Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (FELTP) Planning Tool

Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Coordinating Office for Global Health
Office of Capacity Development and Program Coordination
Division of Epidemiology and Surveillance Capacity Development
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Introduction

The following questions for strategic planning will assist the country and its counterparts, as well as champions of the program, to plan and develop a Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program that best addresses the needs of the country.

The following table provides suggestions of the persons who may best assist in providing input on these questions. The country may wish to identify these persons prior to the strategic planning visit and/or review the questions contained in the document to prepare for the visit.

Most of the input for this document will be provided by ministry of health personnel with specific knowledge of the relevant area of interest. The final section, Higher Education, may best be addressed by university personnel working with programs that offer public health education. This final section may be eliminated if no institutions of higher education that provide or are willing to provide public health education are identified.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Persons to Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>5</td>
<td>1-18</td>
<td>MOH personnel with authority to address the health priorities of the ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Logistics</td>
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<td>19-30</td>
<td>MOH personnel with authority to address logistics of implementing an FELTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Surveillance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>MOH personnel with knowledge of the country’s surveillance system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Epidemiology</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41-46</td>
<td>MOH personnel with knowledge of the country’s epidemiologic capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Laboratory</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>47-53</td>
<td>MOH laboratory management personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Communication</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54-59</td>
<td>MOH personnel with knowledge of communication of epidemiologic and surveillance information and data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Training</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60-72</td>
<td>MOH personnel with knowledge of the training conducted by the ministry for epidemiology, surveillance, and laboratory staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Higher Education</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>73-79</td>
<td>University/college personnel with knowledge of educational degree and certificate programs in public health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart on the following page will assist persons planning and conducting the strategic planning visit by identifying all the personnel participating.
## Planning Interview Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Name and Title</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Public Health Environment</td>
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<td>4 Epidemiology</td>
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<td>5 Laboratory</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Higher Education</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1 Public health environment

Health Priorities and Goals of the MOH

1. What are the public health priorities of the Ministry of Health?

2. How are public health data now used to address these priorities? What changes in surveillance and investigation would encourage greater use of data?

3. Are there any local resources or activities that address development of the ministry’s human capacity needs?

Ministry of health organization

4. Answer the following questions for the central and subnational levels of the MOH. In the first two sections, check all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Central Level</th>
<th>Subnational Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the epidemiologic responsibilities?</td>
<td>Outbreak investigation&lt;br&gt;Conducting epidemiologic studies (case-control, cohort)&lt;br&gt;Conducting health surveys (risk factor surveys, etc.)&lt;br&gt;Surveillance data analysis and interpretation&lt;br&gt;Surveillance system development&lt;br&gt;Surveillance system evaluation&lt;br&gt;Communication of epidemiologic data (bulletins, etc.)&lt;br&gt;Monitoring and evaluation of public health programs</td>
<td>Outbreak investigation&lt;br&gt;Conducting epidemiologic studies (case-control, cohort)&lt;br&gt;Conducting health surveys (risk factor surveys, etc.)&lt;br&gt;Surveillance data analysis and interpretation&lt;br&gt;Surveillance system development&lt;br&gt;Surveillance system evaluation&lt;br&gt;Communication of epidemiologic data (bulletins, etc.)&lt;br&gt;Monitoring and evaluation of public health programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What areas of epidemiologic activity does the MOH feel needs improvement?

Outbreak investigation
Conducting epidemiologic studies (case-control, cohort)
Conducting health surveys (risk factor surveys, etc.)
Surveillance data analysis and interpretation
Surveillance system development
Surveillance system evaluation
Communication of epidemiologic data (bulletins, etc.)
Monitoring and evaluation of public health programs

Outbreak investigation
Conducting epidemiologic studies (case-control, cohort)
Conducting health surveys (risk factor surveys, etc.)
Surveillance data analysis and interpretation
Surveillance system development
Surveillance system evaluation
Communication of epidemiologic data (bulletins, etc.)
Monitoring and evaluation of public health programs

Would there be potential field assignments for an FELTP trainee?

Yes No

Yes No

5. How many technical (non-administrative) staff are employed in the ministry in the following areas full time (by central and subnational area)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Sector</th>
<th># Staff at Central Level</th>
<th># Staff at Subnational Level (if known)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surveillance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Epidemiology</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratory</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. Attach the organizational chart of the MOH and, if necessary, for important sub-units (disease control, surveillance, information systems). If not immediately available, list the location of the document or the name of a contact to obtain the document.

