

# WHO's role in response to COVID-19 pandemic: global and regional perspectives

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Online seminar hosted by the School of Public Health  
Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Iran

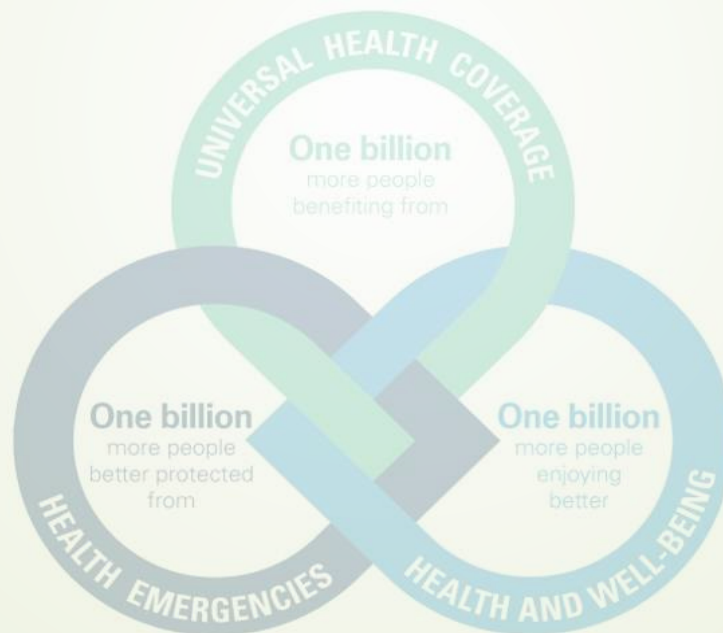
4 May 2020  
Tehran,  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
14–17 October 2019

# Outline

- WHO roles in support of countries
- International Health Regulations (2005)
  - PHEIC – Public Health Emergency of International Concern
  - Pandemic
- COVID-19 solidarity in strategic response to the pandemic
- Provision of recommendation for action
- Assessing the situation and country response
- Evidence generation, appraisal and synthesis
- Service and supply support

# WHO transformational shift

WHO Results Framework is one of the transformational shifts of WHO and aims to collectively measure impact, track progress toward the health-related SDGs and deliver on the triple billion targets



## Mission

**Promote health – keep the world safe – serve the vulnerable**

## Strategic Priorities (and goals)

**Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages by :**

**Achieving universal health coverage** – 1 billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage

**Addressing health emergencies** – 1 billion more people better protected from health emergencies

**Promoting healthier populations** – 1 billion more people enjoying better health and well-being

## Strategic shifts

**Stepping up leadership**—diplomacy and advocacy; gender equality, health equity and human rights; multisectoral

**Drive public health impact in every country**—differentiated approach based on capacity and vulnerability

**Policy dialogue**  
—to develop systems of the future

**Strategic support**  
—to build high performing systems

**Technical assistance**  
—to build national institutions

**Service delivery**—to fill critical gaps in emergencies

**Focus global public goods on impact**—normative guidance and agreements; data, research and innovation

← Mature health system

→ Fragile health system

## The WHO Transformation Agenda

## Organizational shifts

- **Measure impact** to be accountable and manage for results
- **Reshape operating model** to drive country, regional and global impacts
- **Transform partnerships, communications and financing** to resource the strategic priorities
- **Strengthen critical systems and processes** to optimize organizational performance
- **Foster culture change** to ensure a seamless, high-performing WHO

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# WHO COVID-19 strategic and response plans



