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- Consolidated Ebola virus disease preparedness checklist

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1 The six WHO regional offices: AFRO – Regional Office for Africa; EMRO – Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; EURO – Regional Office for Europe; PAHO/AMRO – Pan American Sanitary Bureau/Regional Office for the Americas; SEARO – Regional Office for South-East Asia; WPRO – Regional Office for the Western Pacific.
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WHAT’S NEW IN IHR COORDINATION AND SUPPORT

• Technical consultation on IHR monitoring and evaluation of functional core capacities for implementing the IHR (2005), 19-22 October 2015, Lyon, France

Since the recommendations of the IHR Review Committee in November 2014 calling for WHO to identify a new approach to monitoring and evaluation of the core public health capacities laid out in the IHR, WHO headquarters and the six Regional Offices have undertaken extensive discussions to identify options for improving the monitoring/evaluation process. WHO has developed a concept note describing a new approach for monitoring and evaluation of core capacities post-2016, that has been shared with National IHR Focal Points and published on the WHO website. The framework includes a self-administered reporting tool, after action review, exercises and external evaluation. The feedback from the WHO regional committees has been positive, and States Parties have requested self-administered annual reporting to be simplified. The WHO “Technical Consultation Meeting on monitoring and evaluation of IHR core capacities post-2016” was held in Lyon, France from 20 to 22 October 2015. Participants included Member States experts, representatives of international organizations, partners and WHO staff. The meeting discussed the framework for monitoring and evaluation of IHR core capacities post-2016 and agreed on the features of the joint external evaluations within the new monitoring framework. The Secretariat will continue to work on the draft IHR monitoring and evaluation process and tools developed through this consultation, and will report to the Executive board in January 2016.

• IHR Review Committee on the role of the International Health Regulations (2005) in the Ebola Outbreak and Response, 24-25 August, and 5-9 October 2015, Geneva, Switzerland

The first meeting of the Review Committee on the role of the International Health Regulations (IHR) in the Ebola outbreak and response was convened from 24-25 August, with opening remarks from Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General. The main topics under discussion were the effectiveness of IHR in the prevention, preparedness and response to the Ebola outbreak. The Emergency Response Framework and its links with the IHR were also discussed. The Committee was tasked with identifying ways to improve the functioning, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency of the Regulations. This was followed by the intersessional meeting of the Committee, which took place from 5-9 October. The main scope of this session was to assess the legally binding instrument and whether or not it serves the purpose to prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international

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spread of disease. The reports of the two meetings, recordings of the open session, audios and transcripts of the press briefings are available at: www.who.int/ihr/review-committee-2016/meetings/en/

• **IHR Emergency committees 2015**
  From January to October 2015, the WHO Director-General convened 9 Emergency Committees under the International Health Regulations. These were related to: Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) (4 February, 16 June, 2 September); Poliovirus (17 February, 24 April, 4 August); Ebola virus disease (EVD) (9 April, 2-6 July, 1-3 October). For complete information, including statements and findings of the IHR Emergency Committees, videos, audios and transcripts of press briefings, visit: www.who.int/ihr/procedures/ihr_committees/en/

• **Developing a framework for public health emergency operations centre: Meeting of the Emergency Operations Centre Network (EOC-NET). 7-8 October 2015, Geneva, Switzerland**
  To promote best practices and standards for emergency operations centres the Department of Global Capacities Surveillance and Response (GCR) has led a series of research projects and conducted several experts consultations through the EOC-NET since 2012. Based on the research and consultations, GCR is developing the document, “A framework for a public health emergency operations centres” (PHEOC framework). The PHEOC framework provides high-level methodical guidance for establishing or strengthening a functional EOC. The 1st consultation on the draft EOC framework was held on 27-29 April 2015 to review evidence and develop a draft document. The 2nd consultation meeting took place from 7-8 October 2015 to review the comments and finalize the document. WHO will publish an interim document in early November 2015 for public access and use. We invite your comments at: eoc-net@who.int.

