

Ethiopia Multisectoral Health Security Bulletin



Sixth Edition - May 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Encouraging detection, prevention, and response to public health crises of international significance (PHEIC) and mitigating their social and economic consequences was one of the main goals of implementing IHR. The IHR is a legally binding agreement that mandates that all States Parties establish a set of basic public health capacities. Thus, "the capacity to detect, assess, notify, and report events" is how the IHR capacity needs are defined.

Many obstacles have been encountered during the implementation of NAPHS, such as inadequate multisectoral governance and coordination mechanisms, low ownership and accountability, a lack of resources or a lack of alignment between NAPHS and the yearly budgets of government sectors, a limited NAPHS monitoring and evaluation system, and other competing priorities by sectors.

Over 70% of the activities in the NAPHS have either been fully completed or have moved to an advanced state of completion in the last five years of implementation. The bulletin contains additional information on these topics. Sectoral changes in priorities prevent the remaining thirty percent of the scheduled activities from being carried out. Most of the IHR core capacity categories have improved, according to the Joint External Evaluation (JEE) 2023 results. The overall score increased from 52% in JEE 2016 to 62% in JEE 2023. The previous eight years have seen an increase in the average JEE score of over 10% due to the successful execution of national-level public health emergency management programs and global health security measures across several sectors.

The most up-to-date information and statistics regarding national activities were presented in this bulletin. As a result, we saw that the IHR capacity level increased dramatically between JEE in 2016 and JEE in 2023, indicating that the adoption of important health security interventions—especially NAPHS—influenced the IHR implementation and the development of IHR core skills. These initiatives and accomplishments are made possible by the current establishment of an environment that is supportive of the thorough planning, management, and response of a public health emergency management system. This system incorporates tactics for the prevention and control of cross-border diseases at all authorized points of entry across the nation.

A reader may infer from the various news items and reports in the bulletin that the implementation of a system and structure at all levels, from the national to the sub-national, will greatly facilitate research, data management and analysis, and laboratory capacity functions, thereby enhancing the country's ability to anticipate, identify, prevent, control, and address public health emergencies.

The foundation of success for the reported news and most current information can be mentioned as providing adequate attention to the sustainability and accountability of all sectors to boost the objectives and aim of one health activity to be effective, even though the roads to success and implementation of all core activities fully need extra effort and day and night work.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Multisectoral Health Security Bulletin's sixth edition. Dear readers, the bulletin serves as a crucial platform for disseminating best practices and highlighting accomplishments across various sectors involved in Ethiopia's National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS). By featuring updates on events and new developments, it facilitates effective communication and coordination among different sectors. Sustaining the achievements of both national and international health security agendas relies upon a harmonious and integrated effort. Recognizing this imperative, the bulletin is dedicated to fulfilling its main goals, which include promoting health security agendas within each sector, fostering a collaborative atmosphere, and facilitating the exchange of experiences among sectors.

Implementing health security agendas successfully poses various challenges that should be addressed. Among the challenges, inadequate data sharing and communication, the institutionalization of One Health approaches and financial constraints can be mentioned. To surmount these obstacles and others, it is imperative to establish a robust coordination structure and enhance communication channels.

By addressing these challenges and leveraging collaborative efforts, the bulletin aims to play a crucial role in advancing health security agendas, both nationally and internationally. Through promoting sector-specific initiatives, fostering collaboration, and facilitating knowledge exchange, the bulletin endeavors to contribute to a more resilient and responsive health security system in Ethiopia.

This edition of the bulletin endeavors to provide a comprehensive overview of sectors NAPHS implementation, initiatives in public health emergency management, and efforts to enhance compliance with the International Health Regulations (IHR). Additionally, it sheds light on preparedness efforts on the chemical, biological, and radiological-nuclear simulation exercises, and strategies to combat antimicrobial drug resistance. The bulletin also features updates on sectoral news including capacity-building training, and dogs and anthrax vaccinations. By covering these diverse topics, the bulletin aims to offer readers a comprehensive understanding of the events surrounding national health security and related agendas over the past quarter, serving as a valuable resource for stakeholders involved in safeguarding public health.