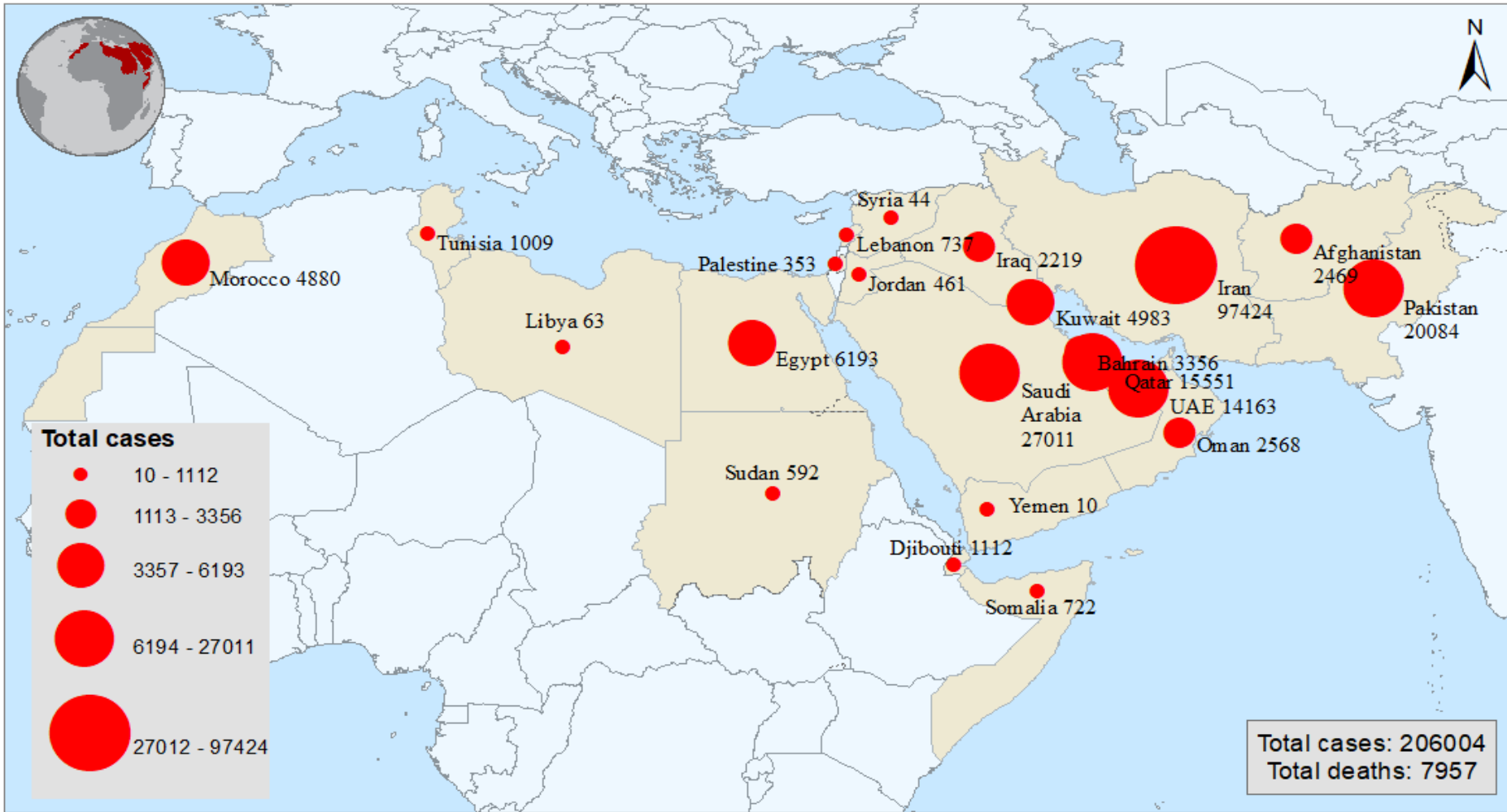
Scope of SPRP update includes:

- All pillars under the public health response for all countries  
+
- Maintaining essential health services as outlined in the “Health First” section of the Socio-Economic Response Plan  
+
- Full scope of health needs under the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for humanitarian settings

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# Distribution of COVID-19, confirmed cases and deaths in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) as of 3rd, May 2020, 07:00 PM (GMT+2)



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Data source: World Health Organization  
Map production: Health Emergency  
Information and Risk Assessment (HIM) Unit  
World Health Organization



