

GLOBAL ACTION PLAN FOR HEALTHY LIVES AND WELL-BEING FOR ALL

Implementation of GAP in the Eastern Mediterranean Region January to June 2020



Engage

7 countries (Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan and Somalia) identified country priorities; 5 countries (Djibouti, Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan and Somalia) developed short-term plans in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health; 12 UN agencies developed a regional Joint Action Plan, 2020 – 2021.

Accelerate

Primary health care accelerator theme is the focus for all priority countries and for which partners are most engaged at the regional level. Data and digital health, financing for health, and determinants of health are the most common additional accelerator themes prioritized by countries.

Align

Institutionalization of GAP by signatory agencies will ensure long-term commitment, improve operational alignment and impact at country-level.

Account

The regional workplan, with its clear deliverables, will serve as one way to review and measure progress.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Established regional mechanism: Regional Health Forum, March 2020 facilitated the establishment of GAP Accelerator Working Groups and the Joint Plan of Action, 2020-2021. The Primary Health Care group is the most active having developed guidance for PHC during COVID19 and a related on-line course. The research & development, innovation & access group has conducted a series of webinars on ethics in COVID-19 research and will be conducting a regional survey on mapping health innovations. Both groups are planning a joint study on: “Country Strategies and Mechanisms for Maintaining Essential Primary Health Services during COVID-19”

Strengthened regional partnerships: COVID-19 pandemic has provided the opportunity for stronger engagement with partners at regional and country levels and is well-reflected in the plans at regional and country levels. The Incident Management and Support Team (IMST), particularly the Partners’ Pillar, has provided platforms for sharing of information and aligning actions. The newly established UN-wide regional Issues-Based Coalitions, is another platform for collaboration; the Gender Justice Empowerment IBC, for example is developing a policy brief on COVID19 and violence against women and girls and a guidance on a gender approach for strategic documents.

Expansion at country level: GAP implementation expanded to 2 more countries in early 2020 (Pakistan, and Somalia) with the development of case studies on accelerating collaborative action on primary health care. Efforts build on existing collaborations and focus on strengthening national mechanisms and processes.

CHALLENGES

Developing and sustaining institutional collaboration among GAP signatories at the regional and country levels and demonstrating the added value of collaborations using GAP as a platform are key challenges. COVID-19 has diverted attention from GAP activities while at the same time highlights the importance of strong collaboration with GAP Signatories and other development partners and underlined the dire needs for some of accelerators that have not been selected by priority countries such as community engagement.



Accelerator	Key Actions
<p>Primary Health Care Co-Leads: UNICEF and WHO Supporting Regional Partners: UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNHCR Additional Agencies: AUB and WONCA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Primary Health Care Measurement and Improvement initiative • Operationalize the WHO framework for effective engagement with private health sector • Develop, finalize and scale up “leave no one behind tools” and approaches to promote common United Nations Country Team Guidance. • Develop packages of essential health services and models of care • Strengthen PHC governance and leadership at national and sub-national levels
<p>Sustainable Financing for Health Co-Leads: WHO Supporting Regional Partners: World Bank and UNHCR Additional Agencies: Regional Bank</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish guiding principles for sustainable financing considering regional specificities emphasizing the learnings from COVID-19 • Generate local evidence and facilitate policy dialogues on health financing for UHC and Health-Related SDGs • Promote more health for the money by supporting the establishment of HTA agencies for undertaking economic evaluation and informing benefit design at country level • Support MSs in resources tracking (including for health programs and PHC)
<p>Community and Civil Society Engagement Co-Leads: UNAIDS, UNICEF and WHO Supporting Agencies:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint advocacy and enabling action (Bridging the gap) • Coordination, guidance, technical support and mapping/development of tools at the regional level • Assessment of and scaling up community and civil society engagement at country level
<p>Determinants of Health Co-Leads: UNDP and WHO Supporting Agencies: UN Women and UNAIDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidance and tools for national assessment and action on determinants of health • Develop tools and guidance on Gender mainstreaming
<p>Innovative programming in fragile and vulnerable settings and for disease outbreak responses Co-Leads: WFP and WHO Supporting Agencies:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a regional coordination mechanism • At least one Joint mission to support UNCT innovative programming and humanitarian-development nexus • Strengthening information management in vulnerable and fragile settings to inform planning and monitoring of operations
<p>Research & development, innovation and access Lead: WHO Supporting Agencies: UNESCO, UNFPA and UNTIL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping innovations on improved healthcare delivery, and key health technologies in the context of COVID19 • Raising awareness on importance of ethics in COVID-19 research • Supporting countries on research prioritization towards achievement of health-related SDG targets
<p>Data and Digital Health Co-Leads: WHO and UNFPA Supporting Agencies: IOM, ITU, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNTIL, UNICEF Additional Agencies: AU, LAS, UNRWA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening CRVS systems in the region, including birth and death registration • Assisting with generating real-time data and supporting initiatives to improve data quality and disaggregation (to include gender and vulnerable populations as refugees, migrants and IDPs) to improve resource allocation and decision-making • Assist countries in developing national strategies for digital health and the digital architecture blueprints for health • Supporting and promoting joint statement of WHO/ITU/UNICEF on COVID-19 • Promoting use of digital health technology and artificial intelligence in linkage of information using digital platforms