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# Update on Progress of Workforce Development in Saudi Arabia

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**Ministry of Health**

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Saudi FETP Dr.Almudarra

# Saudi Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP)

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- ◆ The Saudi FETP was established and started accepting trainees since 1989
- ◆ On completion of two years of training, trainees are awarded a Diploma in Field Epidemiology
  - Awarded by King Saud University College of Medicine – Riyadh
  - Recognized as equivalent to a Masters Degree by Saudi Council for Health Specialties, Ministry of Health and Bureau of Civil Services

# Saudi Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP)

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- ◆ So far:
  - 27 batches have already graduated from Saudi FETP and 2 batches are under training
  - In total: 167 trainees have completed training and are working within various Health Regions in the country
  - 9 graduates were on scholarship from the Ministry of Health in Oman

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# **Executive Report of Workforce Development in Saudi Arabia**

**December 2016**

# Trained Field Epidemiologist – Human

## At least one Field Epidemiologist per 200,000 population

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→→→ Slightly less than one per 200,000 population

Since its establishment, Saudi FETP trained	167 Field Epidemiologists (Physicians & Non-Physicians)
In 2016, field epidemiologists who graduated from Saudi FETP	8 (Physicians) 20 under training
Saudi Board in Community Medicine (Field Epidemiology track) graduated	52 (Physicians) 95 under training
King Saud University MPH (Field Epidemiology track) graduated	14 graduates, 6 in 2016 21 under training (Physicians & Non-Physicians)

# Trained Field Epidemiologist – Human

## At least one Field Epidemiologist per 200,000 population

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- ◆ A further number of Saudi Field / Applied Epidemiology graduates have been trained at:
  - National Guard School of Public Health
  - King Abdul Aziz University
  - Alfaisal University
  - Other international universities
- ◆ The exact number of Field / Applied epidemiologists working in Saudi public health sector is not known and needs to be assessed

# Trained Field Epidemiologist – Human

## At least one Field Epidemiologist per district

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- ◆ Although this exact information is unknown, the distribution of most FETP graduates working over different regions of the Kingdom is available
- ◆ At least one Field Epidemiologist is working at a public health setting in each health region (district)
- ◆ Distribution of graduates of national and international universities still needs to be assessed

# Trained Field Epidemiologist – Human Continued Education Mechanism

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- ◆ In 2016, Saudi FETP conducted 10 short courses (5 days each) in 5 major topics:
  1. Basic Epidemiology
  2. Epi-Info software
  3. Outbreak investigation
  4. Surveillance
  5. Research methodology
  
- ◆ Across the country for 150 health care workers Physicians, Non-Physicians and Epidemic surveillance officers
  
- ◆ No specific continued education mechanism exists for trained field epidemiologist



# Trained Field Epidemiologist – Human Placement of Mentors

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- ◆ Saudi FETP was established with the collaboration of Saudi MOH, King Saud University and CDC, USA
- ◆ It has a distinct design as compared to most of other FETPs across the world, Instead of identifying and placing mentors in the regions, a more centralized approach was chosen
- ◆ All mentors have been identified in FETP, KSU and MOH
- ◆ Although this design worked successfully in the past, it needs to be updated

# Trained Field Epidemiologist – Human

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**Level 4 (Demonstrated Capacity)**

# FETP or other Applied Epidemiology Training program in place

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- ◆ Other Programs which provide post-graduate degrees in Epidemiology include:
  1. The Saudi Council for Health Specialties supervises the Saudi Board in Community Medicine in 6 regions (Jeddah, Riyadh, Abha, AlMadinah, Taif and Makkah)
  2. King Saud University, Riyadh (MPH)
  3. King AbdulAziz University, Jeddah (MSc Epidemiology)
  4. King Saud Bin AbdulAziz National Guard, Riyadh (MPH)
  5. Alfaisal University, Riyadh (MPH)