# Global update of COVID-19 outbreak

03 May 2020 (6:00 pm)

## Cumulative

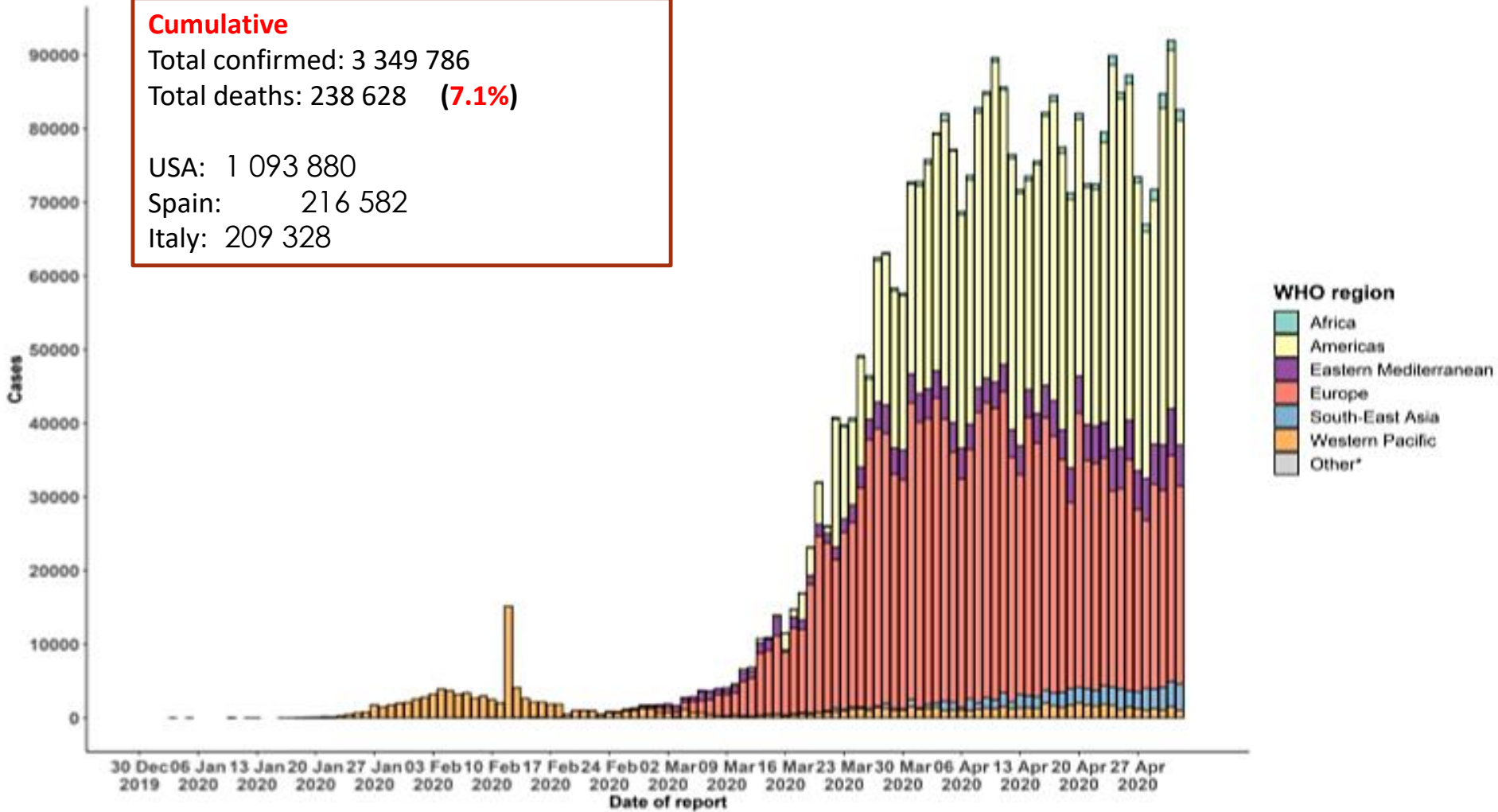
Total confirmed: 3 349 786

Total deaths: 238 628 (7.1%)