Finally, because our readers are fundamental to the success of the bulletin, we encourage you to share your remarks, thoughts, or feedback with us via email at ethionaphs@gmail.com. Your input is invaluable to us, and we genuinely appreciate any insights or suggestions you may have. Thank you for your continued support, and we hope you enjoy reading the bulletin.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL



The success of any sector hinges on coordination and collaboration, but in the realm of multi-sectoral engagement, these factors become paramount. Prior to achieving public health security, effective sector coordination and collaboration are imperative. Each sector can advance its own objectives and contribute to the overarching goals when it collaborates with others in a harmonious and interdependent manner.

In our pursuit of nationwide success in One Health implementation, the National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) will undoubtedly yield positive outcomes. For International Health Regulation (IHR) activities to be effective, it is essential to embrace sectoral responsibility, foster collaboration across sectors, and employ a multidisciplinary approach. In this regard, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute urges all sectors involved in health security areas to intensify collaboration and cooperation like never before. We must work tirelessly, day and night.

Today, the importance of One Health cannot be overstated, as it represents an integrated, unifying approach aimed at sustainably balancing and optimizing the health of people, animals, and ecosystems. Our daily lives are intricately linked with the health of domestic and wild animals, plants, and the broader environment, all of which are interconnected and interdependent.

Through a unified and integrated approach, we can find answers and solutions to all our public health challenges. Our recent experiences with COVID-19 have underscored the significance of collaboration and harmonious teamwork in achieving success. Our collective partnership will bolster the nation's capacity to identify, mitigate, and promptly address threats to public health.

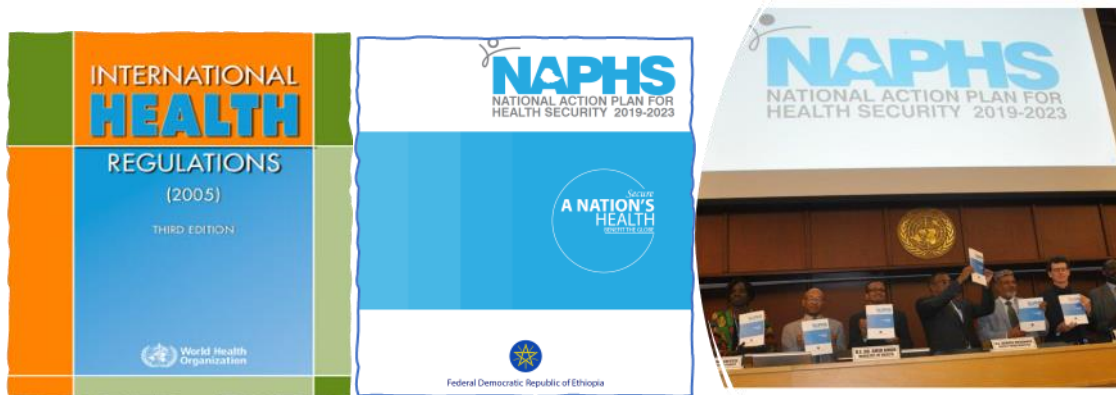
The current times necessitate nothing less than a united effort to confront the challenges posed by public health emergencies. To execute this program effectively, we have forged alliances with all stakeholders. Once again, I will call upon all stakeholders to strengthen the partnership to support the efforts on improving our ability to identify, notify, detect and response to public health events.

**Dr. Melkamu Abte,
Ethiopia Public Health Institute
Deputy Director General**

OVERVIEW OF NAPHS

In May 2005, the fifty-eighth World Health Assembly (WHA) adopted the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), the enforcement started on June 15, 2007. IHR came into force with the aim of enhancing core capacities for global health security, including improving capacities to detect, prevent, and respond to public health emergencies of international concern (PHEIC) and subsequently reducing their social and economic impact.

