmatched opportunity to adopt the scientific methodology of thinking. We start by setting smart objectives, and we reach results, and we provide recommendations for public health priorities.”

Dr. Ibrahim originally entered this field because he was passionate about scientific research, “I was in primary health care when I was nominated for the FETP, and I was lucky because it changed my life. We used to feel that our mentors were like our big brothers, and we learned from them, and it was our role to pass on this knowledge” he explains.

He also points out that with the heightened interest in Epidemiology brought on by the pandemic, FETPs need to accept more people, and so there is a need for cascade training and training of trainers.



Skill is at the heart of what we do
- Jordan FETP Graduate, Dr. Fatima Zohra.



Jordan FETP Graduate, Dr. Fatima Zohra Mustafa Zariouh explains that she developed excellent skills in the areas of biostatistics, scientific writing, surveillance, outbreak investigation. In her current position, she evaluates COVID-19 response and vaccination using an evidence-based approach. “Having this skill set is the heart in all what we do” she adds.



OTHER NEWS

BANGLADESH FETPV HOLDS A DISSEMINATION SEMINAR ON COMPETENCY AND LEARNING

On June 15, 2021, the Field Epidemiology Training Program for Veterinarians (FETPV) of Bangladesh organized a competency and learning dissemination seminar. This seminar was held during the first semester for FETPV’s current cohort. The event was attended by the Director General of the Department of Livestock Services, Dr. Shaikh Azizur Rahman, and other senior officials.

Seminar sessions focused on competencies and learning goals achieved through the program’s implementation. They also shed light on software skills and application. Participants specifically engaged in discussions on how to use Mendeley, ArcGIS, Epi Info, Stata, and DAGs with Dagitty. Other areas of focus covered during this session included on-station and field skills and application. The event’s agenda also featured a presentation on a Survey on the Sonali broiler farm and its objectives. Finally, FETPV residents presented their seminar learning and assignment outcomes, and engaged in discussions of these presentations with fellow participants.



SEVEN ABSTRACTS FROM THE REGION'S FETP ARE SELECTED FOR THE 2021 FETP INTERNATIONAL NIGHTS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Training Programs in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network (TEPHINET) are working together to organize the 2021 FETP International Nights. Continuing the global Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) community's highly anticipated event since the year 2000, this year's FETP International Nights will be a standalone virtual event.

The FETP International Nights event provides an opportunity for FETPs to share the work done by them around the world and to recognize the impact these programs make every day in public health. This year, seven abstracts from the region's FETPs have been accepted, including one oral presentation abstract from Pakistan, and six poster presentation abstracts from Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. See more details about accepted abstracts [here](#).

EMPHNET JOINS GLOBAL EFFORTS TO ADVANCE FETPS

EMPHNET alongside 13 other global, and regional entities sat for the launch meeting of the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG), an initiative launched by the Training Programs in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network (TEPHINET) in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). This meeting, which took place virtually on April 13, 2021, was set to approve the group's charter and establish priorities.



The purpose of the SLG is to provide high-level commitment and drive progress toward global applied epidemiology capacity by offering action-oriented guidance and recommendations. The work of the SLG will ensure high-level leadership and accountability for Global Field Epidemiology while driving forward the progress of the FETP Enterprise which is a multi-partner undertaking that includes the development, implementation, and evaluation of FETPs around the globe.

The formation of the SLG was first conceptualized during a meeting held in Bellagio, Italy, in June 2018 alongside the birth of the FETP Enterprise. This meeting was held by the Task Force for Global Health and was attended by 19 leaders of global field epidemiology training. Together, participants in this meeting examined FETP sustainability, governance, and other critical issues and the result of their analysis led to the Global Field Epidemiology Roadmap which includes the recommendations that are to guide the SLG today in achieving its goals. The formation of the SLG is the first of eight recommendations set forth in the Global Field Epidemiology Roadmap.

With the world continuing to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and other re-emerging infectious diseases, NCDs, and other natural and humanitarian challenges, the launch of the SLG is more important today than ever before, and with more than 80 FETPs functioning around the world, and over 16,000 graduates globally, sustaining the FETP Enterprise is a necessity. The SLG will therefore work to advance global disease surveillance, detection, and response by monitoring the needs to develop and enhance the FETP Enterprise. Its functions will include developing guidance, recommendations, and standards, as well as tools, systems, and policies towards the achievement of its objectives.

The SLG is co-chaired by the Director of CDC's Center for Global Health, Dr. Rebecca Martin, and Assistant Director-General for Emergency Response at the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Ibrahima Socé Fall. Its members represent regional and global entities including Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI), Public Health England, The Gates Foundation, WHO, CDC, TEPHINET, and EMPHNET.