

The Middle East and North Africa Health Policy Forum (MENA HPF)

In Partnership with



IDRC
International Development
Research Centre



CRDI
Centre de recherches pour le
développement international



Conference on

“Better Policies for Better Health”

September 8-10, 2007

Cairo, Egypt

Background

The interplay between health and development is well documented. Both the World Development Report 1993 and the WHO Report on the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health (2001) have highlighted the importance of investing in health for economic development and vice versa. While the impact of economic development on health status through improvements in the social and economic determinants of health (e.g., better housing, improved nutrition, employment) is well established, the impact of health on economic growth is less well understood but equally important.

Despite significant and laudable improvements in health outcomes over the past decade, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region faces new challenges in meeting the growing health needs of the population due to changing demographic and epidemiologic profiles leading to rising health care costs, inadequate and inequitable health outcomes, insufficient human capital development, regressive financing mechanisms that exacerbate inequities, and a lack of incentives in the health system to improve quality while controlling costs. In the public sector, these problems are compounded by poor service quality, causing many, including the poor, to seek care in the private sector, which, in cases of catastrophic and chronic illness, often contributes to impoverishment of all but the richest population groups.

The existing health financing and service delivery systems in the region show varying capacity to respond to these challenges: in terms of mobilizing new financing sources, the tax burden is already high in most countries and additional taxes would blunt job creation and discourage participation in the formal sector; consumer out-of-pocket expenses on health care is on the rise across the region, and is leading to impoverishment of families; and investing in inefficient health services will further strain public financing.

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Strategic options exist to address these problems, but would require the health system to move from an input-based structure towards a more responsive, incentive-based system; and to move from ad-hoc financing mechanisms to financing mechanisms that better balance subsidies, savings, and risk-pooling arrangements. Efficiency gains in health services would translate into improved fiscal sustainability, better labor market incentives and labor productivity; and better targeting of resources would lead to higher social welfare.

Many factors contribute to the poor performance of the health systems in the region, but particularly significant is the lack of evidence-based policymaking, which is due in part to limited data and lack of systematic research and analysis of health sector challenges in the region, and in part to an inadequate capacity to conduct applied health policy research and analysis. Even when research and analysis exist, their results are rarely used to guide the development of national health policies, nor are they shared with other countries in the region.

In order to address these new challenges, there is a high priority for establishing a sound basis for evidence-based policymaking. The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Health Policy Forum is proud to announce its first regional conference—*Better Policies for Better Health*—to take place in Cairo on September 8-10, 2007. The aim of the MENA Health Policy Forum is to contribute “to the development in the low and middle income countries of the Middle East of effective and efficient policies that improve health and that mitigate adverse consequences of illness, particularly for those who are most disadvantaged.”

Objectives of the Conference

As the first regional conference to launch the MENA Health Policy Forum, the conference seeks to achieve three goals:

- To provide recent evidence regarding the importance of health for development and clarify the ways in which health contributes to human development and economic growth;
- To present analytical insights into selected health and health system issues; and
- To promote multi-disciplinary exchange of ideas.

The conference will also serve to identify policy and research priorities for the Forum, which will serve as input into the development of future funding proposals.

Targeted Audience:

- Senior policy makers, including government officials and Parliamentarians from MENA countries, including Ministries of Health, Social Affairs, Financing, Planning, and International Cooperation, as relevant;
- Representatives from civil society, academia, and the media; and
- Development partners active in the region.

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Total number expected: 100-125 persons.

Venue, Timing, and Co-Sponsors

Venue: Marriott Hotel, Zamalek, Cairo, Egypt
Timing: September 8-10, 2007
Cosponsors: IDRC, UK Department of Health, World Bank,
WHO/EMRO
Host: Ministry of Health and Population, Egypt

Language: English is the working language of the conference, but simultaneous translation to/from Arabic and French will be provided.

