Web-based training packages to enhance evidence-informed policy-making for health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Mehrnaz Kheirandish1*, Nicole Rendell1, Roberta Tosques1, Manal Elzalabany2, Arash Rashidian1

1 Division of Science, Information and Dissemination, WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, Cairo, Egypt

2 WHO Health Emergency Program, WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, Cairo, Egypt

Abstract

Background
To ensure that health policies are appropriate, effective and cost-effective, they need to be based on sound evidence. WHO aims for the institutionalization of use of evidence in policy-making for health, through supporting the establishment of the required processes, structures and capacities at national level. To streamline capacity building efforts, key resources available internationally have been identified, and categorized to provide policy makers, policy developers and researchers with high quality selection of training opportunities, in the area of Evidence Informed Policy-Making.

Methods
Following an assessment of the priority needs of countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, through regular consultations with Member States, a series of key works have been identified, to inform an initial search strategy. By using these key words, a range of online databases were searched for relevant training materials. The materials were then shortlisted, based on quality, relevance, and ease of access.

Results
A repository of over 150 training materials was created and categorized under 13 thematic areas, which became collections of smaller training packages. A guiding flowchart was created, to provide a recommended training route, through a series of relevant questions that lead the users through the available training materials.

Conclusions
The EIPM training package is a collection of publicly available international resources, that serves as an effective and efficient way to readily provide users with practical resources. By using existing training programs, this web-based resource is an efficient and cost-effective way for capacity building, particularly for low- and middle-income countries, as it is easily accessible and free-of-charge. WHO advocates the use of this unique resources that brings together a wealth of knowledge, developed by different teams across the globe.