Regional Approach to Promote Engagement with Parliamentarians in EMR to Advance Health and Well-Being and The Role of National Budgets

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Making history: WHO Director-General announces Memorandum of Understanding between Inter-Parliamentary Union and WHO

139th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly: continued support for women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights

18 October 2018: World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr Tedros made history yesterday by publicly announcing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and WHO. This marks a crucial high-level commitment between WHO and IPU and signals important political support for the strategic priorities of WHO in ensuring health lives and promoting well-being for all throughout life.

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“WHO will leverage domestic investment (in health) by fostering citizens’ participation, civil society dialogue and by interacting with governments including Heads of State, parliamentarians, and finance ministers.”
WHO EMRO worked to Establish a Regional Parliamentary Forum for Health and Well-being for All in Eastern Mediterranean Regional
The Experts Advisory Group Consultation
25-26 September 2018
in Amman, Jordan
The Objective of “The Experts Advisory Group Consultation”

To exchange experiences and lessons learned and discuss potential mechanisms to promote the role of parliamentarians in the Region to advance health and well-being.
Meeting of the Regional Parliamentary Working Group on Universal Health Coverage in EMR

3rd- 4th December 2018
Beirut, Lebanon
WHO EMRO’s Approaches to Promote the Role of Parliamentarians to Advance Health and Well-being

Promote Parliamentarians’ access to evidence to guide their decisions for quality and affordable health services for all

Promote policy dialogue between Parliamentarians, governments, and other stakeholders

Evidence-based decision making that addresses the priority health needs of ALL in the most effective and efficient way
WHO EMRO Identified FOUR Roles for Parliamentarians in Promoting Health and Well-Being for All

- Law-making: Reviewing and proposing legalisation
- Budgeting: Reviewing and approving national budgets
- Oversight: Monitoring the Executive branch and holding it accountable
- Representation: Representing the diverse interests and needs of their constituents
UHC means that all people and communities can use the promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative health services they need, of sufficient quality to be effective, while also ensuring that the use of these services does not expose the user to financial hardship.
Where are we with Service Coverage in EMR?

3.8.1 UHC service coverage index, 2015–2017

Source: WHO/WB, 2017
Evidence shows that Public Resources matter for UHC

More public funds, less exposure to financial hardship

Source: WHO Global Health Expenditure Database. Estimates for 2016, excludes countries with population < 500,000.
EMR Health Financing Atlas 2018: Key Findings

1. Investment in health is insufficient (<2% of global spending for 9% of world population).

2. Public spending on health is low despite sufficient fiscal space because it is not a high enough priority.

3. Populations are not fully covered by equitable and efficient prepayment arrangements.

4. This resulted in high out-of-pocket payments and high degree of financial hardship.

Message 1: We Need More Public Money for Health
Public Money Mostly Comes from Budget

Message 2: Parliamentarians Need to be Effectively Involved at All Stages

Source: Cashin et al, WHO 2017 & Barroy et al, WHO 2019
Classical Input-Based Budgets DO NOT necessarily align with health priorities

Message 3: We Need to Move towards Programme-Based Budgeting
COVID Highlighted Many Gaps in Current Public Financing & Budgeting

WHO identified three measures to facilitate better budgeting for COVID response:

1. Use existing budgetary flexibility to fund public health measures

2. Accelerate revision of finance laws to secure a budget for the response through expenditure earmarking

3. Release public funds to frontline service providers timely and facilitating expenditure tracking

Message 4: Need to Work with Ministries of Finance to Ensure More and Flexible Money for Health

https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/how-to-budget-for-covid-19-response
Concluding Remarks

• **Health for All by All** is our Regional Motto

• **Parliamentarians can play important role** in promoting health and well-being, leveraging on their multiple functions

• **COVID-19** highlighted the need to acceleration **budget structure reforms** towards: *more public money* for health with *flexibility* and *accountability*
Thank you

WHO Programme of Work on Budgeting in Health:
https://www.who.int/health_financing/topics/budgeting-in-health/en/

WHO Repository of Health Budgets:
https://www.who.int/health_financing/topics/budgeting-in-health/repository/en/