



## IN THIS ISSUE

- > **Polio mop-up campaign**
- > **World Health Day**
- > **First mental health strategy**
- > **Mother & Child Healthcare**
- > **Surveillance & response training**
- > **Rational use of drugs training**
- > **NCD strategy**

### Last supplementary polio vaccination campaigns

The Ministry of Public Health, in collaboration with WHO and UNICEF, conducted the last supplementary polio vaccination campaign as part of the continued efforts to keep children in Lebanon safe from polio. The seven-day campaign, started on the 23rd of March, during which 384,888 children (1:3 Syrian/Lebanese) under 5 years were vaccinated regardless of nationality. The second round took place between the 23rd and 30th of April in 27 selected districts around the country.

The campaign targeted children who might have missed out on the vaccination during the previous immunization rounds.

The campaign followed several rounds of polio vaccination campaigns that have reached almost 590,000 children under five, around 98.4% of the target group. The campaigns are part of the largest immunization response in the Middle East aiming to prevent the spread and circulation of polio in the region after 37 cases were confirmed in Syria and two cases in Iraq in 2013.



WHO team is visiting a tented settlement in the Bekaa to monitor the vaccination operations.

---

### World Health Day 2015

April 8, Beirut - The World Health Organization Lebanon country office celebrated World Health Day 2015 under the slogan "From farm to plate: make food safe". The Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) participated in the celebration since the subject is of great importance not only to health but it also extends to economic and social development, trade and tourism.

Dr Gabriele Riedner, Acting Representative of WHO to Lebanon affirmed: "Consumers rightly expect their food to be safe. They expect their government to protect them. Gaining the trust of consumers in Lebanon has been a great achievement of the food safety initiative of the Ministry of Public Health. WHO remains committed to work with our partner agency



WHO Representative Dr. Gabriele Riedner presenting the prize to the winner of the World Health Day art competition with representatives from the Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Agriculture and FAO.

FAO and the national authorities to help meeting the people's expectations that the food they consume is safe. Therefore, on this World Health Day we call for: "From farm to plate – make food safe"

The celebration included the distribution of prizes and certificates to the winners of the regional art competition for World Health Day 2015. The ceremony included televised display of informational materials related to food safety.

---

## MoPH launches first mental health and substance use strategy

14 May 2015, Beirut – The Ministry of Public Health, in collaboration with WHO, UNICEF and International Medical Corps (IMC), launched the first mental health and substance use prevention, promotion, and treatment strategy for Lebanon to ensure accessibility of high quality mental health care to all populations in Lebanon. This marks an important milestone for mental health reform, especially considering that mental and substance use disorders are prevalent in Lebanon and among the public health priorities.

The current strategy is the result of a participatory exercise involving all actors in the field of mental health and substance use in Lebanon as well as international experts. The strategy addresses mental and substance use disorders in a cost-effective, evidence-based and multidisciplinary approach with an emphasis on community involvement, continuum of care, human rights, and cultural relevance. The goals and domains of action of the Strategy are in line with the WHO Global Action Plan for Mental Health (2013-2020).



From left to right representatives from UNICEF, the Ministry of Public Health, WHO and IMC during the launching of Lebanon's first mental health strategy

---

## WHO supports the MoPH to improve mother and child health care

The "Mother and Child Health Care" Initiative allows Lebanese pregnant women and children who do not have any form of health insurance to benefit from a comprehensive package of healthcare services at no cost. This initiative was initially implemented in Wadi Khaled in 2003 by Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association (national NGO) with the main objective to reduce maternal mortality. Since March 2014, the initiative was expanded to 3 new regions; Tripoli, Rashayya, and Beirut. The target is 300 women to be offered antenatal and postnatal visits according to national reproductive health protocol and referred to public hospitals for delivery. The project targets also at least 100 children for well-baby development. Till end of May, 372 antenatal care visits, 393 deliveries and 93 pediatric follow ups visits took place.

In addition, in order to strengthen child health services, rationalize the use of medications and reduce morbidity and mortality among Lebanese and refugee children, training was provided at primary health care centers to 306 nurses and medical doctors on the revised national guidelines for Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses.

Also, with the aim of decreasing infant mortality from high-risk pregnancy births, training on neonatal resuscitation and stabilization was provided to 49 nurses and medical doctors.

This project was made possible with the generous contribution of the European Union under the Instrument for Stability project which is led by the Ministry of Public Health and implemented by WHO, in partnership with UNHCR.



A child benefiting from the pediatric follow up visit

## Surveillance and response training

WHO in coordination with the MoPH conducted, seven training sessions on the surveillance and re-sponse Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to provide clear guidance on the steps and processes that should be followed to ensure coordination and timely response in case of an alert/outbreak. A total of 133 personnel have been trained so far, including staff from MoPH response team and Epi-demiological Surveillance Unit team, Qada doctors, head of health department at Mohafaza level, airport health team and Rafik Hariri University Hospital teams. The training continues through to June 2015 to reach 200 personnel.

This project was made possible with the generous contribution of the European Union under the Instrument for Stability project which is led by the Ministry of Public Health and implemented by WHO, in partnership with UNHCR.



Demonstration of correct personal protective equipment use during the response training

## Rational use of drugs training

WHO and the MOPH, in partnership with the YMCA and under the EU/IFS fund, implemented training and awareness seminars for doctors, pharmacists and health care workers of primary health care centers on “the rational use of medicines, the management of medi-cines and the role of health workers”. Around 200 primary health care centers enrolled in the chronic medications program of the MoPH operated by YMCA were invited, 125 doctors/pharmacists and 256 health care workers attended the training.

The ministry of public health has a long standing chronic medications pro-gram that is managed by the YMCA. It ensures procure-ment, management and reporting on utilization of the chronic diseases medications based on a regularly updated national list. It has been observed that some health centers suffer from medication mismanagement, due to their poor medical background and lack of trained staff.

This project was made possible with the generous contribution of the European Union under the Instrument for Stability project which is led by the Ministry of Public Health and implemented by WHO, in partnership with UNHCR.



Dr. Walid Ammar Director General of the Ministry of Public Health (right) during the rational use of drugs training

## Joining forces for optimizing noncommunicable diseases care

In light of the needs and rising interest in care for non-communicable diseases (NCD) among the humanitarian community, a national meeting on the NCD strategy was called for by the Ministry of Public Health with the support of WHO and the participation of various health actors, including UN agencies, local and international NGOs. The objective is to coordinate and harmonize NCD related initiatives and redirect them to the national strategy. It was agreed that small technical working groups will be formed to work on concrete, specific components of the meeting's recommendations: coordination and harmonization of NCD interventions, standardization of care, and improving data collection and information sharing.



During the NCD national meeting

Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/wholeb](http://www.facebook.com/wholeb)  
Twitter account: @WHOLEbanon  
YouTube channel: [www.youtube/user/WHOLEbanon](http://www.youtube/user/WHOLEbanon)



**World Health  
Organization**

Museum square, Glass building, 4th floor, Beirut, Lebanon  
P.O.Box 5391 Beirut, Lebanon  
Tel: (961-1) 612970/1/2  
Email: [emwroleb@who.int](mailto:emwroleb@who.int)  
[www.emro.who.int/countries/lbn](http://www.emro.who.int/countries/lbn)