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# Health in Perspective: Collaboration and Innovation in Kuwait's Health Ecosystem

*WHO Kuwait Newsletter*  
*Q4 2022*

## The Big Picture

The WHO Country Office was launched in June 2021 and by Q4 2022, WHO Kuwait had celebrated a year since its inception. During that period, WHO has worked with the state of Kuwait through the Kuwait Ministry of Health to craft a medium-term cooperation strategy, aligned with Kuwait's long-term Vision 2035 for a new Kuwait. The initial stages of implementing this strategy and broader WHO collaboration with Kuwait are seeing WHO contribute to human capital development, systems strengthening and health diplomacy among other shared priorities. The WHO Kuwait Newsletter takes a look at the impact of WHO-Kuwait collaboration on health in Kuwait and globally.

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## Quick Takes

WHO has worked with the Government of Kuwait to: improve health financing sustainability by supporting towards a health economics unit within the MoH; bolster public health decision-making by training public health leaders; advocate for health for all by running multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder campaigns on key health themes; and support countries in the region to deliver on national health targets, among other activities.





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## **WHO as the Platform Fostering Strategic Dialogue for Health**

### **1st Inter-country Dialogue to Accelerate Action on Obesity**

WHO Kuwait, Kuwait Ministry of Health, and the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition participated in the 1st Inter-country Dialogue to Accelerate Action on Obesity. This strategic dialogue is part of the development of a national plan to be fully designed and owned by stakeholders across the sectors. With WHO support, the national plan aims to prioritize a set of evidence-based public health interventions that effectively halt the rise in obesity across the population by 2030.

## **Bolstering Public Health Decision-Making Capacity through Human Capital Development**

### **Graduating the 2nd cohort of senior leaders in Public Health**

WHO Kuwait in collaboration Ministry of Health, the UN System Staff College (UNSSC) and Johns Hopkins University, delivered the second leadership training program titled “Health Leadership for Positive Change”. The program, which was supported by the Gulf Health Council, and which targeted mid-senior officials from MOH Kuwait and GCC countries, was run as an executive and interactive training program focusing on key public health competencies for impactful leadership. Ultimately, the strengthened leadership will improve program management, policy formation and health sector program delivery.





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## Rethinking Cities to Serve People and the Environment

### Advocating for healthy cities at the '5th Smart City Forum'

World City Day 2022 was an opportunity for WHO Kuwait to reiterate the importance of holistic cities that are built for their inhabitants. WHO's Representative (WR) to the state of Kuwait participated in the '5th Smart City Forum' co-organized by the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office and the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the State of Kuwait. WHO statements at this and various other healthy city events, emphasized the synergies between WHO's healthy cities initiative and the smart city concept, highlighting, not only case studies from Kuwait and around the world that leverage smart solutions to address public health challenges, but also opportunities to realize these synergies in Kuwait.



### Expanding Healthy Cities in Kuwait

On October 4, 2022, "Al Shamiyah" and "Dhahiyat Abdulla Al Salem" were inaugurated as Healthy Cities. Their designation as Healthy Cities follows an extensive WHO-led 3-level assessment and reflects the increased momentum that the initiative enjoys under the leadership of the Healthy Cities Office of the Ministry of Health. Recognizing the multidimensional nature of health, and the impact of environmental factors on good health and wellbeing, these efforts align with Kuwait's ambitions to improve living conditions for the population.



## Emphasizing the Importance of an Ecosystem Approach to Improving Health Outcomes



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### The role of enabling ecosystems in improving health outcomes

In line with WHO's health-in-all settings initiative and recognizing that determinants of health are embedded in all aspects of life, WHO Kuwait hosted a multi-sectoral dialogue to share case studies and raise awareness for on the roles of different stakeholders in bolstering these ecosystems. The conference included leaders from government, private sector, civil society, and UN agencies, sharing good practices, policy bridges and gaps, as well as opportunities for collaboration.





### Raising the standards of maternity facilities through WHO's Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative

WHO Kuwait, in collaboration with UNICEF, the Public Authority for Food & Nutrition and the Ministry of Health, organized the Baby-Friendly (BFHI) Hospital Orientation Seminar as a way to update key private healthcare personnel on the steps to becoming baby friendly hospitals. The orientation program is a steppingstone towards a nation-wide scale up of the BFHI in Kuwait. This orientation seminar succeeded in disseminating the latest evidence and guidance on the BFHI's Ten Steps to 11 private hospitals across Kuwait, selected based on the size of population that they serve.





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## The Future of Global Health Diplomacy in Kuwait

### Inspiring Future Ambassadors for Health through the Young Ambassadors Program

As part of an effort to nurture future Kuwaiti leaders, led by the Canadian embassy in Kuwait, the WHO Country Office hosted a Young Kuwaiti student over a 5-month period. The program titled 'Young Ambassadors' gave young Kuwaitis the opportunity to interact with the international community in Kuwait through mentoring and shadowing activities.



### Emphasizing Health as a Cornerstone of Multilateral Diplomacy through Diplomatic Corps Training

In collaboration with the Kuwait Diplomatic Institute, UNHCR and fellow UN Agencies in Kuwait, WHO Kuwait delivered a short series of lectures on global health diplomacy. The lectures which delivered alongside WHO's Young Ambassador, introduced the students at the Diplomatic institute to WHO's operations as a coordinating entity for global health, key contemporary themes in health diplomacy and tools to use in making sense of an ever-evolving global landscape. This engagement also emphasized the important role that countries like Kuwait play in advocating for and supporting health globally.



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## Data: a Foundation to Build On

### Towards an integrated strategy for population surveys in Kuwait

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### Universal Health Coverage: More Than Just Numbers Kuwait's contributions to UHC

To mark Universal Health Coverage Day in 2022, WHO Kuwait hosted a multi-stakeholder dialogue on “Health for All; a whole of society approach to enhancing health ecosystems”. The “Health for All” dialogue was an opportunity to reflect on the positive impact of the WHO-Kuwait collaboration, as well as explore opportunities for the future. The event convened government and industry leaders, as well as country representatives and CSOs to share good practices of domestic and international collaboration as well as the key principles underlying impactful partnership. WHO and Kuwait's comparative advantage in global health was explored as an essential element in a diverse ecosystem.



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## Stories from the Field

WHO Kuwait works with country offices to tell impact stories of WHO's work, as well as highlight the impact of WHO's collaboration with Kuwait on communities. In Q4 2022, WHO Kuwait worked with the country offices of Pakistan, Yemen and Syria to highlight ongoing WHO initiatives in these countries, and offer stakeholders in Kuwait to hear first-hand about WHO's work on the ground.



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