IHR 2005 set standards to be met by all state countries regarding the minimum capacity needed to prevent, detect, and respond to public health events. Accordingly, WHO recommended countries to assess their existing capacity and design appropriate capacity-building interventions. Countries conduct Joint External Evaluation (JEE) based on WHO recommendations followed by their National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS).



National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS)

NAPHS is a country-owned, multi-year planning process that can accelerate the implementation of IHR core capacities and is based on the One Health, Whole of Government approach for all hazards, achieving health security in Ethiopia, and fulfilling IHR requirements. NAPHS captures national priorities for health security, brings sectors together, identifies partners, and allocates resources for health security capacity development.

NAPHS also provides an overarching process to capture all ongoing preparedness initiatives in a country, along with a country governance mechanism for emergency and disaster risk management. NAPHS is expected to bring significant improvements to the capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to health threats, with benefits extending beyond the health sector.

NAPHS in Ethiopia

Ethiopia, as member of WHO and country that is vulnerable to various epidemics and outbreaks, is one of the leading countries in demonstrating the implementation IHR 2005. The first JEE in Ethiopia was conducted in 2016 and managed to assess the country capacity in 15 technical areas that created a basis for the development of NAPHS in 2019.

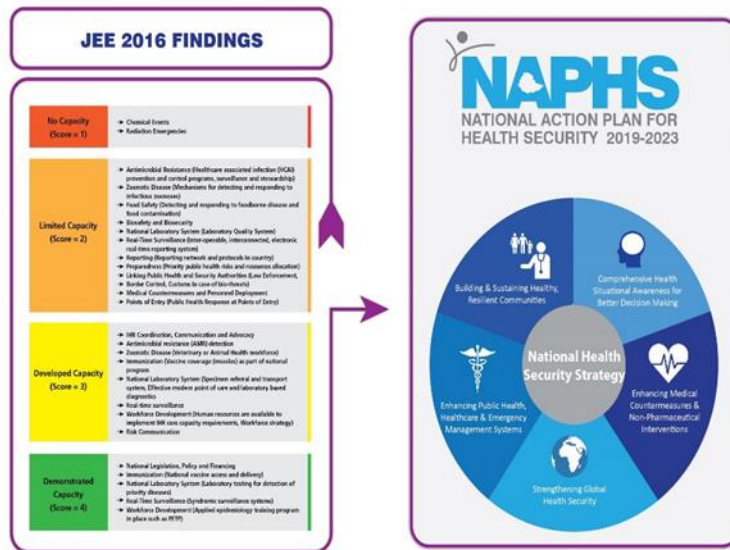
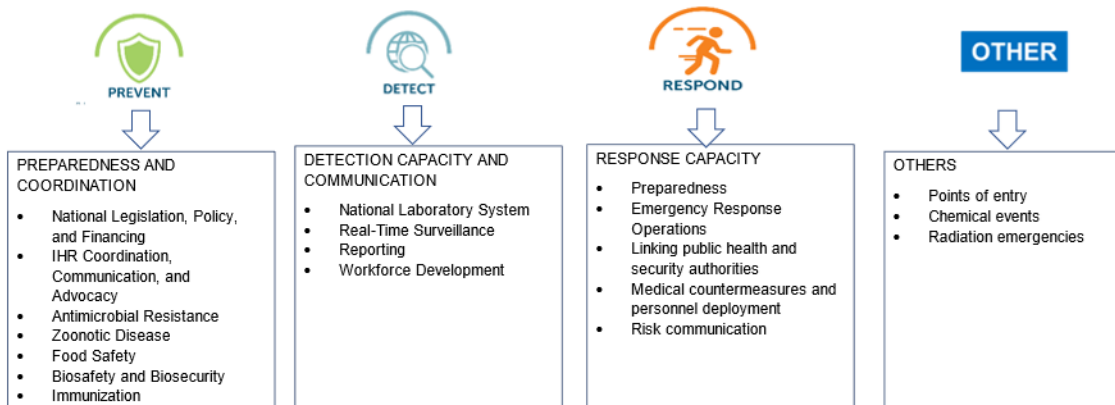


Fig 1. JEE to NAPHS

NAPHS document was developed by multisectoral teams from November 2017 to June 2018. The process involved frequent meetings with stakeholders from different sectors, planning and costing exercises with the involvement of relevant government sectors (with more than 80 experts involved), partners, and other NGOs. This a 5-year costed plan, launched on March 15th, 2019, with the aim of achieving health security in Ethiopia. Ethiopian NAPHS is structured in three pillars, 19 technical areas and over 500 specific activities which address the intended outputs and objectives of the plan.