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Conference Agenda

Saturday, September 8

Time	Session	Speaker/Chair
17:00 – 19:00	<i>Registration</i>	
19:00 – 21:00	<i>Reception</i>	

Sunday, September 9

Time	Session	Speaker/Chair
<i>Opening Session</i>		
<i>Chair: Dr. Ahmed Galal, Economic Research Forum and Co-Chair, MENA Health Policy Forum</i>		
9:00 – 9:20	Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>H.E. Prof. Hatem El Gabaly</i>, Minister of Health and Population, Egypt
9:20 – 9.50	Opening Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dr. Barry McCormick</i>, UK Department of Health • <i>Dr. Michal Rutkowski</i>, World Bank • <i>Dr. Belgacem Sabri</i>, WHO/EMRO
9.50 – 10:30	Keynote Speech	<i>Dr. Josep Figueras</i> , European Observatory for Health Systems and Policies
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break	
<i>The Role of Health in Economic Development</i>		
<i>Chair: Dr. Najib Harabi, University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland</i>		
11:00 – 11:20	Commission on Macroeconomic & Health	<i>Dr. Dean Jamison</i> , University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)
11:20 – 11:40	Health and Wealth in Middle- and High Income Countries	<i>Dr. Martin McKee</i> , London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
11:40 – 12:00	Regional Perspective	Discussant: <i>Dr. Mohamed Laouel</i> , University of Tunis
12:00 – 12:30	Discussion	
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	
<i>Key Health Problems and their Determinants</i>		
<i>Chair: Dr. Salwa Najjab, Juzoor Foundation for Health and Social Development, Palestine</i>		
14:00 – 14:20	International perspective	<i>Dr. Dean Jamison</i> , UCSF
14:20 – 14:40	Regional Perspective	<i>Dr. Sameen Siddiqi</i> , Forum Member and WHO/EMRO
14:40 – 15:00	Social Determinants of Health	<i>Dr Alaa Shukrallah</i> , AHED Cairo, Egypt
15:00 – 15:30	Discussion	
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break	

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Conference Agenda

Sunday, September 9 (continued)

Time	Session	Speaker/Coordinator
<i>Health, Development, and National Priorities</i> <i>Chair: Dr. Marc Roberts, Harvard School of Public Health</i>		
16:00 – 17:30	Panel Discussion: Ministerial Perspectives	Panelists (to be confirmed): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>H.E. Dr. Muhammed Khalifeh</i>, Minister of Health, Lebanon • <i>H.E. Dr. Abdallah Abdillahi Miguil</i>, Minister of Health, Djibouti • <i>H.E. Dr. Abul Karim Yehia Rasae</i>, Minister of Public Health and Population, Republic of Yemen
20:00 – 22:00	Conference Dinner – IDRC Sponsored Event	

Monday, September 10

Time	Session	Speaker/Coordinator
<i>How do we Finance True Universal Coverage?</i> <i>Chair: Dr. Hossam Badrawi, National Democratic Party, Egypt</i>		
9:00 – 9:20	Overview of Key Health Care Financing Issues in the MENA Region	<i>Dr. Akiko Maeda, World Bank</i>
9:20-10:00	Challenges to Expanding Social Health Insurance (SHI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges of covering the uninsured through SHI • Political Economy of SHI Reform 	<i>Dr. Said Rateb, Health Insurance Organization, Egypt</i> <i>Dr. Hedi Achouri, Ministry of Health, Tunisia</i>
10:00 – 10:30	Discussion	
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break	
<i>Improving the Quality & Efficiency of Health Services</i> <i>Chair: Dr. Walid Ammar, Ministry of Health, Lebanon</i>		
11:00 – 11:20	Overview of key Quality Issues and International Experience	<i>Dr. Anne Johansen</i> , Forum Member and World Bank
11:20 – 11:40	Workforce and Incentives	<i>Dr. Nabil Kronfol</i> , Lebanese Health Care Management Association
11:40 – 12:00	Public/Private Partnership: Contracting for Hospital Services	<i>Dr. Tawfiq Nasser</i> , Augusta Victoria Hospital, East Jerusalem
12:00 – 12:30	Discussion	

List of Contributors (by Session)

Session 1.1 Opening Remarks and Keynote Speech

Chair: Dr. Ahmed Galal, Executive Director, Economic Research Forum and Forum Co-Chair

Introduction to the Forum and the Conference: Dr. Ahmed Galal

Remarks by MENA HPF Partners:

- UK Department of Health: Dr. Barry McCormick, Chief Economist
- World Bank: Dr. Michal Rutkowski, Director, MENA Human Development Department
- WHO/EMRO: Dr. Belgacem Sabri, Director, Health Systems and Policies

Welcome by HE Professor Hatem El Gabaly, Minister of Health & Population, Egypt

Keynote speech: Dr. Josep Figueras, Executive Director, European Observatory for Health Systems and Policies

Session Objectives: To introduce the MENA Health Policy Forum and describe its objectives. To provide an overview of the importance of evidence-based policy making and provide examples of how effective health policies have been influenced by research and analysis.

