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## EMPHNET's Word

By: Dr. Mohannad Al Nsour, Executive Director

Dear Colleagues,

We cannot stress enough the importance of joint efforts. Over the last few months, EMPHNET has put the concept of *working together* into practice by conducting a number of activities that mainly focused on advocating collaboration and coordination between public health and epidemiology different fields.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> EMPHNET/5<sup>th</sup> TEPHINET Scientific Regional Conference that was held earlier in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, we witnessed unprecedented harmony among public health professionals. They shared knowledge and expertise, discussed on current public health issues and took part in a number of workshops and training sessions. MoHs officials attended the Conference, and two high profile meetings were held. Consequently, tangible results were achieved including the publication of two short com-

munications in the Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal.

This kind of collaborative atmosphere proves that working in tandem is a key factor to the development of any field. Building on this idea, EMPHNET held a Focal Point workshop to help strengthening linkages among the region's 8 FETPs, conducted an online training session with TEPHINET, during which the two parties shared best practices on a number of topics, and is working now on developing a number of activities that will help nourish the collaborative spirit of different stakeholders, such as, the TEPHINET Global Scientific Conference.

In our 6<sup>th</sup> issue, we call upon all readers to spread knowledge, share experiences, and contribute to the wellbeing of our healthcare and the wellbeing of our society.

Your contributions are welcome!

If you like to share a paper, article, idea, or any other material with the readers, please do not hesitate to send it to: [comm@emphnet.com](mailto:comm@emphnet.com)

## TEPHINET Conducts Online Training Session for EMPHNET Staff

On the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of March, TEPHINET team conducted a comprehensive online training session for EMPHNET staff.

The Training Session entitled "TEPHINET Operation Meeting", aimed at familiarizing EMPHNET staff with effective operational and managerial procedures that TEPHINET implement on a daily bases.

The Session was started with brief introduction about both networks, and then a wide ranging issues were addressed in relation to work plans, contracts, internal and external procedures, budgeting and project management. This type of collaboration, demonstrates the professional relationship and effective support TEPHINET and EMPHNET share.



TEPHINET Staff

## Focal Points Workshop



Focal Point Workshop's Participants

A Focal Point workshop was held between the 4th and the 8th of March, 2012. The Workshop, in collaboration with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), targeted 13 epidemiologists from 7 FETPs' member countries.

This Workshop comes in line with EMPHNET's deep commitment to facilitate communication among Field Epidemiology Training Programs in the region, along with providing them with required tools and training.

During the Workshop, participants were introduced to a number of topics tackling Project Management, Leadership, Outbreak Investigation and Surveillance among others. In addition some of the participants gave presentation on versified topics. These presentations included,

“Leadership: Egypt Leadership Survey” by Dr. Eman Abdelkareem, and “Collaboration with EMPHNET – Hodaidah Outbreak” by Dr. Ali Bin Break, in addition to a number of Country Presentations.

One of the Workshop outcomes was the creation of a work plan to develop an alumni association for all FETPs.

At the last day of the Workshop, Certificates of Attendance were distributed to all participants.

## EMPHNET Hires New Staff

In line with EMPHNET development strategy, and its continuous efforts to include within its team professional personnel, the Network hired 5 new employees.

With experience spanning over 15 years in public health related fields, Dr. Jawad Mofleh joined the EMPHNET's team as specialized epidemiologist, who will assist in implementing the Network's different projects, conduct outbreak investigations, and assist in data analysis and manuscript writing. Dr. Mofleh is a FETP Pakistani Graduate, and he holds M.D from Herat University, Afghanistan, in addition to a number of prestigious certificates.

Ms. Samar Abdelnour comes with a broad experience in project management, public health, and community development. She holds a Masters in Public Health and a Masters in Community Health Nursing. Ms. Abdelnour worked with different regional NGOs, healthcare educational institutions and health development projects. Her education in public health-Epidemiology allowed her to provide technical assistance in data management and analysis to various organizations in the West Bank and Jordan. Ms. Abdelnour will provide EMPHNET with the technical consultation it needs to address different regional public health issues effectively and professionally.

Dr. Ahmad Malkawi holds BDS in dentistry from the University of Jordan, and in 2011 he obtained his MPH degree from the University of Essex, UK. Dr. Malkawi will take part in EMPHNET NCD project, along with providing the required assistance in relation to the Network's publications. In addition, he will work in tandem with other EMPHNET staff to ensure the conduction of effective workshops and training sessions.

Ms. Noor al Khateeb will hold the position of Communication Assistant. She has a BA in English Language and Translation, and 4 years experience in translation and copywriting. Ms. Khateeb will be responsible for drafting effective news releases and stories, in addition to ensuring representing EMPHNET professionally on different online medium, whether on the Network's official website or on Social Media platforms.

Ms. Rana Younes holds BA in Business Information Systems (BIS), with 3 years experiences in reputable companies in Office Management and Human Resources. Ms. Younes will be filling the position of Office Manager and will be responsible for ensuring smooth implementation to different daily procedures. In addition, she will be responsible for facilitating communication in EMPHNET different conferences, workshops, and training sessions.