NAPHS Strategic Framework and Implementation Approach

Goal: A Nation with Secured Capacity that Ensures Community Resilience for Public Health Threats and Their Impacts



IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF NAPHS BY 2023

The National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) stands as a cornerstone in Ethiopia's endeavor to fortify its health security architecture. Implemented from 2019 to 2023, NAPHS aimed to bolster the nation's preparedness and response capabilities in the face of health emergencies. As Ethiopia is in the preparation phase of the second strategic NAPHS spanning 2024 to 2028, it is imperative to reflect on the successes, challenges, and lessons gleaned from the inaugural phase. The past five years have witnessed concerted efforts to translate NAPHS objectives into tangible outcomes. Notably, the nation has witnessed a noticeable improvement in IHR capacities, underscored by enhanced capacity scores obtained from Joint External Evaluations (JEEs).

NAPHS Implementation Status, Jan 2024

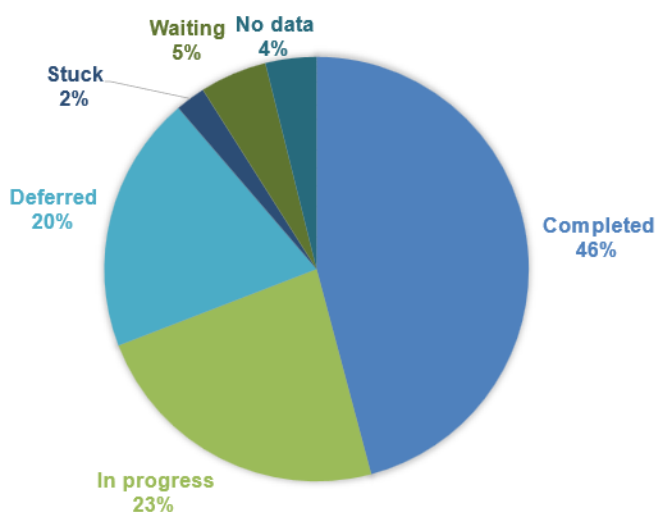
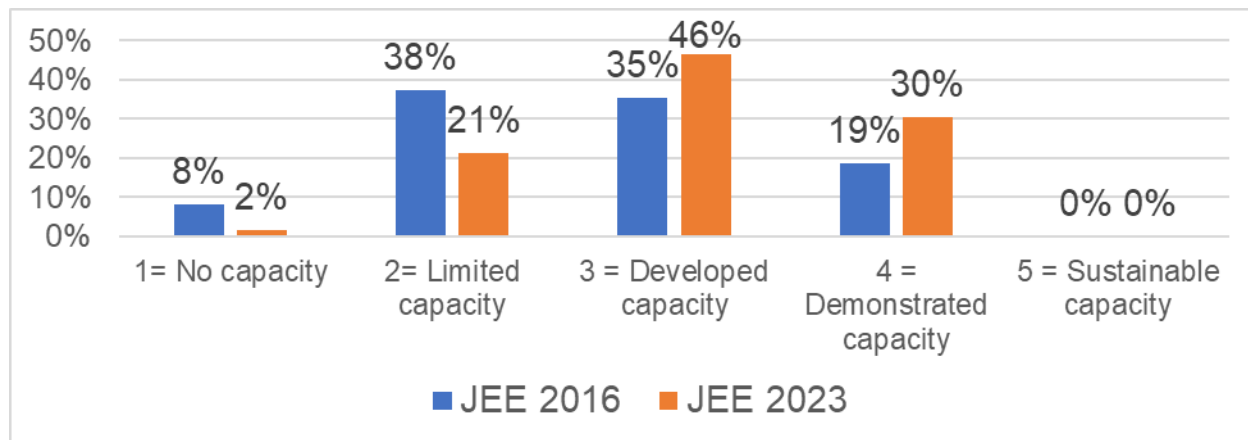


