

**Scope of and strategies for**  
**the Network of Institutions for Evidence and Data to Policy (NEDtP)**  
**in the Eastern Mediterranean Region**

**Background**

As highlighted in Regional Committee technical paper EM/RC66/6 (Annex 1), health policies need to be based on sound evidence to ensure that they are appropriate, effective and cost-effective. Evidence-informed policy-making is therefore essential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and universal health coverage, and its importance is emphasized repeatedly in WHO's current global strategy, the Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019–2023 (GPW 13). However, it can be challenging for countries to obtain and use high-quality evidence.

Over the years, the WHO has taken important steps to strengthen evidence-informed health policy-making in member countries. These efforts have intensified since 2015, and in a landmark resolution (EM/RC66/R.5) in 2019 (Annex 2), a framework for action for evidence-informed policy-making for health was endorsed (Annex 3), and WHO was mandated to develop an action plan to guide efforts to build capacity and institutionalize the use of evidence for policy development at both regional and national levels.

As the RC technical paper notes, despite a significant increase in the number of research studies in the Region, there are still limitations and shortcomings in strong national institutional capacity and technical expertise in systematic use of evidence-based approaches to make health policy more effective in improving health and equity outcomes.

Resolution EM/RC66/R.5 envisaged the establishment of a regional network of institutions to support evidence-informed policy-making at national level. The network will play an important role in strengthening regional and national capacity to improve the availability, quality and use of evidence for decision-making and institutionalize the use of evidence at national level. It will be a platform for sharing experiences between countries as well as supporting WHO programmes in line with WHO's global and regional strategies and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## **Mission statement**

The Regional Network of Institutions for Evidence and Data to Policy (NEDtP) is established to support WHO and Member States in implementing the framework for action to improve national institutional capacity for the use of evidence in health policy-making in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (2020–2024) through:

- strengthening effective communication between key stakeholders (e.g. researchers and health policy-makers);
- fostering collaboration and partnerships at national, regional and global levels;
- sharing experiences and building capacity at national and institutional levels;
- producing high-quality knowledge products for health-policy making; and
- advocating for the use of evidence in all national health policies.

## **Main objectives**

- To support national evidence-informed policy-making to for health
- To enhance regional and national technical capacity to use evidence in health policy development
- To collaborate with Member States to enhance the use of evidence in policy development
- To support WHO staff in the Eastern Mediterranean in efforts to enhance the use of evidence in policy development
- To share insights and experiences in support of evidence-informed policy-making by Member States, especially those with successful institutional mechanisms for evidence-informed policy-making
- To recognize and enhance national and regional expertise in evidence-informed policy-making.

## **Structure of NEDtP**

NEDtP will consist of the following main actors:

- Member institutions
  - 1 or 2 institutions (depending on country size) from each country of the Region
- NEDtP Secretariat
  - This will be drawn from the Evidence and Data for Policy unit in the Science, Information and Dissemination department in WHO's Regional Office
- Steering Group
  - To be assigned by the WHO Regional Director
- Supporting institutions and partners
  - Key institutions that can provide technical and material support in line with NEDtP's mission and objectives.

## **Scope of work**

NEDtP members commit to active and regular participation in related activities, including participation in annual meetings of the network and active participation in teleconference calls. Membership of the network on its own does not imply regional or national regulatory or executive functions; any such roles are undertaken by member institutions based on relevant national arrangements and processes. WHO will provide technical support, capacity development and secretariat functions to the network.

## **Selection of member institutions to join NEDtP**

Member institutions should be located in countries of the Region and nominated for membership of the NEDtP by the relevant national ministry of health. Proposed institutions should meet at least two of the following criteria:

1. They should be academic institutions (major universities, schools of public health) or key policy development institutes (e.g. institutes of public health, national institutes for health research).
2. They should be in a formal relationship with the ministry of health, either:
  - a. structurally linked with the ministry or having a long-term established relationship and collaboration with it; or
  - b. expected to play a key role in collaboration with the ministry and other key partners to enhance health policies, monitor and improve their implementation, and evaluate the impact on policies on health outcomes.
3. They should have the human resource capacity and technical experience of key steps and processes in evidence-informed policy development such as: knowledge translation processes; conduct of policy dialogue; development of policy briefs; adaptation or development of health technology assessment reports; clinical or public health guidelines; preparation of policy impact assessment reports.
4. A track record of a collaborative approach and partnership with other related national, regional or global entities in areas of knowledge translation processes, conduct of policy dialogue, development of policy briefs, adaptation or development of health technology assessment reports, clinical or public health guidelines, preparation of policy impact assessment reports. Such experiences should have been well documented and published.

## **Main expected outcomes**

By 2023, it is expected that NEDtP will have played a significant role, in support of WHO and Member States, in:

- enhancing national capacity for evidence-informed policy-making;
- establishing and institutionalizing evidence-informed policy-making in countries through regulations, structures and established processes;
- enhancing advocacy and support for evidence-informed policy making at national level;
- regular production of knowledge products such as policy briefs for high-priority regional health issues;

- producing medium- and long-term plans for the adaptation or development of guidelines and health technology assessment reports for regional or country context; and
- establishing rapid response processes for context-sensitive evidence and advice in emergency settings.

### **Annexes**

Annex 1: RC technical paper EM/RC66/6: Developing national institutional capacity for evidence-informed policy-making for health, [https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/RC\\_Technical\\_Papers\\_2019\\_6\\_en.pdf?ua=1](https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/RC_Technical_Papers_2019_6_en.pdf?ua=1)

Annex 2: WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean resolution EM/RC66/R.5 on developing national institutional capacity for evidence-informed policy-making for health;  
<https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/RC66-R5-eng.pdf?ua=1>

Annex 3: Framework for improving national institutional capacity for use of evidence in health policy-making in the Eastern Mediterranean Region; appended to RC technical paper EM/RC66/6.