• **17th Meeting of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) Steering Committee Meeting, 24-25 June 2015, Geneva, Switzerland**
  On the occasion of the 17th GOARN Steering Committee Meeting, Committee members carried out a detailed review of the Ebola response, including the challenges and lessons learned for GOARN partners over this protracted crisis. This clear and critical review looked at the response of GOARN to the outbreak in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and in Nigeria and Senegal. Response missions, support to technical groups, and direct bilateral support to the country by partners were carefully examined, and critical lessons learnt documented. Agreement was reached on a strategy for further support to WHO and Ebola affected countries to help “Getting to Zero cases”. The strategy for GOARN development and operations and related work plans were also reviewed, with a view to strengthening networking for more effective field response across technical areas, from laboratory deployment, to infection prevention and control, to case management, field Epidemiology and outbreak coordination.

• **Revision of WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual**
  Further to the recommendations of the Extended Biosafety Advisory Group (BAG) meeting held at the close of 2014 at WHO headquarters in Geneva with the support of the European Union, a comprehensive revision of the WHO
Laboratory Biosafety Manual is now underway. The revision anticipates a substantial review of biosafety practices and concepts in order to take a more risk-based approach that is underpinned by robust scientific evidence and that can be practiced in all countries, with the goal to set out universally applicable core requirements. The first meeting of editorial committee was held from 28-30 September 2015. This revision is being carried out with the support of the United States.

- **Ports, airports and ground crossings: Call for States Parties to inform WHO of ports authorized to issue ship sanitation certificates and related queries**
  The IHR require States Parties to identify and inform WHO of ports that are authorized to issue ship sanitation certificates in order for their certificates to be recognized as internationally valid. The WHO list of ports authorized to issue ship sanitation certificates is updated regularly and is available at: www.who.int/ihr/ports_airports/portslanding/en/
  For this purpose -- or for any related queries -- National IHR Focal Points can contact the Ports, Airports and Ground Crossings Team, Global Capacities Alert and Response, WHO headquarters: ihrpag@who.int

- **Support to Member States for Simulation Exercises**
  WHO has encouraged the use of simulation exercises as an evidenced based process to assess and test national capacities and system functionalities to respond and manage a suspected EVD and other outbreaks. Between July and November 2015, simulation exercises were conducted with the support of WHO Preparedness and Support Team and AFRO in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Benin and planning missions took place in Mauritania, Gambia and Niger.

**WHAT'S NEW IN RISK AND DISEASE CONTROL**

- **Ebola virus disease in West Africa - update**
  Since the beginning of the outbreak there have been a total of 28635 reported confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone up to 8 November, with 11314 reported deaths (this total includes reported deaths among probable and suspected cases, although outcomes for many cases are unknown). For the latest information on the Ebola virus disease outbreak, situation reports, technical information and frequently asked questions, visit: www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/en/
  To read about what WHO is doing to support countries in scaling up preparedness, simulation exercises and other WHO activities in the field, visit www.who.int/csr/

- **Cholera in Tanzania: Logistics support for mass vaccination campaign, 25 May-09 June 2015**
  Members of the WHO headquarters GCR Logistics Team were deployed to provide practical preparation in support of a two-round mass vaccination campaign with Oral Cholera Vaccine (OCV) in and around the Nyarugusu refugee camp in response to a cholera outbreak in the region of Kigoma. This cholera outbreak followed a massive influx of asylum seekers from Burundi since 26 April 2015 due to civil unrest. The team from HQ comprised a medical epidemiologist and a logistics officer. The OCV team worked in coordination and collaboration with the WHO Country Office and the Government of Tanzania through the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Médecins sans Frontières, the Tanzanian
Red Cross and other partners. The mission of the logistics team was to support assessment of the cholera situation in order to devise the best and most practical strategy to conduct the mass OCV campaign; assess the overall logistics capacity to organize and conduct the OCV campaign at national, regional, district and field level; conduct a detailed assessment of the regional and district capacity for active and passive cold chain equipment and transport.

