

DPHSWD in Yemen



Overview and Goals

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), through its Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development (DPHSWD), is supporting the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MOPHP) in Yemen to build public health work force capacity, strengthen public health systems, and strengthen public health institutions. Areas of focus include disease surveillance, outbreak response, and program evaluation through training programs in applied epidemiology. This collaboration includes a two-year Yemen Field Epidemiology Training Program (Yemen FETP), associated short-courses for officers at the national and sub-national level, and supporting outbreak response and investigations throughout the country. The overarching goal of the program is to reduce the burden of major public health problems in Yemen.

Accomplishments in Yemen

- Launched the first Yemen FETP cohort to be trained in Yemen in February 2012 and conducted the FETP Field Site Supervisor training. Twelve residents and twenty four supervisors/mentors were chosen representing the highest priority health concerns in Yemen.
- Demonstrated improved response capacity by investigating an outbreak of unknown etiology in Hodeidah Governorate and a dengue outbreak in Al-Maharah.
- Prepared future public health leaders by conducting the first in-country basic epidemiology training in early 2011, for 32 residents, including 10 from the national level and 22 representing the Governorates.
- Strengthened region capacity and shared important lessons learned on disease detection and prevention by organizing a regional scientific writing workshop with the Iraqi FETP, which included participants from Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Morocco.
- Yemen FETP developed the plan and timeline for a national survey to assess coverage and impact of Hepatitis B vaccination in Yemen in FY 12. This assessment will identify any potential gaps in current campaigns and lay out a plan to increase vaccination coverage.

Program Description

Building Workforce Capacity

The Yemen FETP aims to develop essential skills in the public health workforce such as: conducting cross cutting integrating surveillance, detecting and investigating public health events, implementing epidemiologic studies, and using data for decision making. Resident training focuses on developing a cadre of leaders at the national level who can instill a culture of best-practices built around applied science and the use of evidence based research and analysis to impact programs, policy and practice. The Yemen FETP serves as a platform to train MOPHP officials in a number of important issues including: best practices for laboratory management, laboratory biosafety and biosecurity procedures, and improved biosafety practices with regards to specimen collection, transport and handling during outbreak investigations. These trainings and applied field work immediately engage residents and public health officers at the provincial and governorate levels.

Strengthening Public Health Systems

To provide direct support for the public health systems the Yemen FETP links and partners with networks for applied public health action and disease detection efforts in the region, including USG Naval Medical Research Unit 3 (NAMRU-3) and WHO-EMRO. Direct communication between the MOPHP, Yemen FETP and regional networks increases Yemen's access to technical expertise and quality reference laboratories. It also strengthens Yemen's ability to detect and respond to disease outbreaks rapidly and efficiently.

Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure and Institutions

In order to strengthen the MOPHP and institutionalize skills in disease surveillance, outbreak response, and program evaluation the Yemen FETP plans to train approximately 620 personnel working in epidemiology, surveillance and response in three tiers within 10 years:

- FETP (Advanced): Two-years for 120 residents
- Intermediate: 9 months for 120 residents
- Basic: 6 months for 380 residents

Center for Global Health

Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development





CDC instructional designer, Lisa Byrd (center), and Dr. Salma Afifi, CDC epidemiologist (2nd row left), with NAMRU-3 and FETP Egypt team participating in the Yemen FETP introductory and screening course, Sana'a, Yemen, 2011.



Yemen FETP introductory and screening course participants working on a case study, Sana'a, Yemen, 2011.



The Honorable Minister of Public Health and Population, Dr. Abdulkarim Rasae, opening the Yemen FETP introductory and screening course, Sana'a, Yemen, 2011.

By providing three levels of training the Yemen FETP will strengthen all levels of the MOPHP and sustainably increase its ability to manage future public health threats. At the advanced tier, twelve officers will be trained annually using the complete FETP curriculum. They will spend their first year at the central level and the second year at the central or governorate level in a field placement. Intermediate trainings are nine months long and focus on disease surveillance and outbreak response using an abbreviated curriculum. These trainings will start for governorates, major hospitals and large population districts after the second advanced cohort graduates. Basic level trainings focusing on fundamental epidemiology and disease surveillance skills are six months long and will begin after a sufficient number of mentors and full-time surveillance positions are established.

Future Plans

With continued collaboration, Yemen FETP will help identify gaps in public health surveillance systems and support the MOPHP with policy recommendations to build disease detection and response capacity and improve the population's health. DPHSWD's priorities over the next few years include:

Graduating the first cohort of the Yemen FETP

- Ensure long-term sustainability as the program launches and grows
- Develop strong mentors and supervision capacity
- Conduct short courses for public health professionals external to Yemen FETP on MOPHP priority areas

Strengthen disease surveillance systems

- Tailor training projects to describe and assess public health surveillance systems in priority areas
- Identify gaps and opportunities in surveillance systems and determine solutions and improvements

Enhance preparedness and response capacity, nationally and regionally

- Train MOPHP staff in outbreak preparedness and response
- Collaborate and network with neighboring countries in the region on public health issues

Key Partners

- Ministry of Public Health and Population Central Public Health Laboratory
- National Yemen Malaria Program
- NAMRU3
- Department of State, Bio-Engagement Program

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