Fig. NAPHS implementation status, January 2024

The results of the Joint External Evaluation (JEE) in 2023 reveal significant improvements across various International Health Regulations (IHR) core capacity areas, with an overall score increasing from 52% in 2016 to 62% in 2023. This notable rise of over 10% underscores the collective efforts of multiple sectors and the successful execution of both global health security and national-level public health emergency management initiatives. Importantly, there has been a marked enhancement in IHR capacity levels from the 2016 to 2023 JEE assessments, indicating the positive impact of key health security interventions, notably the implementation of the National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS), on strengthening IHR implementation and the development of core capabilities. Despite notable achievements such as improvements in International Health Regulations (IHR) capacities and successful execution of over 46% of planned activities, challenges abound. Weak multisectoral governance, limited ownership and accountability, resource

constraints, and competing sectoral priorities have posed significant hurdles. However, these challenges have provided invaluable lessons for future iterations of NAPHS. Moving forward, addressing governance deficits, enhancing resource mobilization, and establishing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are crucial for Ethiopia to navigate the complex landscape of health security effectively.



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Ethiopia's Stride in IHR Capacities Evaluated Through SPAR

The Ethiopian SPAR 2024 workshop, held from January 24-26, 2024, in Hawassa town, aimed to prepare the state party Self-Assessment Annual Reporting for 2023 using the SPAR tool and a multi-sectoral One Health approach. Dr. Messay Hailu, Director General of the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), highlighted Ethiopia's commitment to enhancing health security capacities across various domains during the workshop's opening. He emphasized EPHI's efforts to strengthen International Health Regulation (IHR) capacities to prevent, detect, and respond to public health emergencies, underscoring the importance of collaboration among government sectors, partners, and donors. Dr. Melkamu Abte, EPHI's Deputy General Director, stressed the need for coordinated efforts among governmental, non-governmental, and developmental partners to build resilient public health management and response systems. Dr. Feyesa Regassa, IHR National Focal Point, emphasized the importance of national multi-sectoral health security capacity in IHR implementation and state parties' self-assessment annual reporting during his presentation. The workshop aimed to generate an evaluation strategic document of national health capacities based on State Parties Annual mandatory reporting, which will be reported to the World Health Assembly. Keynote speeches from

partners such as WHO, CDC, USAID, and RESOLVE TO SAVE LIVES Ethiopia reiterated their commitment to collaborative efforts with EPHI in advancing health security objectives.



Dr. Messay Hailu, EPHI Director General delivering an opening speech



Dr. Melkamu Abte, EPHI-DDG and Dr. Feyesa Regassa IHR-NFP at SPAR workshop delivering a speech.



Forging Collaboration: Ethiopia's One Health Stakeholder Meeting for Sustainability & Accountability

Ethiopia recently convened a pivotal One Health stakeholders' meeting dedicated to deliberating on the sustainability and accountability of all sectors in advancing the objectives of One Health initiatives. Dr. Getachew Tollera, Deputy Director General of the Ethiopia Public Health Institute (EPHI), underscored the imperative of collective efforts and collaboration across sectors for the successful implementation of One Health practices nationwide. Emphasizing the necessity of multisectoral collaboration and a multidisciplinary approach in International Health Regulation (IHR) activities, Dr. Getachew highlighted the pivotal role of coordination by EPHI, as mandated by the recent 529/2023 regulation. The meeting saw the establishment of key bodies including the One Health Advisory Committee and One Health Technical Working Group and proposed for the establishment of One Health Ministerial Task Force, focused on providing strategic direction on IHR/One implementation including addressing critical areas such as zoonotic diseases, food safety, and antimicrobial resistance. With participation from diverse stakeholders including government health sectors, universities, research institutes, partners, and other relevant entities, the meeting signaled a collective commitment to fostering collaboration and accountability in advancing Ethiopia's One Health agenda.



