

# International Health Regulations (IHR)

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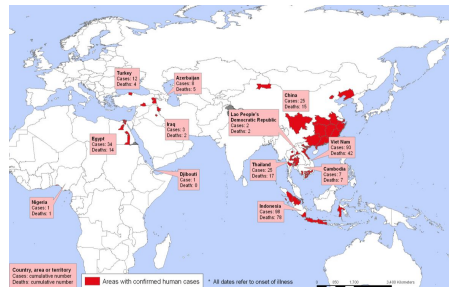
**Original Content** | **Titles** | **Additional Notes** | **Important**

# Learning objectives

- By the end of the session the students should be able to define and understand:
- To define International Health regulations.
- To understand the importance of international health regulations.
- To list national and international requirements of the international health regulations.
- To describe how the international health regulations are implemented.
- **Dr. Shatha said you should know definitions, aims, how to apply in certain conditions**

# Why do we need IHR?

- Serious and unusual disease events are inevitable
- Globalisation - problem in one location is everybody's headache
- IHR prioritizes health of individuals.
- Purpose:
  - To prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international spread of diseases
  - Restricted to **public health risks**, and which avoid unnecessary interference with international traffic and trade.
- **H5N1: Avian influenza pandemic** good example of IHR intervention



# What is IHR?

- This international legally-binding agreement (196 Countries)
- Significantly contributes to **global public health security**.
- Providing a new framework for the coordination of the management of events that may constitute a **public health emergency of international concern**.
- Improve the capacity of all countries to **detect, assess, notify** and **respond** to public health threats.
- One of the purposes of IHR is that it provides regulations that allow healthy people to travel from a country with an outbreak to another country.

• يعني لما يكون فيه مرض ببلد معين المنظمة بتحط قوانين للناس اللي بالبلد وتبغى تسافر برا البلد وهذا الشيء يساعد بأنه ما راح يعطل الناس اللي عندهم شغل وما راح يعطل التجارة (مثلا تجارة الدواجن وقت انفلونزا الطيور).

# What's new?

Old (IHR 1969)	New (IHR 2005)
Three diseases (Yellow fever, cholera, and plague)	All public health threats (e.g. chemical agents and contaminated food)
Control of borders	<b>Containment at source</b> Best measure!
Preset measures	Adapted response

- IHR recognize that international disease threats have increased
- Scope has been expanded from **cholera, plague** and **yellow fever** to **all public health emergencies of international concern**
- They include those caused by infectious diseases, chemical agents, radioactive materials and contaminated food

# What does IHR call for?

- **Strengthened national capacity** for surveillance and control, including in travel and transport
- **Prevention, alert and response** to international public health emergencies
- **Global partnership** and international collaboration
- **Rights, obligations and procedures**, and progress monitoring

# Acute public health threats are collectively managed

- The IHR define a risk management process where States Parties work together, **coordinated by WHO**, to collectively manage acute public health risks.
- **The key functions of this global system, for States and WHO, are to:**
  - Detect (has to be time bound)
  - Verify (definition of cases and fulfillment of criteria -if exists-)
  - Assess (assessment of conditions, situations, process, and surveillance)
  - Inform (local and international authorities)
  - Assist (for development of national and international plans)

# Containment at source

- The extent of international travels is an extraordinary opportunity for disease transmission.
- **Rapid response at the source is:**
  - The most effective way to secure maximum protection against international spread of diseases
  - Key to limiting unnecessary health-based restrictions on trade and travel



# Importance of national capacity

- **The best way to prevent international spread of diseases is to detect public health events early and implement effective response actions when the problem is small**
- **Early detection of unusual disease events** by effective national surveillance (both disease and event based)
- **Systems to ensure response** (investigation, control measures) at all levels (local, regional, and national)
- **Routine measures and emergency response at ports, airports and ground crossings.**

# Core capacity requirements for designated points of entry (PoE)

- **Designation of points of entry**
  - States Parties **shall designate Airports**, seaports, landports **and Ports** for developing capacities.
  - States Parties where justified for PH reasons, **may designate ground crossings** for developing capacities, taking into consideration volume and frequency of international traffic and public health risks of the areas in which international traffic originates.
- **States Parties sharing common borders should consider:**
  - Bilateral and multilateral agreements
  - Joint designation of adjacent ground crossing for capacities

# PoE Core capacity requirements at all times (routine) Every port should have this



(a) Assessment and Medical care, staff & equipment



(b) Equipment & personnel for transport ill travellers



(c) Trained personnel for inspection of conveyances



(d) ensure save environment: water, food, waste, **wash rooms** & other potential risk areas - inspection programmes



(e) Trained staff and programme for vector control

a

**Public Health Emergency Contingency plan:** coordinator, contact points for relevant PoE, PH & other agencies

b

Provide **assessment & care** for affected travellers, animals: arrangements with medical, veterinary facilities for isolation, treatment & other services

c

Provide **space**, separate from other travellers to interview suspect or affected persons

d

Provide for assessment, **quarantine** of suspect or affected travellers

g

Provide access to **required equipment, personnel** with protection equipment for transfer of travellers with infection/contamination

f

To apply **entry/exit control** for departing & arriving passengers

e

To apply recommended measures, **disinsect, disinfect, decontaminate**, baggage, cargo, containers, conveyances, goods, postal parcels etc.

