WHO HIFA-EVIPNet monthly rendezvous

N°3 : Knowledge management and sharing

1 – Key points

Communities of knowledge for sharing health knowledge deliver the following benefits:
- Wide dissemination of studies and good practices;
- Identification of shortcomings in health systems;
- Exchanges between forum members on current health issues;
- Discussions with experts;
- Networking with like-minded members;
- Capturing and building on latent and explicit knowledge;
- Promotion of universal access to knowledge.

To be able to function, communities of knowledge require:
- An organizer who must also moderate messages;
- Sustained involvement by the membership.

Benefits recognized by WHO, for example, include:
- Regular reminders of the most important current recommendations;
- A better appreciation of WHO expertise;
- The opportunity to debate different points of view.

2 – Summary of the discussions

In the week devoted to health knowledge management and sharing in communities of practice, the following activities were conducted:
- Presentation of the objectives of the HIFA-EVIPNet forum and community of practice;
- Attempt to demonstrate the advantages of communities of practice, provided they have the resources to carry out their activities;
- Review of the situation in other communities of practice.

HIFA-EVIPNet, like other health forums, has expanded considerably in recent years. It is possible to derive benefit from these forums by treating them as a kind of ongoing and dynamic learning process and contributing to exchanges through suggestions for references, ideas, lessons learnt, country experiences and best practices.

We had a lengthy exchange with Dr Carinne Bruneton, the organizer of the E-med forum, specifically on the issue of essential medicines. She stressed the importance of using this sharing tool to bring to bear a more critical perspective and increase awareness of what was happening on the ground as regards the use and distribution of essential medicines in French-speaking countries. It is also useful for mobilizing stakeholders and raising their awareness of current issues, and for learning lessons from their specific contexts.