- **Global laboratory proficiency testing panel for detection of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV)**
  The GCR Laboratory Strengthening Team organized a global round of proficiency testing for MERS-CoV in the middle of the year. The panels were prepared and distributed by a provider in Australia. A total of 96 laboratories in 76 countries received the panel and reported results. Overall the performance of laboratories was good but a number of gaps in performance were identified and follow up actions will be needed. As most laboratories globally do not receive a large number of specimens for testing for MERS-CoV, proficiency testing plays an important part in maintaining the skills of the laboratory workers. It is hoped to repeat this activity in 2016.

**WHAT'S NEW IN THE WHO REGIONS**

- **AFRO: 1st meeting of the Public Health Emergency Operations Centres Network in the WHO African Region, 9-11 November 2015**
  WHO, together with partners, is supporting countries in the African Region to establish and improve functional public health emergency operations centres as a key component of IHR capacity building. The meeting brought together public health emergency experts from 26 countries to Brazzaville, Congo for the development of the Africa Public Health Emergency Operations Centres Network. Participants shared experiences and lessons learned in managing public health emergencies. The newly developed WHO document “Framework for a Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC Framework)” was discussed, the PHEOC Framework checklist was used to identify gaps in implementing PHEOCs, and priority activities of the network was agreed upon. The establishment of an Africa Public Health Emergency Operations Centres Network will improve collaboration among countries and help to mobilize necessary resources from the region and globally, including for the global EOC-NET. It is an important step towards more efficient and effective coordination of public health emergency response in the region.

- **AFRO: Rapid Response Team Training Package: Adapting the Package to the African Context, 21-25 September 2015, Lyon, France**
  The overall objective of this meeting was to review the existing EMRO training package for rapid response teams (RRT; see also the connected event under EMRO: Rapid Response Teams training on EVD Preparedness) to determine how it could be adapted to the AFRO context and needs. Specific objectives were to finalize the high-level design on the RRT AFRO training package, adapt selected content areas to the African context in line with the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) strategy, and develop additional training

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material. The GCR Learning Solutions and Training Support Team worked in coordination with the GCR Preparedness Team and AFRO to develop this package. The output of this meeting was a consolidated final package that can be customized based on specific Member States contexts and needs. Finally, the package was translated into French and is to be translated in Arabic, French and Portuguese. It will be delivered in four countries (Tanzania, Togo, Niger and Mauritania) in November and December 2015.


  WHO Headquarters and the Regional Office for Africa jointly convened a high level partners meeting with the goal of bringing together key national regional and international stakeholders to set up a common framework of action to support, coordinate and intensify the strategic development and maintenance of health security preparedness. Participants reviewed the status of ongoing Ebola preparedness strengthening efforts, IHR capacity building and health systems strengthening in Africa, and worked towards reaching consensus on critical concepts, relationships, contributions, expectations and processes needed to move forward in strengthening health security preparedness capacities at country level.

- **EMRO: Establishing a regional network for outbreak alert and response in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 19-21 October 2015, Casablanca, Morocco**

  The WHO EMRO Regional Office organized a meeting of technical institutions and Member State representatives in Casablanca, Morocco to strengthen the regional presence of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN). In recent years the Eastern Mediterranean Region has faced an increasing number of epidemics of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and public health threats in the Region are compounded by a series of unprecedented health emergencies, conflicts and crises. This meeting sought to: promote the concept of GOARN; identify national challenges in order to define needs and how to better obtain support for responding to outbreaks; strengthen the work of GOARN in the Region; and map existing regional technical resources. An additional objective was to develop a strategy for identifying potential partner institutions in the Region and proposing a regional network activity work plan for 2015-2016.

