

**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.

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

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

Section	Name and Title	Address	Telephone	Email
1 Public Health Environment				
2 Logistics				
3 Surveillance				
4 Epidemiology				
5 Laboratory				
6 Communication				
7 Training				
8 Higher Education				

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.

Question	Central Level	Subnational Level
What are the epidemiologic responsibilities?	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

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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)?

Staff Sector	# Staff at Central Level	# Staff at Subnational Level (if known)
Surveillance		
Epidemiology		
Laboratory		

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? _____

Causes of mortality	Mortality Rate (cases/100,000 population)	Year
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

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

Disease	Morbidity rate (cases / 10,000 pop.)	Deaths (*)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

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)? _____

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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?

System Level	Frequency of Reporting (circle one)		
National	Monthly	Weekly	Immediately
Subnational (List each level below)			
	Monthly	Weekly	Immediately

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.)? _____

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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

7 Training capacity

Educational institutions providing public health-related education

Degree programs

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

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

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? _____