Routine

Don't skip it!

Emergency

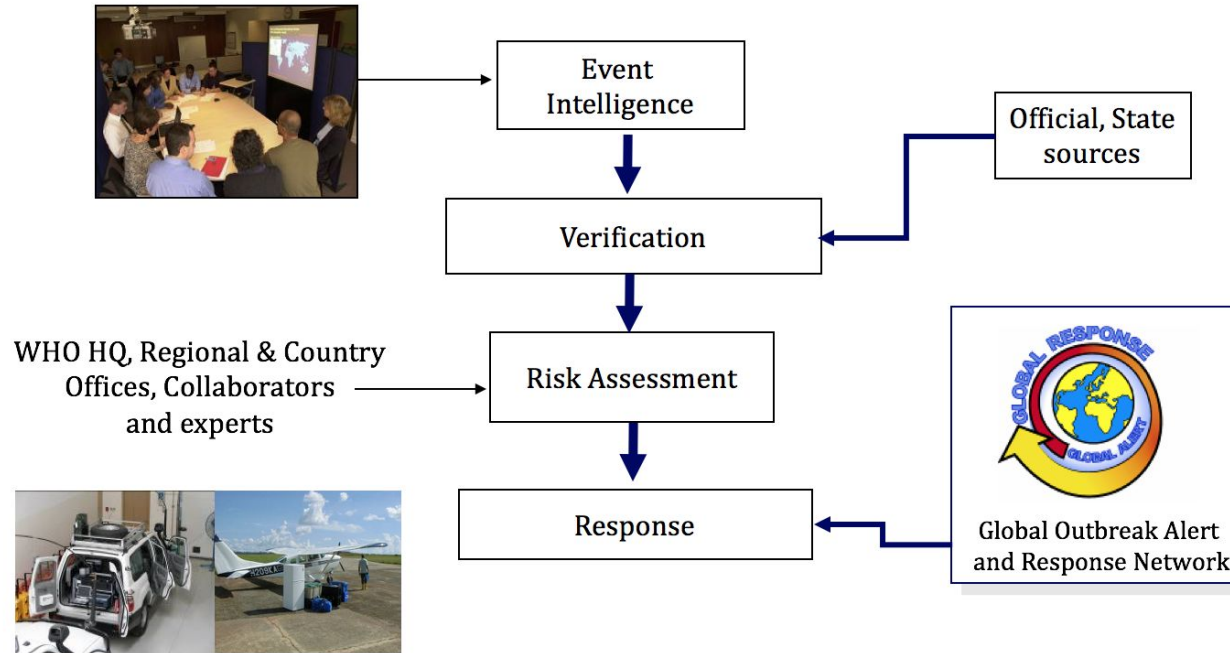
# Some principle approaches

- **Continuous risks**
  - **Routine measures in place**
    - "sanitary conditions" at points of entry and conveyances travellers, goods etc.
  - **Specific measures for certain known risks in place**
    - Vector control, vaccination
    - Standing recommendations
- **Sudden increase in risk**
  - **Detection**
    - information & verification
    - notification
    - risk assessment
  - **Response**
    - Support to investigation and control
    - Information and recommendations

# What does WHO do under the IHR?

- Designate WHO IHR contact points
- Support States Parties in assessing their public health risks, through the notification, consultation, and verification processes
- Inform State Parties of relevant international public health risks
- Recommend public health measures
- Assist States Parties in their efforts to investigate outbreaks and meet the IHR national core capacities requirements for surveillance and response and points of entry

