

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE TOOLKIT

IRAQ CRISIS

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The documents ***Health Survey – Sample Forms, Guidelines For Use Of Surveillance Forms, Health Surveillance Forms, Case Definitions, Guidelines For Outbreak Control, Case Management Of Epidemic-Prone Diseases and Guidelines For Collection of Specimens for Laboratory Testing*** were developed by the Communicable Disease Working Group on Emergencies at WHO/HQ and EMRO/DCD. The Health Surveillance Forms and Case Definitions were developed with UNHCR and the Inter-Agency Health Task Force on Iraq, Geneva. The following individuals also contributed these documents and their technical input is gratefully acknowledged:

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PREFACE

The purpose of the *Communicable Disease Toolkit* is to provide health professionals in UN agencies, NGOs, donor agencies and local authorities working on the Iraq crisis with up to date guidelines and standards for controlling communicable diseases.

The *Communicable Disease Profile for Iraq* aims to provide up to date information on the major communicable disease threats faced by the emergency-affected population. The list of endemic and epidemic diseases has been selected on the basis of the burden of morbidity and mortality and include acute lower respiratory tract infections (ALRI), cholera, bacillary dysentery, measles, leishmaniasis, malaria, meningitis and tuberculosis. The *Profile* has been updated to include two additional diseases - anthrax and Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever - and an annex on the incidence of major communicable diseases and vaccination coverage rates in the six countries neighbouring Iraq. Diseases that have global eradication or elimination goals are also included. The document outlines the burden of communicable diseases in Iraq for which data are available, provides data on recent outbreaks in the country, and presents disease-specific guidelines on the prevention and control of these diseases.

The *Health Surveillance Forms* and *Case Definitions* have been developed to provide early warning of epidemics, and in event of a potential biological or chemical weapons (BCW) incident - to detect cases of unknown disease occurring in a cluster. The surveillance forms will also monitor ALRI, injuries/trauma and malnutrition. Case definitions are provided for main epidemic-prone diseases and include an annex on signs and symptoms that may be expected from chemical or biological agent exposure.

The control of communicable diseases represents a major challenge to those providing health care services in Iraq and neighbouring countries. It is hoped that this toolkit will facilitate the co-ordination of communicable disease control activities between all agencies working in the region.