These new additions to EMPHNET's team are expected to contribute significantly to EMPHNET success and its everlasting efforts in addressing public health issues in the region.

## Dr. Shoaib, FE(L)TP Pakistan, to Present his Abstract

Dr. Shoaib Hassan, 2011 graduate of Pakistan Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program, has been selected to present his abstract Cholera Outbreak at an Internally Displaced Person's Camp in a Flood Affected District- Muzaffargarh, Pakistan 2010 as an oral presentation at the 61st Annual EIS Conference to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, April 16 - 20th. Muzaffargarh, a district located in the Punjab province, was one of the districts most affected by the floods of 2010 as the district lies between the Chenab and Indus rivers.

Dr. Hassan, who lives in Muzaffargarh, was heavily involved in the flood relief efforts during 2010. During his relief response work for floods affected population and investigation of a cholera outbreak at an internally displaced person's camp, he identified factors responsible for the outbreak. His investigation and recommendations lead World Health Organization and Ministry of Health establish one of the diarrhea treatment centers in this area. Dr. Hassan will deliver his presentation on International Night at the EIS Conference scheduled for April 18th.



## NCD Survey Conducted in Egypt

In collaboration between WHO and Egypt FETP, the second NCD Survey was conducted in 2011. The survey was the second community based one dealing with prevalence of chronic diseases such as; diabetes mellitus, hypertension and hyperlipidemia and their behavioral risk factors as; smoking habits, drinking alcohol, eating fruits and vegetables, oil consumption, physical activities and obesity as well as the physical and biochemical measurements.

Egypt FETP's graduates acted as supervisors, and current residents acted as trainers during the survey's different steps. The survey was led by 10 out of 13 FETP residents, and at the end of the survey, 5 residents graduated from the program. It is worth noting, that Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit at the Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population has moved towards implementing NCD and their risk factors Surveillance System since 2002.

## Iraq-FETP 2nd Cohort

On Dec/1/2012, 11 residents joined Iraq FETP, representing the second cohort. They are all physicians, 10 are working in Iraq MOH and one resident is working as an occupational physician to a public chemical industry.

All MoH residents were working in Public Health sectors from six directorates of Health in six provinces in Iraq. The new cohort started their didactic course that will last for three months, in the department of community medicine/Baghdad College of Medicine.

The didactic course includes lectures, and case studies given by the faculties of the Community Medicine Department, and covering the 10 core competencies of FETP, and other subjects relevant to public health in Iraqi setting.

After the didactic course, residents will spend two months in a rotation between the different public health units, training in central public health laboratories and Epi Info. Following the short term assignments, the residents will start long term assignments in specified projects that will be decided by the steering committee, and in response to the MOH priorities.

It is worth mentioning that, the mentors will have one week training before starting mentoring the new cohort, in collaboration with CDC.

## Yemen FETP Launches First Training

The first training for the Yemen FETP cohort of 12 officers was conducted in Sana'a, Feb 4-15, 2010. The officers, comprised of six from Governorates Shabwa, Abyan, Lahj, Aldhale, Sana'a, Amran and one from the city of Sana'a, include four from MOPHP programs including malaria, delivery services, surveillance, and cancer and one from MO Agriculture. Eleven are MDs and one is VDM.

The two week training covered epidemiology methods, biostatistics, and surveys and surveillance. The officers used epi-info to analyze surveillance data and summarize the data in abstracts. Some trainees used the exercise on framing the problem to develop mini proposals.

The second week of training was conducted by Dr. Ali Mokdad, Professor of Global Health at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington in Seattle. Dr. Mokdad leads the survey and surveillance activities at the Institute.

The trainees were matched with priority health programs in Yemen that included Surveillance, Immunization, Nutrition, Schistosomiasis, Malaria, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases, Tuberculosis, Central Laboratory, Maternal Health, Maternal Mortality and Zoonotic Diseases. Two supervisors from each of the priority programs attended a 3-day orientation on the FETP and roles and responsibilities of field supervisors in order to better serve as field site supervisors for the FETP Officers.

## Saudi FETP Upgraded to a Master Degree

The Saudi Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP), the first (FETP) in the region, has introduced a new Master's degree program as a replacement for the Diploma program.

This was achieved by enhancing and updating the diploma degree program to include new training materials that address social and behavioral sciences, and principles of health informatics.

## Yemen Field Site Supervisor Training

Two supervisors from each of the priority health programs in Yemen attended a 3- day Field Site Supervisor workshop in Sana'a Yemen in January. This workshop, intended to orient those who will supervise the FETP Officers, provided information on the FETP, the roles and responsibilities of the officer and supervisor, and the expectations of the officers so that the field site supervisors will be better able to serve as supervisors and mentors for the FETP Officers.

The field site supervisors included individuals from such priority health programs as Surveillance, Immunization, Nutrition, Schistosomiasis, Malaria, Diabetes, Tuberculosis, Central laboratory, Maternal Health, Maternal Mortality, and Zoonotic Disease. The FETP Officers were matched with a priority health program and will work in these programs while training.



Field Site Supervisor Training Participants