

# Task force on Surveillance and early-warning systems

Progress report and prospects for  
future work

# Mandate from the First Meeting of the Parties (Geneva, 17-19 January 2007)

- (a) Prepare guidelines on surveillance, outbreak detection and early warning systems, contingency plans and capacity response, taking into account established WHO guidelines for adoption by the Parties at their second meeting:
- (b) Support the guidelines' implementation by providing assistance, upon request, to Parties and non-Parties through in-country missions (up to six missions should be organized in 2008-2009).

# 1° meeting of the task force

- At the Italian National Institute of Health, in Rome on 24-25 September 2007.
- The meeting was attended by representatives from Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Norway, Romania and Slovakia

# Work plan of the task force up to the second meeting of the Parties

- a) Questionnaire to define the state of the art on the surveillance systems on WRDs;
- b) Guidance materials (technical and policy guidelines);
- c) Scientific workshop;
- d) Assistance and in-country support.

# QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to accomplish the mandate we agreed to recognize the situation in the region in relation to existence, nature, reliability of surveillance systems, and their capability to capture data and information on WRDs and to react to outbreaks

# Questionnaire

Data and information from the questionnaire → basis of knowledge to:

- Identify critical areas/situations
- Define/estimate the burden of WRDs in the region (as second step)
- Define (tailored?) assistance and training programmes

# Questionnaire

## Data and information on :

- priority, emerging and locally important diseases;
- organization of the surveillance systems;
- laboratory capabilities;
- public information;
- outbreak detection capability;
- response capacity;
- training;
- databases and mapping/GIS resources

The questionnaire, as well as information on registration, access and compiling, has been sent to the Protocol's national focal points by the end of February

The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar displays the URL <http://cms2.iss.it/mod/questionnaire/view>. The page title is "Water\_Quest: Water surveillance". The browser's toolbar includes navigation buttons, a search box, and various utility icons. The main content area features a blue header with the text "Risorse Web" and a "Jump to..." dropdown menu. Below the header, a breadcrumb trail reads "SI.ISS > Water\_Quest > Questionnaires > Water surveillance", followed by an "Update this Questionnaire" button. A "Print Blank" button and the text "No responses" are also visible. The questionnaire content is enclosed in a white box with a dark blue header that reads "QUESTIONNAIRE ON WATER-RELATED DISEASE SURVEILLANCE". Below this, a sub-header reads "Questionnaire on water-related disease surveillance". A note states: "Take care: Mandatory questions are identified by \*". The first section is titled "1. General section". The first question, labeled "1.1\*", is "Is there a mandatory surveillance for any diseases in your country?". Below the question are two radio button options: "Yes" and "No". The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Internet" and a zoom level of "100%".

The questionnaire is available in the online version at the link: <http://cms2.iss.it/>

Info:  
[monicafrancesca.blasi@iss.it](mailto:monicafrancesca.blasi@iss.it)

...the questionnaire is also hosted in electronic format on a protected site of the Italian National Institute of Health (<http://cms2.iss.it/>)

The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS). The page title is "Qualità degli ambienti acquatici e acque di balneazione". The URL in the address bar is <http://www.iss.it/baaq/>. The page content includes a navigation menu, a search bar, and several sections: "Chi siamo", "Area di intervento", "Attività di ricerca", "Attività istituzionale", "Pubblicazioni", "Normativa", "Area riservata/Restricted area", and "Link". The "Area riservata/Restricted area" section is highlighted with a red box and contains the following text: "Quest'area è dedicata alle attività della Task Force 'Surveillance of waterborne diseases', nell'ambito del Protocollo Acque e Salute WHO-UNECE. In tale area sono condivisi documenti, dati, appuntamenti, workshop tra i Paesi partner. Possono accedere a tali informazioni soltanto gli utenti autorizzati." Below this section, there is a "Documenti relativi" section with two items: "QUESTIONNAIRE ON WRDs SURVEILLANCE .doc" (0.23 MBytes) and "QUESTIONNAIRE ON WRDs SURVEILLANCE .pdf" (0.16 MBytes). Both items are highlighted with a red box. At the bottom of the page, there is a feedback form with a "Invia" button and a "Torna ad inizio pagina [0]" link. The taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button and several open applications: Yahoo! Mail, Microsoft Outlook, Istituto Superiore di S..., and Microsoft Power...

