CONCEPT NOTE

HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE
PREPAREDNESS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES
Challenges and opportunities in urban areas

3-4 December 2018 - Musée des Confluences - Lyon, France

CONTEXT

The global population looks set to rise to 9.7 billion people by 2050, when it is expected that more than 70% of humanity will be living in urban areas. Global connectivity is a powerful dynamic for human development however, trans-border vulnerabilities, such as infectious disease outbreaks, are becoming more significant with the deepening of globalization and the increase of world population.

The speed and size of international passenger traffic is unprecedented and further grew by 8% in 2017 when the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) recorded 4.1 billion passengers. According to the latest forecast from the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), international tourism arrivals grew by a remarkable 7% in 2017 to reach a total of 1,322 million. Africa and Europe show the strongest growth in

international tourism and this trend is expected to continue in 2018 at a rate of 4%-5%. In 2030 the figure is expected to be 1.8 billion.

Today, the United Nations estimate that 4 billion people or 54% of the world population live in urban areas, a striking increase from 1 billion in 1960. The number of megacities around the world continues to increase. More than 40 megacities are expected by 2030, compared with 18 at the beginning of the century, with most of these occurring in Asia and Africa. Urbanization leads to new challenges for global health as it changes the epidemiology of infectious diseases, offering new opportunities for transmission and amplification in a complex, dense and highly mobile environment requiring new approaches and tools for effective outbreak alert and response. Urban areas host major international hubs for air traffic, maritime and terrestrial routes. They can become incubators and amplifiers for new epidemics directly threatening the world through the considerable daily flows of incoming and outcoming international travelers and goods.

In global health security terms, this is a potential powder keg. After a series of severe health crises affecting capital cities or urban areas (e.g. Ebola virus disease, Zika virus, MERS-Coronavirus, SARS, Influenza A (H1N1), Dengue, Yellow fever), building and strengthening the core capacities required under the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) is a key priority.

Public health emergencies are a challenge for communities, economies and governments. They are also an opportunity for major changes in the way the global community prepares for and responds to infectious diseases outbreaks and public health emergencies. A global and multi-sectoral approach is gaining momentum. In addition to governments and specialized international institutions, mayors and urban leaders[1] also play a critical role in global preparedness. These decision-makers directly or indirectly control the necessary multi-sectoral public health interventions, including public hospitals, transport, health workers, shipping of biological samples, water supply, security and communication. During a local health crisis, they are on the front line of multi-sectoral coordination.

Providing such decision-makers with a forum for sharing experience to work with multiple sectors and information to better address public health emergencies matches the convening role of World Health Organisation (WHO). As the custodian of the IHR(2005), WHO actively supports capacity building and the strengthening of the global network of the IHR National Focal Points (NFPs), scaling up their skills and capacity to work beyond the health sector, including at the interface between health, tourism and transport.

The implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), especially in low-resource settings, depends on stronger multi-sectoral public health emergency preparedness, including in urban areas. The whole SDGs process has reinforced how critical it is to have the engagement of all sectors and disciplines.

The context detailed above calls for the development of new and multi-sectoral approaches in preparedness for public health emergencies in urban areas, involving all relevant stakeholders at local as well as national and international level. The Lyon international metropolis has forged solid relations with stakeholders of urban areas throughout the world and has joined international networks such as the World Association of the Major

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[1] The term *urban leaders* refers to: political leaders of cities, metropolitan regions, city regions, and urban places

Metropolises. These metropolis are developing effective and original forms of cooperation: exchanges of practice between experts in urban public policies, joint involvement in projects in collaboration with local governments in emerging countries to best protect their population during health emergencies.

PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

This Conference, supported by the Government of France, comes as a follow-up to the 2008 WHO Consultation on Cities and Public Health Crises[2], and the 2016 High-level Conference on Global Health Security[3]. This Conference will provide a forum for Ministers of Health, mayors and urban leaders, local boards of health, national and international stakeholders from the health sector and beyond, WHO and UN organizations involved in transport and tourism including ICAO and UNWTO, to share experiences on the value of a multi-sectoral approach for effective leadership in preparedness for infectious disease outbreaks and public health emergencies in urban areas.

The Conference will also look at the value of public and private sector and community partnerships, within and across sectors, at all levels (local, national, international), to leverage the role that all stakeholders play in preparedness for public health emergencies.

OBJECTIVE OF THE CONFERENCE

- Identify gaps and challenges in preparedness for and management of urban outbreaks and public health emergencies, between sectors and across levels (local, national, international).
- Foster multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary collaboration between relevant stakeholders and find opportunities to enhance preparedness for infectious disease outbreaks and public health emergencies in urban areas.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Encouraging implementation of the WHO International Health Regulations (2005): draft five-year global strategic plan to improve public health preparedness and response, notably strengthening the global network of National IHR Focal Points[4];
- Connecting specialized networks and communities e.g. global parliament of mayor's network and IHR NFPs global network for stronger integrated approach to health emergencies preparedness in urban areas;
- Establishing a 24/7 hub for public-private information sharing and communications at the public health-transport-tourism interface;
- Engaging partners across sectors for a stronger public-private sector partnership for preparedness to health emergencies prior to World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, Davos 2019.

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[2]See at http://www.who.int/ihr/lyon/FRWHO_HSE_IHR_LYON_2009.5.pdf
[3] See at https://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/events/ev_20160322_en and http://solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/systeme-de-sante-et-medico-social/securite-sanitaire/article/22-23-mars-2016-conference-de-haut-niveau-sur-la-securite-sanitaire Lyon-France
[4] See at http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA71/A71_ACONF7-en.pdf

HEALTH
EMERGENCIES
programme

LOCATION AND DATE

The conference will take place in Lyon, France, on 3 and 4 December 2018 at Musée des Confluences. (http://www.museedesconfluences.fr/fr/visit-museum).

LANGUAGE

The official language of the conference is English. Interpretation in English and French will also be provided.

EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

The conference will be attended by (provisional non-exhaustive list):

- Ministers of Health
- National IHR Focal Points from the six WHO regions
- Mayors and urban leaders
- WHO Director General
- WHO Deputy Director General, Emergency Preparedness and Response
- UN organizations
- World Economic Forum
- International organizations and partners