Collaborative Synergy: Advancing Public Health Emergency Management in Ethiopia through Government-Partner Partnerships

Highlighting the pivotal role of coordination and collaboration in successfully managing public health crises, the Ethiopia Public Health Institute (EPHI)- Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) and Resolve to Save Lives, convened a conference in Addis Ababa. The gathering brought together stakeholders involved in public health emergency management programs to underscore the critical importance of cooperation among diverse entities for national-level success. Dr. Melkamu Abeta, Deputy Director General of EPHI, emphasized the need for strengthened coordination to ensure a unified and community-centered response to safeguard Ethiopia's health security. He called for optimized collaboration between water and sanitation authorities, emergency response stakeholders, and other relevant sectors, expressing gratitude for past cooperation while urging enhanced and sustained teamwork in the future. W/z. Neima Zenu, Capacity Building Director, reiterated the organization's commitment to fostering an enabling environment for collaboration, facilitating streamlined efforts across sectors, and pooling resources effectively. The conference featured discussions on outbreak and response updates, health cluster developments, and future priorities in public health emergency management, with participation from various donors, and partners. The overarching goal remains to ensure the efficient and effective management of public health emergencies through concerted collaborative efforts. The workshop concluded with an agreement to hold quarterly meetings, with commitments from partners and donors to provide ongoing support.



Building Emergency Response Capacities: Certification of Second AVoHC SURGE Trainee Cohort in Ethiopia

The second cohort of the Ethiopian National AVoHC SURGE training concluded with the certification of 92 multi-disciplinary experts on December 8, 2023. The trainees underwent intensive training aimed at enhancing their emergency response skills over the 33 days. Dr. Mesay Hailu, Director General of the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI), highlighted EPHI's recent reforms in Public Health Emergency Management aimed at improving response capabilities. Dr. Melkamu Abte, Deputy Director General of EPHI, congratulated the trainees and urged them to continue developing their skills in emergency response. Dr. Abrham Tefera, Director of the Federal Police Health Directorate, emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts between EPHI and the Federal Police, in line with existing agreements. Dr. Patrick Abok from the World Health Organization (WHO) praised the impact of the training, noting that over 60% of previous graduates have been deployed to response activities. The program aims to train 3000 experts from 17 African countries, with Ethiopia leading the way by certifying 190 experts. Trainees were drawn from various regions and sectors, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to building emergency response capacity.



Strengthening Infection Prevention & Control Program

The Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Program Strengthening Advocacy Workshop was conducted with the objective of advocating for the role of IPC and getting commitment from stakeholders to be able to establish a dedicated IPC unit at the national level and domestic financing in the Addis Ababa and Sidama regions for their IPC program. Dr. Abas Hassan, LEO for innovation and quality improvement, mentioned in his opening speech that the National IPC Program has

national IPC technical guidelines, and other related national IPC guidelines.

He also stated that the best success of the national IPC program is securing a dedicated budget line for IPC in collaboration with MOF (Ministry of Finance), and thus the national IPC program is getting stronger from time to time even though there is a lot to be done to change the IPC practice in healthcare facilities. He affirmed his commitment that his team will extend their support to the

accomplished remarkable achievements like developing national IPC strategy,

subnational level on the advocacy efforts of dedicated budget for IPC.



Addressing Rabies: A Crucial Training Initiative by the Ethiopian Public Health Institute

Rabies remains a significant public health concern, as highlighted by the Ethiopian Public Health Institute's Bacterial, Parasitic, and Zoonosis Research Directorate. Dr. Geremew Tassew, Director of the Directorate, emphasized the importance of ongoing training initiatives during the program's opening, urging participants to disseminate their knowledge and take action to control and prevent rabies in their respective regions. Dr. Yimer Mulugeta, Senior Researcher and Zoonotic Diseases Research Team Lead, underscored the training's alignment with national action plans, aiming to strengthen capacity toward rabies elimination by 2030.