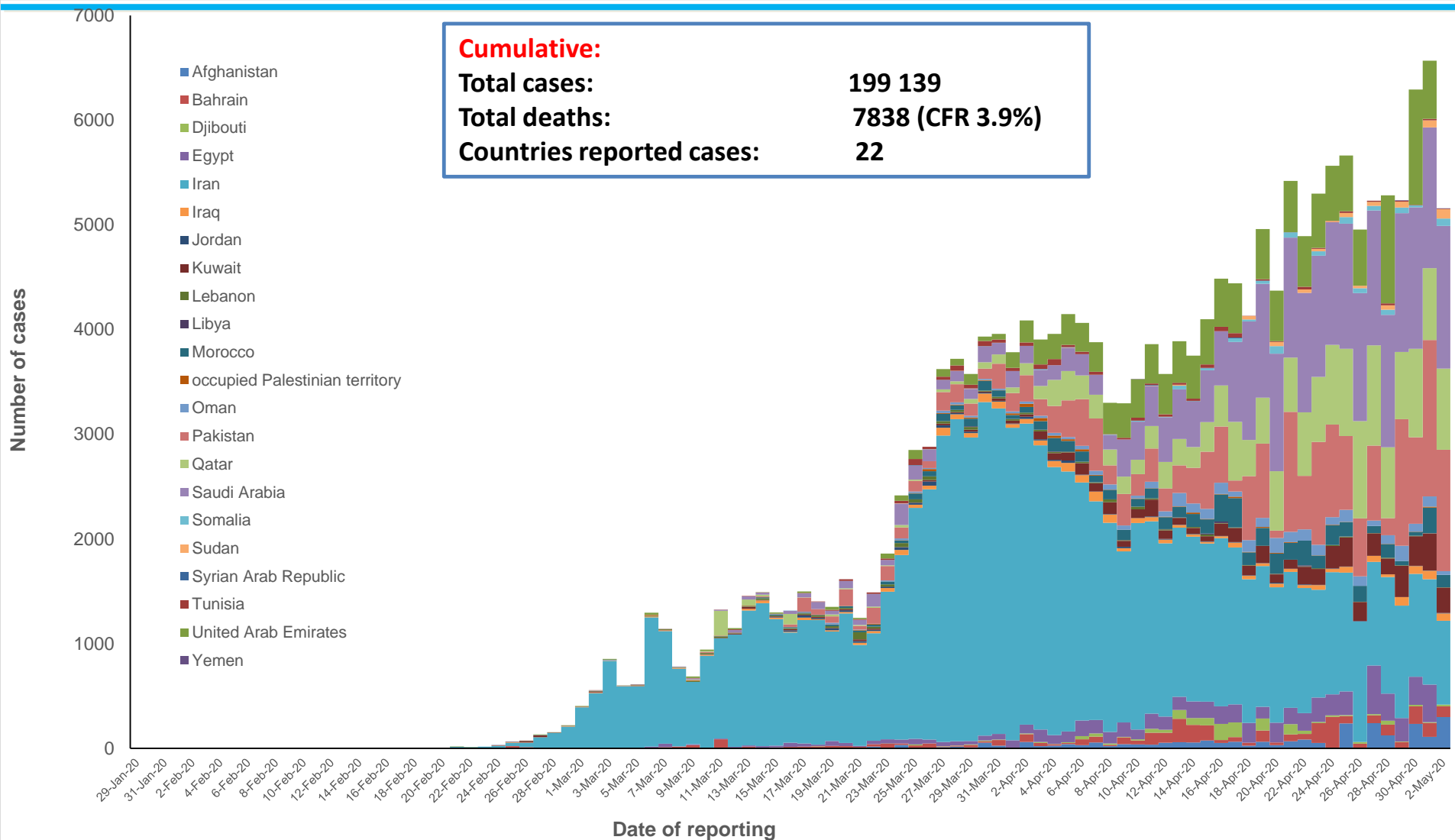
USA: 1 093 880

Spain: 216 582

Italy: 209 328

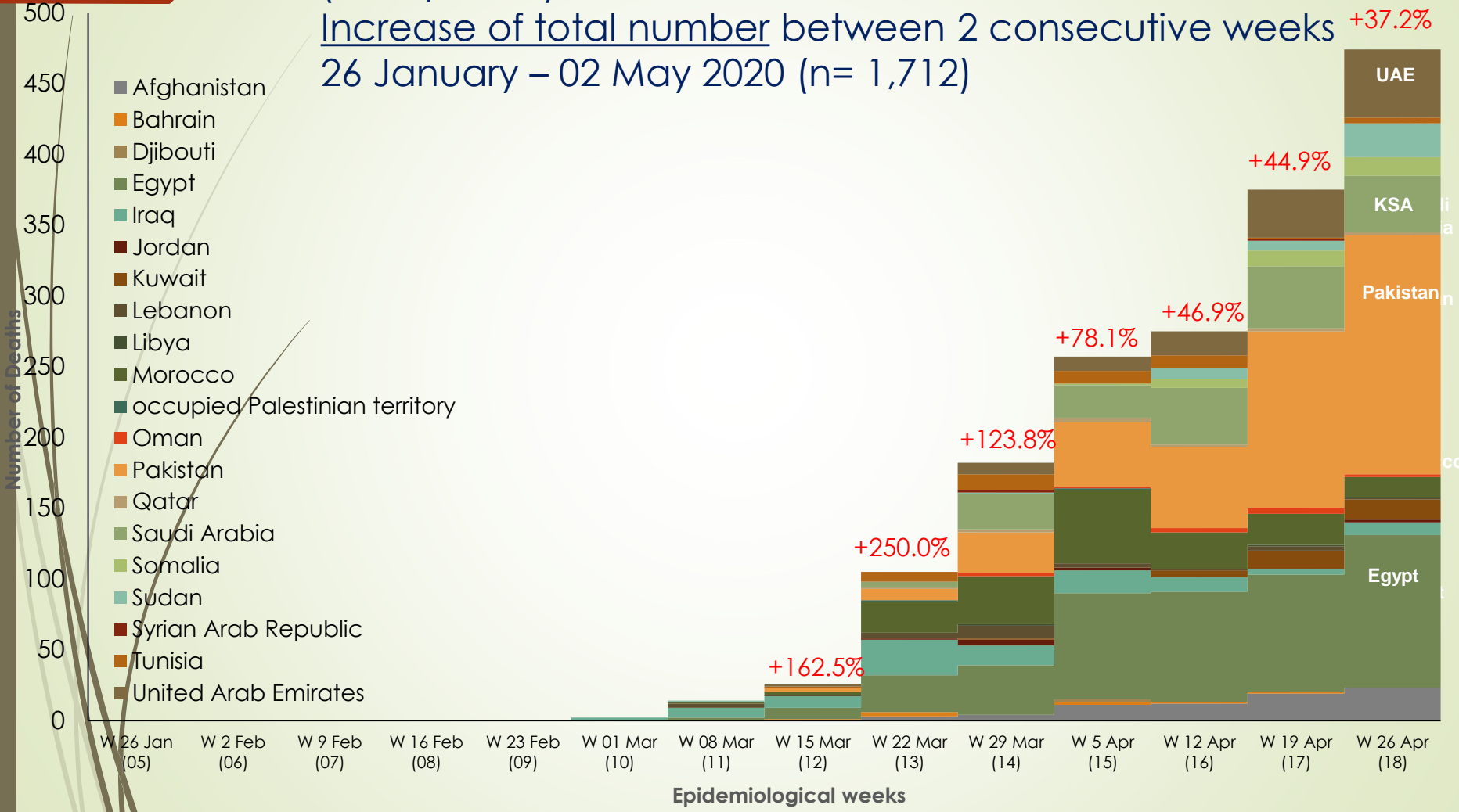


# Daily distribution of cases of COVID-19 in EMR countries 29 January to 02 May 2020 (6:00 PM)



# Weekly distribution of COVID-19 deaths in EMR countries (except Iran)

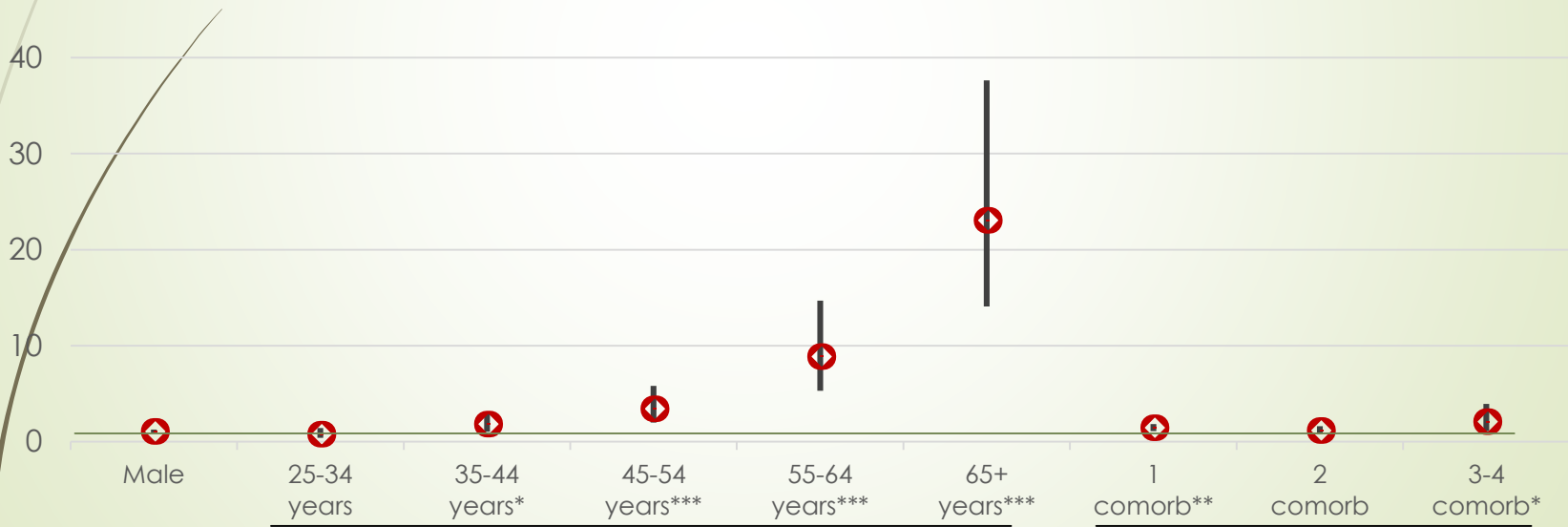
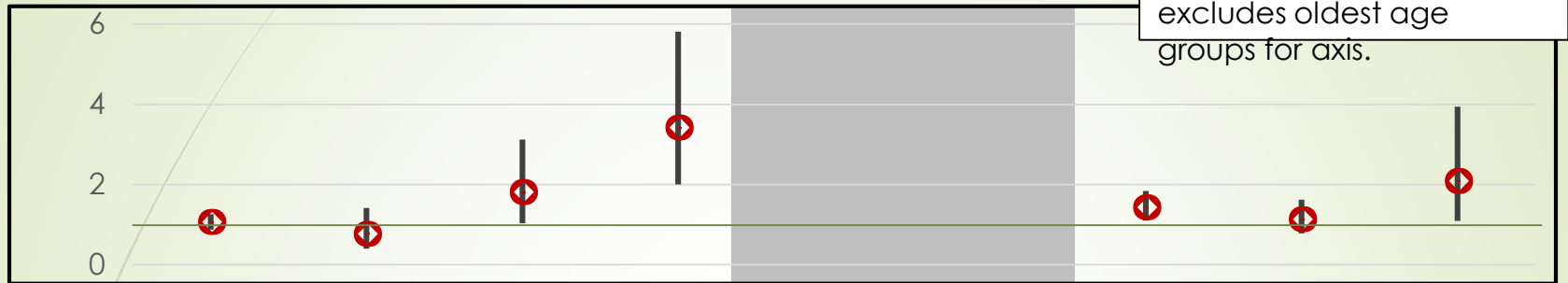
Increase of total number between 2 consecutive weeks  
26 January – 02 May 2020 (n= 1,712) +37.2%



# COVID-19 Risk Factors for Death, EMR, 1 May 2020 (n=14,224)

Adjusted Risk Ratio (95% CI)

Same as below but excludes oldest age groups for axis.



Age compared with <25 years

Compared with 0 comorbidities

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

# EMRO's Decision to Work on Modeling COVID-19



Examples of questions raised by policy makers in EMR countries:



How many people are expected become infected? Of which, how many may become hospitalized? How many may become critical? How many may die?



How effective will various NPIs be in reducing spread? What would be the impact of removing one intervention at a certain point (e.g. when to lift lockdown measures)?



How much hospital/ICU beds and essential supplies/equipment would be needed?



How many healthcare workers per cadre would be needed?



What would the economic impact be?

Driven by increasing requests from EMR countries for data-guided decision making and resource forecasting

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# COVID-19 and research

- Response to the unknowns
- Demand and need for research and evidence
- WHO briefs and recommendations
- Priorities for research in the region. WHO call for proposals:
- <http://www.emro.who.int/rpc/rpc-news/research-in-priority-areas-of-public-health-20202021.html>

# Ongoing RCTs or clinical intervention studies linked to COVID-19

- WHO multi-country **Solidarity Trial**
- Registered in WHO International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP) and accredited registries
- (update 23 April)
  - Egypt 2(1); Iran 95 (over 45 CTs); Pakistan 1
  - China 610 (over half interventional); Italy 17; UK 10; France 21; USA 33
  - Multi-country ~20
- Clinical trials include many medicines of potential use, as well as interventions aimed at signs and symptoms and milder cases
- Many other studies. E.g. over 650 studies received ethical clearance in Iran
- Adhering to the principles of research ethics
- Burden on ethical committees and systems