- **EMRO: Rapid Response Teams training on EVD Preparedness: Building a knowledge network community of practice, 28–30 September 2015, Lyon France**

  To provide a structured follow-up to Ebola preparedness training for rapid response teams (RRT) organized by EMRO in collaboration with the GCR Learning Solutions and Training Support Team (LST) in early 2015, the LST Team has developed the Rapid Response Team Community of Practice. This virtual learning environment can offer follow-up activities ranging from identification of gaps in knowledge and skills, to facilitating threaded discussions, sharing of experiences and challenges, organizing webinars on specific technical subject areas, and identifying experts to support the organization of further Ebola RRT trainings at national and sub-national levels. The RRT Community of Practice is comprised of former participants and members of the various facilitation teams in the WHO/EMRO Ebola Preparedness training for Rapid Response Teams. Members came together to finalize the Community of Practice terms of reference, activity plans and agree a timetable for implementation of activities.
**EMRO: Intercountry meeting of the directors of public health laboratories of Eastern Mediterranean Region, 24-27 February 2015, Tunisia**

An intercountry meeting of directors of public health laboratories in the Eastern Mediterranean region took place in Tunis, Tunisia, from 24-27 February 2015. Participants from 17 Member States, partner organizations and WHO reviewed the status of the public health laboratories and discussed ways to strengthen laboratory quality management systems, biorisk, data management, equipment maintenance and diagnosis of infectious diseases of public health concern to meet the needs of International Health Regulations (2005). An important output of this meeting was the review and refinement of the draft regional public health laboratory strategic plan for further endorsement by the Member States. The meeting was supported by the European Union (European Commission's Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation) as part of the project for "Strengthening health laboratories to minimize potential biological risks". To learn more, visit: [www.emro.who.int/fr/laboratories/lab-events/phl-directors-meeting-oman-2014.html](http://www.emro.who.int/fr/laboratories/lab-events/phl-directors-meeting-oman-2014.html)

**EURO: Better Labs for Better Health initiative in the European region**

Through the Better Labs for Better Health initiative, launched in 2012, WHO/Europe assists countries to improve the overall quality of their laboratory services, whether for public health or clinical diagnostic purposes. This is achieved through the development of national policies, strategies and training programmes, and by supporting the implementation of core capacities under the International Health Regulations. The Better Labs for Better Health initiative recently published an update of its activities via two articles in the Public Health Panorama, WHO/Europe's bilingual (English/Russian) journal. The articles are available at:

**PUBLICATIONS, TRAINING AND REFERENCE TOOLS**

- **Laboratory Assessment Tool - short version for EVD/VHF (Only for Ebola/VHF diagnosis capacity and not for clinical testing for Ebola/VHF patients) - Annex 1:**

- **Laboratory Assessment Tool - short version for EVD/VHF (Only for Ebola/VHF diagnosis capacity and not for clinical testing for Ebola/VHF patients) - Annex 2:**

  [www.who.int/ihr/publications/laboratory_tool/fr/](http://www.who.int/ihr/publications/laboratory_tool/fr/)

- **WHO Interim guidance for Ebola event management at points of entry**
  This guidance targets National IHR Focal Points (NFP), public health authorities at points of entry, PoE operators, conveyance operators, aircraft and
ship crew members and other stakeholders involved in the management of public health events. The aim is to provide early detection of potentially infected persons; to assist in implementing WHO recommendations related to Ebola management; and to prevent the international spread of the disease while allowing PoE authorities to avoid unnecessary restrictions and delays. Available in English.


- **Travel and transport risk assessment: guidance for public health authorities and the transport sector**
  Includes background information on Ebola virus disease, Ebola emergency committee recommendations, risks for different groups, and information for travellers from and to affected countries. Available in English.

- **Ebola: Points of entry online training toolkits**
  These toolkits provide guidance to countries to strengthen their knowledge and abilities on initial risk assessment and management of Ebola events, in preparation of entry / exit screening if warranted to be part of national preparedness and response planning, at ports, airports and ground crossings, following a multisectoral approach. Upon completion of these courses, participants are also better able to indicate critical steps and actions to cope with Ebola at points of entry:
  -Ebola - Exit Screening at Ports, Airports and Ground Crossings. Available in English.
  -Ebola - Entry Screening at Ports, Airports and Ground Crossings. Available in English.
  https://extranet.who.int/hslp/training/course/index.php?categoryid=28

- **Exit screening at airports, ports and land crossings: Interim guidance for Ebola virus disease**
  Developed for use in countries with Ebola transmission, this guidance may also be used as a reference and as a planning tool for all countries. Available in English:

- **Entry screening for Ebola at airports, ports and land crossings: Technical note for preparedness planning**
  This technical note provides recommendations for planning entry screening at Points of Entry (PoE). It was developed in collaboration with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Air Transport Association. It includes planning for entry screening, an overview of entry screening operations, data management, sample checklists, and other forms. Available in English, French and Portuguese.