Disease burden (Example)

7. Are reliable data available on mortality and morbidity rates? Yes No (If yes, please answer questions 8-12)

8. What is the infant mortality rate? Source and year?

9. What is the under-5 mortality rate? Source and year?

10. What is the maternal mortality rate? Source and year?
11. What are the top five causes of mortality (below)? Source and year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes of mortality</th>
<th>Mortality Rate (cases/100,000 population)</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

12. What are the top five causes of morbidity (below)? Source and year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Morbidity rate (cases / 10,000 pop.)</th>
<th>Deaths (*)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Public health system overview**

13. Is there a national plan for *infectious* disease control and prevention? Yes No

Where may we obtain a copy? _______________________________________

14. Is there a national plan for *chronic* disease control and prevention? Yes No

Where may we obtain a copy? _______________________________________

**Trainees**

15. Is the MOH committed to create positions for FELTP trainees and graduates in the Ministry of Health? Yes No

16. What is the current career pathway for *epidemiologists* in MOH? _______________________________________

17. What is the current career pathway for *laboratorians* in MOH? _______________________________________

18. How would the FELTP lead to career advancement for epidemiologists, managers and laboratorians? _______________________________________
2 Logistics of establishing an FELTP

MOH Considerations

19. What are the problems that the MOH has identified regarding the performance of the persons responsible for epidemiology and disease control and prevention at the different levels of the MOH? __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

20. Who within the government is supporting the implementation of an FELTP (top management, technical champions, potential counterparts)?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

Location

21. Who will be responsible for managing the FELTP? __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

22. Where would the FELTP be placed physically? __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

Coordination and Supervision

23. Who would define the program? __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

24. Who would supervise and mentor trainees? __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

25. Who will be on steering committee? __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
Candidates

26. What would be the qualifications of preferred candidates? __________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
27. What would be a typical assignment for a trainee? ______________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
28. What kind of position or career incentives might be offered a graduate? _____
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Funding

29. Would the MOH be interested in sharing resources or contributing towards the
establishment of a regional FELTP? _________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
30. What availability of funding is there from the MOH for in-country costs of an
FELTP? _________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
3 Surveillance capacity

Ministry of health capacity in surveillance

31. Describe the disease surveillance system from the local to the national level. Include the following information.
   a. How is disease reported from the local to the national level?
   b. What data sources are used?
   c. Is there availability of laboratory confirmation?

32. How frequently are data analyzed to identify trends? ______________________

33. When was the system last evaluated? ___________
   What were the findings? ______________________

34. Are there examples of outbreak investigations conducted based on information provided in the surveillance system? ______________________

35. Are there examples of program evaluations conducted using data provided by the surveillance system and, if so, were there any public health action or recommendations implemented from this evaluation? ______________________

36. What other major health information systems are in place in the country? ______

37. What kinds of data analysis are routinely performed at each level (e.g., frequency distributions, trends over time and from place-to-place, outbreak investigations, etiologic studies)? ______________________

38. What problems occur in using surveillance data for public health decision-making (e.g., data not available when needed, data not correct, type of data needed is not available)?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Informatics capacity and technology infrastructure**

39. Is the surveillance system computerized?  Fully  Partially  Not at All

If the surveillance system is only partially computerized, please describe which levels of the system are computerized and which are not.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

40. How often is data transmitted by each level of the health system to the next?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System Level</th>
<th>Frequency of Reporting (circle one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subnational (List each level below)</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monthly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 Epidemiologic capacity

Ministry of health capacity in epidemiology

41. What is the education and training background of most epidemiologists in the Ministry of Health? ______________________________________

42. At what levels of the public health system do epidemiologists work (e.g., only at national level, at all levels, etc.)? ______________________________________

43. What other types of health care workers in the public health system perform epidemiologic activities (e.g., outbreak investigations, epidemiologic studies, etc)? ______________________________________

44. For each of the items below, describe the public health personnel involved and their roles and responsibilities?
   a. Surveillance? ______________________________________
   b. Outbreak investigation? ________________________________
   c. National surveys (e.g., DHSS, behavioural, micronutrients, etc.)? __________________________
45. How are outbreak investigations reported and to whom?
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

