MECIDS
(Middle East Consortium for Infectious Disease Surveillance)
Present and future

Jerusalem, February 28, 2013
EB Meeting

Report for 2012-2013
By Prof. Alex Leventhal, chair of the EB

Welcome to our partners in the present and future
Who are we?

Palestine

Kingdom of Jordan

Israel

Search for Common Ground

Middle East Consortium on Infectious Disease Surveillance

NTI

Building a Safer World
MECIDS members

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Governmental</th>
<th>Jordan Ministry of Health</th>
<th>Israel Ministry of Health</th>
<th>Palestine Ministry of Health</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nongovernmental Academic</td>
<td>MESIS Amman</td>
<td>Tel Aviv University</td>
<td>Al Quds University</td>
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Vision

Promote long-term health, stability and security in the region.
The starter

Food-borne disease surveillance project
Lab. Based Surveillance for Salmonella
Structure of the food borne diseases laboratory-based surveillance network

**National Level**
- Sentinel Community and Hospital Labs
- Reference Lab
  - National Data Analysis Unit

**Regional Level**
- Regional Data Depository
- Joint Data Analysis Meetings

**Infrastructure and skills developed for proper national and regional response**
Capacity building

Joint training and Workshops:
- Interventional Field Epidemiology
- Salmonella Identification to Harmonize methodology using the same equipment and reagents
- Diagnosis avian influenza virus H5N1, H1N1 by PCR
- PFGE Training
- Risk communication workshop
- Humanitarian response to disaster

2- Equipment and Materials Supply

- Anti sera, media, reagent and other supplies
- Biosafety cabinets level II
- Portable refrigerators
- PFGE
- Equipment that support process with the PFGE
- Computers for the sentinel sites
- Constructing MECIDS website
MECIDS partners and stakeholder

- Search for Common Ground
- Nuclear Threat Initiative – NTI
- Becton Dickenson Company donation (Antisera, media, reagent and other supplies)
- World Bank-
- European Union
- ICLS-International Council for Life Scienes
- Peres Center for Peace
- UK department of Defense

Outbreak Detection and Response in Avian Flu outbreak of March 2006

Opportunity for control
Regional collaboration in the Middle East to deal with H5N1 avian flu

Alex Leventhal, Assad Ramlawi, Adel Belbiesi, Ran D Balicer

In 2003-6 Arab and Israeli collaboration contained outbreaks of avian flu in the Middle East. This initiative shows how building relationships through joint efforts creates an infrastructure for cross-border collaboration during emergencies.

Recent emerging infectious diseases have changed the way that outbreaks are dealt with—from a mainly local approach to a regional and even global one. The importance of global collaboration orchestrated by the World Health Organization has been demonstrated during recent outbreaks of severe acute respiratory syndrome and avian flu.1 2

Geopolitical circumstances in the Middle East

We describe an example of Arab and Israeli collaboration in the Middle East on a public health issue. Cooperation between Israeli, Jordanian, and Palestinian veterinary and public health services contained outbreaks of H5N1 avian flu. The measures relationships through joint efforts for tackling common infectious diseases creates an infrastructure for cross-border collaboration during emergencies.

Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, and Israel border one another. The distance between the three capital cities is less than 80 km. Palestinians who live in all three countries have close family and commercial ties with each other. The citizens of these countries live as one "biological family."3

Mission

To facilitate cross-border cooperation and collaboration to implement action plans in response to disease outbreaks at regional level
Our Goals

• Initiate and upgrade regional collaboration
• Harmonize research standards,
• Exchange data,
• Implementing integrated and comprehensive preventative activities:

MECIDS Achievements

Well built infrastructure with capacity for:
• Implementing epidemiological and lab-based surveillance
• Data-sharing
• High alert system to detect emerging and re-emerging diseases
• Dealing with preparedness against bioterrorism
• Publishing scientific papers
Key Achievements for Regional Cooperation

- Daily contact in case of urgency and emergency (call phone, Conference call, e-mail, reports)
  - Avian Influenza outbreak (March, 2006)
  - Pandemic H1N1, 2009
  - Post pandemic H1N1, 2010-2011
  - H1N1 cluster, January 2013 (Recently)

- Harmonization of diagnostic methodologies

- Establishment common data-sharing formats

- Sample sharing for inter-lab comparison and further investigations

Collaboration with international organizations:

- WHO- Implementation of the IHR
- CORDS- members of the EB and participation in the activities
- EpiSouth- members of the EB
- Future collaboration with the SEEHN
Building blocks of sustainability
The triangle of success: below the radar

- Funds Private-public partnership
- Governance- political support
- Environment of Equity, Trust and Cooperation leading to continuous activities

Capacity building in the last two weeks:

- February 25-27, 2013:
  - Three day training for disaster management (Earthquake training).

- March 3-8, 2013:
  - Advanced Epidemiology training
Projects planned in the future:
IHR Implementation

• MECIDS know-how had been implemented in the IHR
• Workshops with collaboration with WHO
• In 2012 - workshop for cross- border implementation of the IHR

• Leishmaniasis project

Multi sectorial involvement

• Bringing together:
  – Government ministries,
  – Academics,
  – Technicians,
  – Local authorities
Biosafety and Biosecurity, training:

- **Phase I**: Regional Training of Trainers (TOT) as a tri-national workshop with Dr. Barbara Johnson
- **Phase II**: National training as a national workshop on behalf of MECIDS with Dr. Barbara Johnson
- **Phase III**: Local training - as responsibility of the national MoH

Humanitarian response to disaster

- To create workshop on the district level of cross border knowledge and collaboration with Peres Center for Peace and the RCRC Society
What is MECIDS secret?

A step by step building of innovative “Governmental NGO”
FOR THE PARTNERS (ACADEMIA AND GOVERNMENT),
THE DONORS & PARTNERS
THE SECRETARIAT OF ONE-MAN SHOW,
THE PH PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD AND THE LABS
FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT IN THE
PAST, PRESENT AND IN THE FUTURE

Thank you
EB meeting and capacity building

The distance between the three capitals of Jordan, Palestinian, and Israel is less than 80 km.

WHO EURO

WHO EMRO

MECIDS
Created Nov. 2002
Data collection on foodborne diseases July 2005
Past MECIDS Achievements

- Sub national, national and regional table top exercises on Pandemic influenza,
- IHR-Implementation
- Regional and national training on Bio-risk Management (bio-safety and bio-security)
- Training to enhance surveillance system
- MECIDS Data Sharing Workshop

Challenges and obstacles

- Although of the oscillating and instability of the political situation in the Middle East
- MECIDS still
  - collects, shares and disseminates data
  - Upload to the regional data analysis unit in the Middle East Scientific Institute For Security "MESIS".