



## Review, update, and operationalize the EPI Communication Strategy in Iraq

### Project Information

- ◆ Department: Public Health Program
- ◆ Unit: Polio & Immunization Department

### OBJECTIVES

This project's main goals are to review and modernizing the communication strategy to comply with the updated immunization policies, and emerging challenges. Gain political commitment through change over political attitudes to allocate financial resources for vaccine purchase and for other RI activities. Advocate Media to educate society and support immunization program in dealing with rumors effectively and mobilize political leaders to act for securing sufficient fund for vaccine equity. Establishment of well-functioning infodemic management system.

### BENEFICIARIES

The targeted beneficiaries are stakeholders' representatives, partners, media, and society members in general.

### REGIONS OF WORK

The project will be implemented across Iraq.

### PROJECT PHASES

This project involves three phases as follow:

**Phase 1** Review: GHD will support conducting workshops for stakeholders' representatives to review and modernizing the EPI communication strategy to comply with the updated immunization policies, and emerging challenges.

**Phase 2** -Preparation: GHD will support conducting a meeting for prioritization the activities and set timeline for implementation.

**Phase 3**- Implementation: GHD will support implementation of three priority activities: 1- Advocacy workshop to gain political commitment through change over political attitudes to allocate financial resources for vaccine purchase and for other RI activities. 2- Advocacy meetings for media and stakeholders to educate society and support immunization program in dealing with rumors effectively and mobilize political leaders to act for securing sufficient fund for vaccine procurement, introduction of new vaccines and improve equity. 3- carry out a desk-review to identify the available online and offline media sources, develop a guideline for misinformation and infodemic management with the responsibility of coordinating infodemic management, identifying and assessing rumors, and provide actionable insights and recommendations to communications, Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) and advocacy. And develop a system/guideline for social listening

<b>Project Start and End Date</b>	<b>8/1/2021 – 7/31/2022</b>
<b>Partner Organizations</b>	<b>Iraq Ministry of Health (MoH)</b>
<b>Funded by</b>	<b>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)</b>

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2017, GHD supported Iraq in developing communication strategy with the full engagement of the Ministry of Education, religious affairs, relevant public health programs, academia. This strategy must be reviewed to find out the progress & obstacles. Currently, the immunization program in Iraq confronts several challenges, the introduction of new vaccines, stock out, competition for funding with other health interventions, and vaccine hesitancy. GHD will support Iraq to review, update, and operationalize the EPI communication strategy to comply with the updated immunization policies, and emerging challenges.

### Currently . . .

Despite the improvement in immunization coverage from 2017-2019 in Iraq, large drop in immunization coverage was reported, the DPT3 coverage lowered from 84% in 2019 to 74% in 2020 due to COVID-19 emergency response. Iraq has a communication strategy since the year 2017, nonetheless, the immunization program in Iraq confronts several challenges, such as, the introduction of new vaccines, stock out, competition for funding with other health interventions, and vaccine hesitancy.

### What's next . . .

A well-planned, adequately funded strategic communication, immunization programs is needed to meet and sustain coverage goals. This EPI communication strategy needs to be reviewed and updated to comply with the updated immunization policies, and emerging challenges and gain political commitment through change over political attitudes to allocate financial resources for vaccine purchase and for other RI activities.

### By the Numbers

- +120 Stakeholders' representatives to review and update the EPI communication strategy.
- +25 Participants to attend a 2-day meeting for prioritization the activities and set timeline for implementation
- +30 Participants to attend advocacy workshop to gain political commitment through change over political attitudes to allocate financial resources for vaccine purchase and for other RI activities.
- +120 participants to attend advocacy meetings for media and stakeholder.
- 1 updated operationalized EPI communication strategy.
- 1 well-functioning infodemic management system

**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 dis

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