- **Consolidated Ebola virus disease preparedness checklist**
  The Checklist aims to assist countries assess and test their level of readiness, and be used as a tool for identifying concrete actions to be taken by countries and identifying potential gaps. It outlines 11 key components and tasks for both countries and the international community that should be completed within 30, 60 and 90 days, respectively, from the date of assessment. This checklist has
been revised based on feedback from multi-partner Preparedness Strengthening missions, by various national and international institutions, including WHO, CDC and UN OCHA. Available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Russian. A dashboard display of the status of EVD preparedness can be found at http://apps.who.int/ebola/preparedness/map.


- **Preparedness: country visit reports**
  From September to December 2014, WHO deployed international preparedness strengthening teams to help unaffected countries strengthen or plan preparedness. The teams were comprised of national and international networks such as the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, the International Association of National Public Health Institutes and other partners. The teams visit countries to support them in developing operational readiness for EVD to the greatest degree possible. The reports are available at: http://apps.who.int/ebola/our-work/preparedness/country-visit-reports

- **Early detection, assessment and response to acute public health events: Implementation of Early Warning and Response with a focus on Event-Based Surveillance**
  This document seeks to provide national health authorities, and stakeholders supporting them, with guidance for implementing or enhancing all-hazards early warning and response mechanisms within national surveillance systems. It aims to provide direction regarding the implementation of surveillance capacities, especially event-based surveillance, in order to detect and to respond rapidly to all acute health events and risks from any origin. Available in English, French and Russian.

- **Coordinated public health surveillance between points of entry and national health surveillance systems: Advising principles**
  The purpose of this document is to support competent authorities in charge of IHR implementation to improve national capacities for the prevention, detection and control of events, by strengthening communications and coordination between points of entry and the national health surveillance system. This provides steps for implementing and strengthening communication mechanisms and defines criteria for deciding what and how events should be reported between points of entry and the national health surveillance system.

- **Handbook for the assessment of capacities at the human-animal interface**
  This Handbook was developed by WHO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to facilitate the assessment of public health capacities in countries for areas in which veterinary services contribute to the implementation of the IHR (2005). It highlights complementarities between the WHO IHR Monitoring Tool and the Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway, and aims at facilitating annual reporting on country compliance with IHR (2005) requirements by using the results of the PVS Pathway missions. Through this process, it also endeavours to highlight the importance of the collaboration between the human and animal health sectors.
  www.who.int/ihr/publications/handbook_OMS_OIE/en/
• **Core Capacity Workbook: A series of exercises to assist the validation of core capacity implementation levels**

To support States Parties to validate and monitor the implementation levels of IHR (2005) core capacities, WHO has developed a series of tabletop exercise scenarios and supporting materials. This workbook is not intended as a tool to rank the performance of countries; rather it aims to assist each country to validate and monitor its own progress of core capacity implementation as called for in the Regulations. The Core Capacity Workbook is now accessible online at: [www.who.int/ihr/procedures/monitoring/en/](http://www.who.int/ihr/procedures/monitoring/en/)

• **PROTECT- Basic occupational health and safety pre-deployment training**

A requirement for any staff deployed to West Africa in support of the EVD response, this training covers topics ranging from EVD infection prevention and control to training for health authorities and other relevant staff at ports, airports and ground crossings. This and other training packages are available on the Health Security Learning Platform at: [https://extranet.who.int/hslp/training/](https://extranet.who.int/hslp/training/)

*This newsletter seeks to provide useful information for NFPs, countries and partners in implementing the IHR. We welcome your suggestions and comments and invite you to send these to ihrinfo@who.int*