# FETP or other Applied Epidemiology Training program in place

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- ◆ There are also some Universities that provide undergraduate Programs in Epidemiology, such as:
  1. AlQassim University, Qassim (Males)
  2. Princess Noura Bint AbdulRahman University, Riyadh (Females)

**Level 4 (Sustainable Capacity)**

# Workforce Strategy

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1. Health workforce strategy exist
  2. Public Health workforce strategy exist
  3. Public Health workforce strategy regularly implemented, reviewed, tracked and reported
- ◆ This information may be available but is not widely shared
  - ◆ This component of Detect-5, the development and follow-up of national health and public health workforce strategy, lies within the domain of **Division of Planning and Development**

# Workforce Strategy

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- ◆ Although we believe that the development, review and implementation of the workforce strategy to accommodate targets of GHSA need to be through a collaborative approach

**Level 2 (Limited capacity)**

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# 2017 Action Plan

# Trained Field Epidemiologist – Human

At least one Field Epidemiologist per 200,000 population  
& At least one Field Epidemiologist per district

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Action Plan	Proposed Full Period
Identify all graduate/ postgraduate persons with training/qualification in Field Epidemiology / Applied Epidemiology / Public Health working in public health sector(s) of Saudi Arabia with their placement information and job description	2 years (Work in progress)
Identify the number of Saudis studying abroad in subjects of Field/Applied Epidemiology/ Public Health through concerned authorities	
Develop a registry of all such personnel for follow-up, monitoring and continued education	
Identify regions/districts with shortage of trained staff	



# Trained Field Epidemiologist – Human

## Continued Education Mechanism and Placement of Mentors

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Action Plan	Proposed Full Period
Development and organization of short courses on advanced methods in Field Epidemiology, on periodic basis	A yearly plan
Assessment of the number of Saudi Field/ Applied Epidemiology graduates that have been trained at different national governmental or private institutions and other international universities	1 year
Mechanism of placement of mentors in regions	6 months (Work in progress)

# FETP or other Applied Epidemiology Training program in place

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Action Plan	Proposed Full Period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue with the training of residents in Field Epidemiology, while focusing on enhancement of the quality of training</li><li>• Improve the quality of candidature for the FETP by better advertising to expand the pool of candidates</li><li>• Identify all the programs that provide training in Epidemiology over the country (both undergraduate and postgraduate)</li><li>• Develop collaboration between FETP and other programs providing training in Field / Applied Epidemiology to utilize the training resource efficiently and strengthen the overall training capability</li></ul>	Ongoing

# FETP or other Applied Epidemiology Training program in place

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Action Plan	Proposed Full Period
Work towards establishing a 1 year program for Field Epidemiology training for non-physician health care workers (in collaboration with Universities in the Kingdom, Department of training at MOH, and the Civil Bureau)	5 years
Develop short courses (3-6 months) in basic and intermediate Field Epidemiology training for health care workers (both physicians and non-physicians), in collaboration with Universities in the Kingdom, Department of training at MOH, and the Civil Bureau	

# FETP or other Applied Epidemiology Training program in place

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Action Plan	Proposed Full Period
Develop short courses (3-6 months) in basic and intermediate Field Epidemiology training for veterinarians, in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture, Universities in the Kingdom, Department of Training at MOH, and the Civil Bureau	2 years
Improving training by optimizing the mentor - resident ratio through hiring additional trained specialists and consultants in FETP	

# Workforce Strategy

Action Plan	Proposed Full Period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FETP will participate in the implementation of national Public Health workforce through development of trained manpower in Field Epidemiology, as mandated</li><li>• FETP will work with Civil Service Bureau, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance to streamline career tracks and provide befitting incentives for personnel trained in Field/Applied Epidemiology, to attract candidates and retain the trained manpower in positions where their knowledge and skills can be optimally used</li><li>• Establish incentives for recruitment of health professionals and maintenance of the workforce</li></ul>	5 years (Work in progress)

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# Thank You



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Saudi FETP Dr.Almudarra