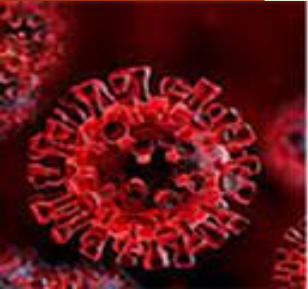


# WHO 'Unity Studies' formerly known as Early Investigation Studies

- WHO provided **Four Early Investigation Protocols (WHO Unity Studies)**.
- Aiming for better understanding of unknown factors related to COVID-19
  - **understanding transmission patterns**
  - **Severity**
  - **clinical features**
  - **risk factors**
  - **+**
  - **Environmental contamination**
- Protocols for rapid and systematic collection and sharing of data
- Facilitate aggregation, tabulation and analysis across different settings

# COVID-19 Innovations in the EMR

- ▶ Early detection, lab capacity and diagnosis
- ▶ Case finding and contact tracing
- ▶ Mitigation strategies and social/physical distancing
- ▶ Personal protection of public and health care professionals
- ▶ Advocacy and utilization of digital technology in disease prevention
- ▶ Availability and provision of medical oxygen at different levels
- ▶ Supply chain management



# Coronavirus (Covid-19)

*Stay Safe .... Stay Connected*

Science, Information and Dissemination



HEALTH  
KNOWLEDGE  
MANAGEMENT  
PORTAL

- **Health Knowledge Management Portal** is being visualized and works to support the “**Incident Management Support Team (IMST) COVID-19**” by identifying, searching, evaluating, retrieving, sharing and disseminating of reliable and updated information which are related to Coronavirus (COVID-19) by using a pre-defined list of relevant topics/keywords of COVID-19 from the following per-defined multiple information resources, e.g. CDC; Cochrane; Nature; ScienceDirect; Oxford Academic Press; Wiley Online Library; IMEMR; IRIS, PMC; PubMed, ...etc.
- **KM Portal:** <https://kmport.emro.who.int>

# Coronavirus (Covid-19)

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KNOWLEDGE  
MANAGEMENT  
PORTAL

## COVID-19 | Recent Publications



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### Recent Publications

Last update 1 hour ago

- PubMed** The Role of the Global Health Development Eastern... [Read more](#)  
Source: PubMed  
JMR Public Health Surveill. 2020 Mar 27;6(1):e18503. doi: 10.2196/18503.  
Publication Type: Journal Article  
Keywords: COVID-19  
Countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan
- PubMed** The first COVID 19 case in Afghanistan acquired fr... [Read more](#)  
Source: PubMed  
Lancet Infect Dis. 2020 Mar 23:S1473 3099 20 30231 0. doi: 10.1016/j.jid.2020.03.019. Online ahead of print.  
Publication Type: Journal Article  
Keywords: COVID-19  
Countries: Afghanistan, Jordan
- PubMed** Preliminary estimation of the novel coronavirus di... [Read more](#)  
Source: PubMed  
Int J Infect Dis. 2020 Mar 11:S1201 6712 20 30138 7. doi: 10.1016/j.ijid.2020.03.019. Online ahead of print.  
Publication Type: Journal Article  
Keywords: COVID-19  
Countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Oman, Pakistan

## KM Portal: COVID-19 - New Feeds



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Filter Reset Search Q Search

### Sources

- Databases
- Publications
- Websites
- RSS

### Search results (333 results)

- News** Covid 19 worldwide we need precise data by age group and sex urgently [Latest Headlines - BMJ](#)  
Accurate and interpretable data are essential in guiding our approach to the covid 19 pandemic Basic epidemiological principles are currently being flouted 1 Mostly as in your article 2 case
- News** Covid 19 PHE upgrades PPE advice for all patient contacts with risk of infection [Latest Headlines - BMJ](#)  
New guidelines on use of personal protective equipment PPE by healthcare workers significantly expands the potential use of eye protection and fluid

This is an automated Line Search by using pre-defined keywords in order to capture all COVID-19 publications from pre-defined reliable information resources e.g. PubMed, Cochrane Library, CDC, PMC, ...etc.