46. Are monitoring and evaluation activities conducted for public health programs?
Yes   No

If yes, who has responsibility for these activities?
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
5 Laboratory capacity

Ministry of health capacity in laboratory

47. Does the laboratory data produced by the public health laboratories support the disease surveillance system? Yes No

48. Are laboratory data reviewed for outbreak detection? Yes No

49. Can the laboratory communicate necessary information to those who need to respond? Yes No
   If yes, how do they communicate the information? ________________________________

50. Are there guidelines for conducting laboratory tests in the public health laboratories? Yes No

51. Is the record-keeping in public health laboratories adequate to support the disease surveillance systems in the country? Yes No

52. Are there sufficient laboratory resources to accommodate the needs and goals of the surveillance system? Yes No
6 Public health communication capacity

53. Is there a public health bulletin? Yes No

If yes, does the national health bulletin (check all that apply)

- Include surveillance data
- Include outbreak notices
- Include public health recommendations
- Include data from other countries or WHO

54. Do local workers in the surveillance system see results of data they provide (i.e., does information flow both ways)? Yes No

55. The MOH has:

- An office of communication Yes No Unknown
- A communication strategic plan Yes No Unknown
- An emergency media response plan for large outbreaks, disasters, etc.? Yes No Unknown

56. The MOH has communications staff to:

- Edit and publish a health bulletin Yes No Unknown
- Speak to the press or write press briefings Yes No Unknown
- Prepare general health promotion materials Yes No Unknown

57. The MOH regularly shares epidemiologic data with:

- Other countries Yes No Unknown
- WHO/Europe, or other int’l agencies Yes No Unknown

58. What communication products were produced by the MOH in the current calendar year? (Check all that apply). Also mark those that have been tried and discontinued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th># of issues a year</th>
<th>Number printed</th>
<th>Issued on Internet?</th>
<th>Target Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National health bulletin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Surveillance data reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Science-based press releases</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7 Training capacity

*Educational institutions providing public health-related education*

**Degree programs**

The following questions regard both medical schools and public health schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Medical Schools</th>
<th>Schools of Public Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59. How many are there?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. How do the current programs support the functions of the MOH?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>61. What are the present degrees and diplomas offered?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. Are there potential options for credentialing of FELTP graduates?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. Do the institutions offer any continuing education opportunities to public health employees? If yes, what?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. Is it possible the academic staff might be interested in teaching in the FELTP?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Training programs within the MOH*

65. Does the ministry itself currently offer any training programs for its employees?  
   Yes  No

   If yes, what types of training are offered, particularly those related to epidemiologic topics?  
   
   __________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

66. How are current MOH training programs funded?  
   __________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
**Other in-country training in epidemiology, surveillance, laboratory, and public health communication**

**Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)**

67. What role are NGOs playing to build capacity? Are they providing:
   a. Dependable sources of funding  Yes  No
   b. Assistance with human resources  Yes  No

68. What types of training programs in public health-related topics are NGOs providing?
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

69. What opportunities might there be for NGOs to collaborate with an FELTP?
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

70. Are there any research institutions that the MOH collaborates with?  Yes  No
   If yes, please answer the following questions.
   a. Are there possible field positions for trainees within these institutions?  Yes  No
   b. Are there any possible long-term projects conducted by the institution relevant to FELTPs?  Yes  No
      If yes, please describe: _______________________________________
      ______________________________________________________
      ______________________________________________________

   c. Might they be able to provide any supervision to the trainees?  Yes  No
   d. Might they be able to sponsor any trainees?  Yes  No

**Other governments**

71. Are there any other governments besides the U.S. funding training programs in public health?  Yes  No
   If yes, what type of programs are they funding? ____________________
8 Training by Higher Education Institutions

If any universities or colleges are interviewed for the assessment, ask the following?

72. List other institutional affiliations (other academic institutes, MOH programs, donors, technical partners, etc.)

73. Is there a Masters of Public Health Program? Yes No
   If yes, what areas of concentration are offered (e.g., epidemiology, informatics, etc.)?

74. What is the institution’s relationship to the MOH?

Certificate programs

75. What current public health certificate programs are offered?

76. What are the entry requirements for the certificate programs?

77. How do the current certificate programs support the functions of the MOH?

Continuing Education

78. What continuing education opportunities in public health related topics are offered by these institutions?