# QUESTIONNAIRE REPLIES

- Only 11 countries sent back the filled questionnaire

Andorra 1

Czech Republic 2

Estonia 3

Finland 4

Hungary 5

Norway 6

Slovakia 7

Turkey 8

Germany 9

Armenia 10

Georgia 11



# Questionnaire

- Language barrier: the russian version is now available and has been sent to countries of russian language

# Preliminary analysis (first 8 replies)

- WRDs surveillance systems: generally they exist and are able in detecting and reporting WRDs
- Different organization in reporting WRDs
- Lack of information especially for rural areas (unregulated water-systems)
- Lack of information on possible WRDs due to bathing, shell-fish and crops consumption
- Lack of adequate information to the public
- Weakness in the response capacity
- Scarce use of database and mapping
- Request of training (4 out of 8)

# Guidance documents (technical and policy guidelines);

## **Technical guidelines (from Roger's slides)**

### Background

- Sub-regional programme for central Asia 2005
- Meeting of the Parties 2007
- Task Force on water-related disease surveillance 2007

# Contributors

- Germany (8)
- Hungary (1)
- Italy (1)
- Kyrgyzstan (1)
- Tajikistan (2)
- Turkmenistan (2)
- United Kingdom (2)
- United States (1)
- Uzbekistan (2)

# PART I POLICY GUIDELINES

**Practical guidelines to set up, implement and assess surveillance system on water related diseases**

- Problem definition
- Water safety plans
- Surveillance of water-related diseases
- Definition
- Setting up a wrd surveillance system
  - Surveillance at the local level
  - Surveillance at the regional level
  - Surveillance at the national level
- Functioning of surveillance systems
- Outbreak and response
- Specific problems of rural areas

# Part II: Technical guidance

- Setting up a surveillance system
- Water-related pathogens
- Monitoring strategies
- Chemical risks
- Water safety plans
- Essential epidemiology
- Specific methodological challenges
- Detection, investigation and reporting of outbreaks
- Essential surveillance
- Use of GIS systems

# Organizing aspects

- An Outbreak Management Team (OMT) should be installed at the Local Health Unit, under the headship of a Public Health Officer.
- The OMT should be composed of the Public Health Officer, representatives of the water work and sanitation, water department of the regional environmental agency, a specialist for hygiene and environmental medicine, representatives from the police.

# OMT main tasks

Take the responsibility of all the pertinent aspects in the territory in terms of:

- Organizing, improving the Surveillance system (preparedness, response, etc.) ;
- Applying the approach of the WSPs (not only for drinking waters)
- Reporting to political authorities in order to achieve improvements

# Scientific workshop(s): possible topics

- WRDs Surveillance Systems in different countries: how to learn from each other
- How to distinguish between food and water related diseases
- Virology in drinking-water supplies
- Relative weight in the burden of WRD of drinking waters, recreational waters, cultivated mollusk and irrigated crop.

# Assistance and training

- Some countries have already asked for external technical assistance (TZ).
- 4 out of the first 8 countries that replied to the questionnaire consider external assistance a need
- Training activities have not started and even been defined

# Future workplan

## Questionnaire

- Elaboration of a report on WRDs surveillance and early warning systems :
- Discussion and decisions on how to improve WRDs SEWSs (guidelines, assistance, training);
- Definition/estimate of the burden of WRDs in countries that have a specific surveillance system;
- Countries that have not replied to the questionnaire: how to achieve the most relevant information;

# Future workplan

- Guidance documents : they are ready  
(Policy guidelines need probably a further technical revision)
- They represent very useful tools for setting, implementing and assessing the WRDs Surveillance systems.
- Hence they should be approved, delivered, published as soon as possible.

# Future workplan

Final decision of the topics to be selected for the scientific work :

- WRDs Surveillance Systems in different countries: how to learn from each other, how to reach minimum sufficient targets in different situations
- Emerging WRDs and their

# Future workplan

Assistance and training:

- From technical and policy guidelines (but also other material) preparation of “standard” or specific material for assistance and training
- We are organizing the first visit for assistance upon request by TZ

# 2° meeting of the TF

- 1) Overview and discussion on the results of the Questionnaire.
- 2) discussion on how to define/estimate the burden of WRDs;
- 3) discussion on how to improve the Surveillance systems;
- 4) how to achieve relevant information from countries that have not replied;
- 5) finalization and approval of the policy and technical guidelines (????);
- 6) definition of a programme of assistance and training and in country support (also in a sort of standardized form)
- 8) Reviewing the mandate of the TF, in light of the deliberations of the Working Group and the experience gained so far.

# Possible timetable

- August/September: delivery of the guidance documents
- September 2008:
  - first draft of the analysis of the replies to the questionnaire;
  - in country assistance in TZ
- October 2008: Second meeting of the Task Force
- December 2008: Scientific workshop.

# Resources needed

## Editing activity :

- Publication of technical guidelines (book?),
- Policy guidelines
- Reports: from data and information from the questionnaire

I am not able in estimating these costs

# Resources needed

- Workshop (s): 4,000-5,000 euro/event
- 2° meeting of the task force: 4,000-5,000 euro.....

ISS and the Italian Ministry of Health, of the Environment ??

- Same period (close dates) for these events → lower costs

# Resources needed

- Assistance : 2-3 experts/visit of 4 days:  
..... ?
- In country training: 1 expert/ 4 days:  
????????????