Conducting an inventory of the health information system can:

- Identify and describe the functions that occur in a surveillance system
- Clarify sources of problems such as redundancy, lack of timeliness, and lack of feedback
- Determine who to work with and which systems, if any, can be used and which need to be strengthened.
- Develop a flow chart to be used as a descriptive or diagnostic tool and to facilitate an objective discussion of information system problems and strengths

Following the inventory is an example of how a flowchart might be organized. For more information, please see Section 2.4 (Goals of surveillance assessment).
The following table describes the steps in conducting a health information system inventory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>List the information systems used to gather information on health status indicators and the health care system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2    | Select the three or four systems that are most important to achieving MOH priorities and targets. For each of those systems, collect information such as:  
  - Name of system  
  - Names and titles of persons supplying information  
  - Purpose/objectives of the system  
  - Source of funds  
  - Collaborators outside of MOH  
  - Needs of staff at each level  
  - Ways in which needs might be met  
  - Role, resources and interaction with laboratory at each level  
  - Reporting protocols  
    - Diseases/conditions reported  
    - Frequency of reporting  
    - Method of reporting  
    - Incentives for reporting  
    - Penalties for not reporting |
| 3    | Record information on a flowchart (see the following example) |
| 4    | Review the flowchart for:  
  - Redundancies  
  - Timeliness  
  - Feedback  
  - Persons to work with  
  - Which systems, if any, can be used and which need to be strengthened |
Sample flowchart adapted from Jordan FETP

Average time from infection to development of symptoms:

What information is reported to the local level? How long does this take or how often is it reported?

What information is being sent to the regional level and when? Is more information collected about each patient (risk factors)?

What information is being sent to the federal level and when?

How is information communicated to the community? When?

How are health providers updated? When?

How quickly and to whom does the federal government communicate decisions and information?

What information is communicated to the local level? When?

What information is reported to the local level? How long does this take or how often is it reported?

What information is being sent to the regional level and when? Is more information collected about each patient (risk factors)?

Local Public Health System

Regional Public Health System

Federal Public Health System:

Health Care Provider

Community