This is an RSS-Feed based on pre-defined line search and/or query in order to capture all news and updated COVID-19 information from reliable information resources e.g. WHO News, BMJ Latest Headlines, PubMed, ...etc.

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# Other areas of extensive WHO support for countries

- Diagnostics Tests
- PPEs
- Ventilators
- Oxygen related needs and resources
  
- Coordination of donors and supporting countries resources

# Appendix - EMR RPPH Call for Research Proposals on COVID-19

## **Epidemiology & Surveillance:**

- Epidemiology (incidence, mortality rates, etc.) of COVID-19 associated with NCDs, Mental Health and Neurological and Substance Use and NCD risk factors in EMR countries
- Identification and handling high risk groups in EMR populations
- Role of wild-life, domestic and campaign animals in transmission of COVID-19 to human.
- Can COVID-19 be transmitted in indoor non healthcare settings environments?
- Physical distancing measures: impact on flattening the COVID-19 epi curve
- Risk factors for severity of COVID-19 infection, including co-morbidity, medications, tobacco use, source of infection (case control study)
- Linkages between tobacco use, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) and COVID-19 in the EMR.
- Impact of COVID-19 on people living with malnutrition in low income countries.

- Geospatial modelling to forecast the geographic distribution of COVID with EMR countries
- Implementing multisectoral interventions for addressing COVID-19 risk factors in the context of Healthy Cities
- Use of machine learning in monitoring and evaluation of the response to COVID-19
- Assessment and mitigation of ethical challenges in research in pandemic situation

## **Community engagement, infection prevention and control**

- Role of risk communication and community engagement in responding to COVID-19 Infection prevention and control measures in reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health care in the context of COVID-19
- How efficient is the disinfection of streets and open spaces?

# EMR RPPH Call for Research Proposals on COVID-19

## Health Systems & Services

- Comparing essential / basic health services (both quantity and quality) during COVID-19 pandemic against needs provided to populations in Fragility, Conflict & Violence (FCV) settings
- Acceptability and effectiveness of remote delivery of Mental Health and Neurological and Substance Use Disorders services
- Health system strengthening for better response and improved preparedness in the context of COVID-19.
- Models of care and services (re)organization to ensure continuity of services (e.g. maternal and child, NCDs, immunizations, etc.) during emergencies, including outbreaks and pandemics.
- Expanding Universal Health Coverage, ensuring leaving no one behind, e.g. refugees, IDPs, migrants and other vulnerable groups, including during emergencies and outbreaks.
- Use of cause of death and/or routine health information system data for identification and validation of COVID-19 cases and outbreak control

- Decision making processes at national level and use of evidence in pandemic situation
- Effectiveness and feasibility of using digital health solutions in response to COVID-19 needs

## Disaster preparedness and response

- IHR (2005) implementation and COVID-19: how linked they are
- Enhancing country preparedness: lessons learned from the COVID-19
- Assessing the COVID-19 disaster management/response practices, experiences and capturing lessons earned.
- Challenges in response to outbreaks/epidemics/pandemics in areas affected by conflicts with more than one governing authority.
- Social media and their role in early warning, alert and response



# EMR RPPH Call for Research Proposals on COVID-19

## Disaster preparedness and response

- Transmission risks and patterns of COVID-19 in quarantine centres in countries of the Region.
- Effectiveness of contact tracing models in countries of the Region.
- Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on countries with protracted emergencies.
- Assessment of effectiveness of EWARN system in detecting and responding to COVID-19.
- Performance of point of entry surveillance systems in detecting COVID-19.
- Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices study on acceptance and adherence to non-pharmaceutical public health interventions for COVID-19 containment, prevention and control.
- Monitoring response for the COVID-19 pandemic in the Region.
- Molecular and serological investigation of COVID-19 infected patients to detect multiple shedding routes.
- Detection of IgG and neutralizing antibodies against COVID-19 among recovered cases of COVID-19 (longitudinal cohort studies).
- Detection of asymptomatic carrier state of COVID-19 through national screening programmes.
- Assessment of COVID-19 infection prevention and control practices and measures among health care workers.
- Physicians' knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding clinical management of COVID-19 cases.
- Prediction models for assessment of health care capacity to manage COVID-19 cases in the Region.
- IHR (2005) implementation and COVID-19: how linked they are
- Enhancing country preparedness: lessons learned from the COVID-19
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