# WHO system of Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) Operations



# Countries' challenges for IHR implementation

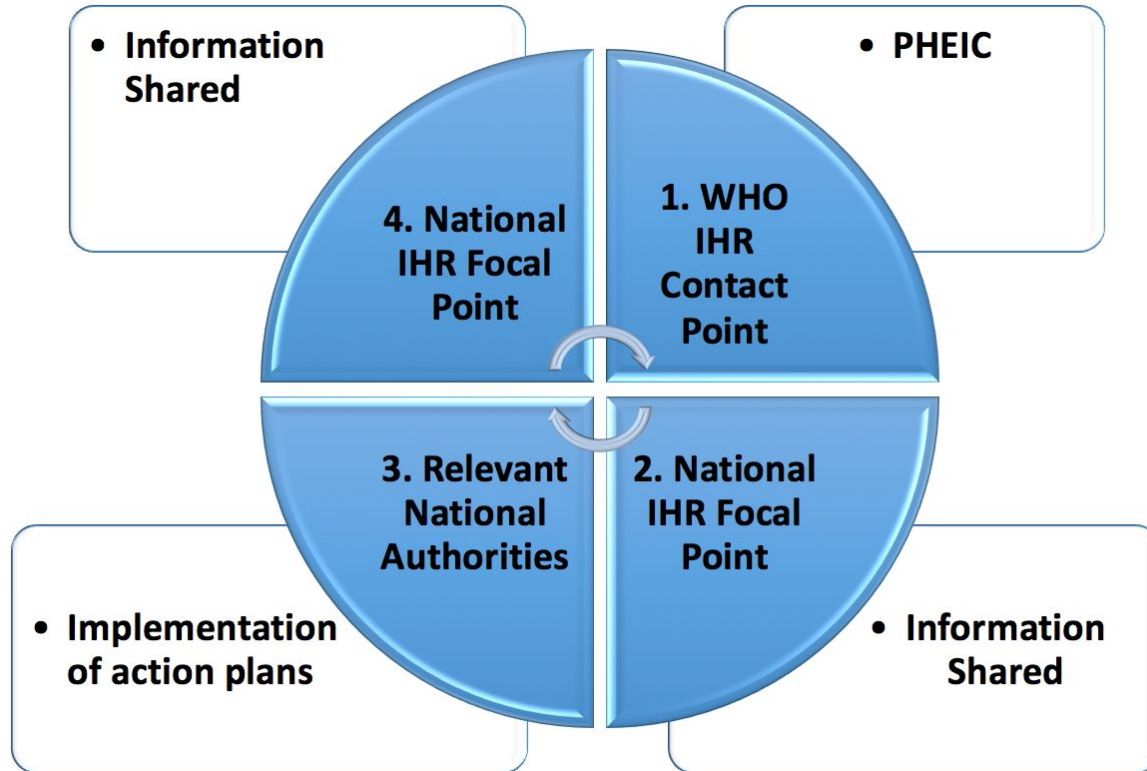
- Mobilize resources and develop national action plans
- Strengthen national capacities in alert and response
- Strengthen capacity at ports, airports, and ground crossings
- Maintaining strong threat-specific readiness for known diseases/risks
- Rapidly notify WHO of acute public health risks
- Sustain international and inter-sectoral collaboration
- Monitor progress of IHR implementation

# IHR in Saudi Arabia: Case study

- During Hajj Season of 2014, the country was subjected to the risk of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak during the Hajj season.
- **What was the action plan conducted under the IHR?**
- **Firstly:** the disease was announced to be endemic in **west African countries:**
  - Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in West Africa. Additionally, a localised spread of the virus was announced in certain areas of Nigeria
  - This announcement indicated a Public Health Event of International Concern (PHEIC).
  - Saudi Arabia, as a member state was informed about this PHEIC through the National IHR Focal Point.
  - **The National IHR Focal Point in Saudi Arabia was a representative of the Saudi Ministry of Health.**
- How does The National IHR Focal Point in Saudi Arabia receive information from the WHO?
  - Through the WHO IHR Contact Points.
- أول شيء صار أنه فيه مسؤول من منظمة الصحة العالمية تواصل مع المكتب الإقليمي في الشرق الأوسط اللي بعدين تواصل مع الفوكل بوينت اللي تمثلها وزارة الصحة. بعد كذا وزارة الصحة تواصلت مع وزارة الحج، وزارة النقل، ووزارة الداخلية والحدود البرية والبحرية بحيث يحددون مطار فيه الاستعدادات والاحتياطات اللازمة لفحص المسافرين. الوزارة حددت مطار الملك عبدالعزيز في جدة ومطار الأمير محمد في المدينة والميناء الإسلامي في جدة لأن معظم المسافرين من البلدان الموبوءة بالإيبولا كانوا يلجؤون إليها.



# Circle of communication



# IHR in Saudi Arabia: Case study

## 1. The Information components:

- a. Surveillance, notification, consultation, verification, and information sharing at the endemic countries with EVD.
- b. Announcement of the PHEIC with state parties.
- c. Sharing of relevant public health knowledge about EVD with state parties.

## 2. Action plan at endemic countries:

- a. Application of prevention and control measures in endemic countries.
- b. Application of exit screening measures at Points of Entry. People leaving the country get screened beforehand.
- c. Information sharing with state parties.

## 3. Action plan at Saudi Arabia:

- a. Restriction of entry of citizens of affected countries. People from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone were not allowed to enter the country. Which was not ideal because some people from these countries have french citizenships.
- b. Application of entry screening measures.
- c. Information sharing with relevant local authorities.
- d. Assessment of the established capacity:
  - i. Transportation system adherence to the IHR guidelines.
  - ii. Maintenance of core capacities at designated Points of Entry in Saudi Arabia: Jeddah airport, Madinah Airport, and Islamic seaport. In Jeddah.
  - iii. Development of Public health Emergency Contingency Plans at Points of Entry.
  - iv. Plan trials (drills), monitoring and evaluation.

# Summary:

1. IHR → international legally-binding agreement that provide a framework for the coordination of the management of events that may constitute a **public health emergency of international concern**.
2. Its aims are → To prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international spread of diseases.
3. Importance of IHR
4. National role in controlling the public health risks.
5. Example of application of IHR