Session 1.2 The Role of Health in Development

Chair: Dr. Najib Harabi, Professor of Economics, University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland

Macro-Economic Commission on Health: Dr. Dean Jamison, Professor of Health Economics, University of California, San Francisco

Health and Wealth: Dr. Martin McKee, Professor, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Discussant: Regional Perspective. Dr. Mohamed Laouel, Professor of Economics, University of Tunis

Session Objectives: To present recent evidence regarding the impact of health on economic growth and on the economy in general in both low and high-income countries in order to document the importance of health on economic growth.

Session 1.3 Key Health Problems and their Determinants

Chair: Dr. Salwa Najjab, Reproductive Health Advisor, Juzoor Foundation for Health and Social Development

- Global perspective: Dr. Dean Jamison, UCSF
- Regional perspective: Dr. Sameen Siddiqi, WHO/EMRO
- Social Determinants: Dr Alaa Shukralla, Association for Health Environment and Development, Egypt

Session Objectives: To provide an overview of the most recent evidence regarding global and regional health priorities and their determinant, and to introduce the key findings from the *Disease Control Priorities in Developing Countries* (2nd Edition).

Session 1.4 High-level Panel Discussion: Health, Development, and National Priorities - Ministerial Perspectives

Chair: Dr. Marc Roberts, Professor of Political Economy, Harvard School of Public Health

Panelists (to be confirmed):

- **H.E. Dr. Muhammed Khalifeh**, Minister of Health, Lebanon
- **H.E. Dr. Abdallah Abdillahi Miguil**, Minister of Health, Djibouti
- **H.E. Dr. Abul Karim Yehia Rasae**, Minister of Public Health and Population, Republic of Yemen

Session Objectives: To explore the challenges of developing effective health policies within the larger national social and economic development goals. This session will involve a high-level panel, consisting of a group of current policy leaders in health, finance, and/or planning ministries. The panelist will be asked to present their views on the major challenges and defining the role of the state in ensuring access to quality health care and extending financial protection within the available fiscal envelope. The session will provide opportunities to explore how policy makers from different sectors and responsibilities view the priorities differently, and how to build consensus towards a common goal for improving the health status and health care for the population.

Session 2.1 How Do We Finance True Universal Coverage?

Chair: Dr. Hossam Badrawi, National Democratic Party, Egypt

- Overview of Key Health Care Financing Issues in the MENA Region: Dr. Akiko Maeda, World Bank

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- Challenges to Expanding Social Health Insurance: Examples from two Countries
 - Egypt: Dr. Said Rateb, Health Insurance Organization
 - Tunisia: Dr. Hedi Achouri, Ministry of Health

Session Objectives: To provide an overview of the challenges facing countries in the MENA region and other low and middle income countries in providing adequate protection against impoverishment due to illness and injuries, and to share experiences from countries in the region with regard to expanding health insurance coverage to the uninsured and vulnerable population.

Session 2.2: Improving the Quality and Efficiency of Health Services

Chair: Dr. Walid Ammar, Director General, Ministry of Health, Lebanon

- Overview of Key Quality of Care Issues, Anne Johansen, World Bank.
- Work force and incentives: Dr. Nabil Kronfol, Lebanese Health Care Management Association
- Public-Private Partnerships: Dr. Tawfiq Nasser, Augusta Victoria Hospital, East Jerusalem

Session Objectives: To share evidence-based insights about how to improve health sector performance in a select number of areas.

Session 2.3 Investing Today to Improve Decision-Making Tomorrow

Chair: Dr. Sameh El-Saharty, Senior Health Specialist, World Bank

Presentation of Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research/IDRC Study: Dr. Fadi Al Jardali, American University of Beirut
Health Policies and Research Priorities in MENA: Group Discussions

Session Objectives: Based on the preliminary findings from the Forum's first competitively funded grant, the purpose of this session is to identify regional policy concerns and research priorities in the MENA Region.

Session 2.4 The Future of the Forum and Closing Ceremony

Chair: Dr. Marc Roberts, Harvard School of Public Health

Policy-makers' Perspective: Panelists (to be confirmed)

- **H.E. Dr. Fathi Abu Moghli**, Minister of Health, Palestine
- **H.E. Dr. Mutahar Al-Abassi**, Deputy of Minister, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Yemen
- **Dr. Hamdy El-Sayed**, Health Committee of the People's Assembly, Egypt

Forum Future: Dr. Donald Franklin, Forum Co-Chair and UK Department of Health
Closing Ceremony

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Session Objectives: To discuss the future of the Forum and close the conference.