



Accelerating the Elimination of Women's Cancers in Iraq Year 2

Project Information

- ◆ Department: Public Health Program
- ◆ Unit: Health protection and promotion department

OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen HPV prevention and women's cancer control in Iraq by enhancing evidence-based immunization decision-making, improving public awareness, supporting healthcare capacity, and promoting the integration of preventive interventions into national health policies.

REGIONS OF WORK

The project will be implemented in Iraq.

BENEFICIARIES

The targeted beneficiaries are all men and women in Iraq, healthcare providers, and the broader community benefiting from enhanced healthcare infrastructure and awareness.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

EMPHNET in collaboration with MSD will continue supporting the Iraqi Ministry of Health in strengthening HPV prevention and women's cancer control through a comprehensive approach that combines policy support, advocacy, awareness raising, and capacity building. The project focuses on reinforcing national decision-making mechanisms particularly NITAG by supporting data review, evidence generation, and policy dialogue related to HPV vaccination and other preventive interventions. Key activities include high-level meeting attended by high-level officials from the ministry and partners, advocacy workshops, establishment of stakeholder engagement platforms, multi-channel awareness campaigns aligned with national and international health observances, capacity building for healthcare workers, and development of policy briefs informed by project-generated evidence. Where approved by the MoH, preventive service delivery components such as mobile screening units may be supported to promote early detection and improve access to services.

PROJECT PHASES

Phase 1 – Launching the project and Stakeholder Engagement:

GHD|EMPHNET will coordinate with key stakeholders to finalize priorities.

Phase 2 – Awareness:

The project will implement advocacy workshops and awareness campaigns.

Phase 3 – Evaluation:

Post-activity evaluations will be conducted to assess stakeholder engagement.



Project Start and End Date	1/1/2026 – 31/12/2026
Funded by	Merck Sharp & Dohme IDEA GmbH (MSD)
Collaborators	Iraq Ministry of Health

Currently . . .

HPV-related diseases and cervical cancer continue to pose a public health challenge in Iraq due to limited national data, low HPV vaccination coverage, insufficient awareness, and delayed detection. Decision-making related to HPV vaccination and preventive interventions is constrained by gaps in local evidence and limited structured platforms for sustained stakeholder dialogue. Sociocultural stigma and limited public awareness further hinder prevention and early health-seeking behaviors.

What's next . . .

To address these challenges, the project will implement a coordinated package of advocacy, awareness, capacity building, and policy support activities under the leadership of the Iraqi Ministry of Health. By reinforcing evidence-informed decision-making, promoting prevention-focused policies, and empowering communities and health workers, the project will contribute to sustainable progress toward the elimination of HPV-related diseases and women's cancers in Iraq.

Increased awareness of breast and cervical cancers, early detection practices and prevention strategies among Iraqi women.

Outcomes

Strengthened national capacity for evidence-based decision-making on HPV vaccination through NITAG

Greater stakeholder alignment to prioritize HPV prevention and women's cancer control within

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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