Participants engaged in discussions covering various aspects of rabies, including transmission, symptoms, and management challenges, with contributions from the Ministry of Agriculture, EPHI's Public Health Emergency Management, and Vaccine Production. The training, attended by Health Extension Workers, Human Rabies Vaccine Providers, and Animal Health Assistants from multiple regions, took place in Adama town from January 15–17, 2024. Participants were awarded certificates of recognition and received the Multisectoral Zoonotic Disease Outbreak Investigation Guideline as part of the program's conclusion.



Strengthening Preparedness: Ethiopia's National Chemical, Biological, and Radio Nuclear Simulation Exercise

The Ethiopian Public Health Institute's (EPHI) Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) spearheaded the Ethiopia National Chemical, Biological, and Radio Nuclear Technical Working Group Simulation Exercise from December 4–5, 2023, at the EPHI's Training Center. Dr. Melkamu Abte, Deputy Director General of EPHI, emphasized the workshop's objective of enhancing the technical knowledge and skills of the national cross-government Chemical, Biological, and Radio Nuclear (CBRN) Technical Working Group. This included simulating realistic scenarios to improve understanding of chemical risks and responses, informing future strategies. Mr. Eyob Getachew, Former CBRN Incident Surveillance and Response Case Team Lead, highlighted the exercise's goal of identifying gaps in multi-agency response to chemical events and improving coordination for efficient and effective future responses. The workshop concluded with participants receiving certificates, marking a milestone in enhancing Ethiopia's preparedness for chemical incidents



Efforts to Address Antimicrobial Drug Resistance

The increasing resistance of microbes to antimicrobial drugs poses a significant global problem, causing severe harm to human, animal, crop, and environmental health. To address this issue, the International Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week was celebrated internationally for the ninth time and for the eighth time in our country, taking place in November 2024.

Dr. Wubshet Zewde, Lead Executive of Animal Health and Veterinary Public Health, emphasized that the resistance of antimicrobial drugs by microbes not only affects the health of humans and animals in our country but also has widespread implications for crop and environmental health. He highlighted the urgent need for preventive measures and mentioned that various activities are being undertaken to combat this problem.



Dr. Wubshet pointed out that the global impact of this issue is profound, with over 750,000 deaths occurring annually worldwide. If no action is taken to mitigate the problem, the number of deaths could reach 10 million by 2050. During the event, participants engaged in extensive discussions on research articles and reports addressing the adaptation of antimicrobial drugs by germs. They shared ideas, raised questions, and achieved a collective understanding on the matter. The collective effort to combat antimicrobial resistance is crucial to safeguarding public health and the well-being of animals, crops, and the environment. By raising awareness, promoting research, and fostering collaboration, societies can work towards effective strategies and solutions to address this global challenge.

Dogs & Anthrax Vaccination

Rabies is one of the diseases that affects not only humans but also directly attacks animals. Hereby, to eradicate this problem and prevent the Ethiopian wolf from rabies, and decrease CDV, vaccination was given for 1,421 domestic dogs in Bale Mountains National Park adjacent kebeles.

Furthermore, in the five kebeles of Jana-mora Worda, located in the Simien Mountains National Park, cattle vaccinations were conducted to prevent anthrax from harming wild animals. Fifty thousand cattle received vaccinations under this scheme.

Additionally, throughout the fiscal year, the lead executive for wildlife research and development at the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority evaluated each of the organization's protected regions and gathered information on the health of the wildlife. During the evaluation, deceased wild animals were discovered in various parks, including one Ethiopian wolf reported by CDV, three Burchell's zebras, and one ostrich each from Bale Mountains National Park, Nech Sar National Park, and Abjita Shala Lakes National Park.

PHOTO GALLERY



Efforts Intensify to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance



One health sectorial meeting



Addressing Rabies: Multisectoral workshop

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