



Arab Republic of Egypt



High Level Regional Conference
**Health Sector Integrity in the Arab Region:
Risk, Solutions, and Roles of Stakeholders**

21/10/2024

Cairo, Egypt

Programme

Supported by



Overview

There is growing international consensus on the need to intensify efforts to prevent and combat corruption across various sectors due to its detrimental effects on sustainable development and multiple facets of life. In the health sector, corruption undermines the quality of healthcare services, the efficiency of healthcare institutions, and people's access to affordable and equitable treatment. It can result in loss of life or serious harm to health, with far-reaching consequences for both the economy and society. Corruption, therefore, poses a significant barrier to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 3, which focuses on “Good Health and Well-being”. To improve health system performance and reach goals such as universal health coverage, additional efforts are needed. This requires a clear vision, robust governance structures, and enhanced capacities to effectively prevent and combat corruption.

In the Arab region, the health sector is a critical priority, yet it faces mounting challenges, including issues related to health financing, limited access to quality services, weak governance frameworks, and insufficient participation in decision-making between healthcare providers and beneficiaries. Although regional reform efforts have accelerated—partly in response to the COVID-19 crisis, which exposed the vulnerabilities of many health systems—these efforts have often fallen short in addressing these core challenges. Moreover, they have not adequately focused on promoting integrity or preventing and combating corruption, despite the direct impact corruption has on the effectiveness of policies and programs in this vital sector.

In response to these challenges, and as part of its regional partnership with the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Population of the Arab Republic of Egypt, is organizing a high-level regional conference titled “**Health Sector Integrity in the Arab Region: Risks, Solutions, and the Roles of Stakeholders**”. The event will take place in Cairo, Egypt, on 21 October 2024.

The conference will bring together regional delegations from twenty Arab countries, including ministers and senior representatives from health ministries, integrity and anti-corruption commissions, financial and administrative oversight bodies, as well as high-level officials and leading experts from regional and international organizations, research centers, and specialized civil society organizations. This gathering will offer participants a valuable opportunity to explore concepts and practices related to integrity in the health sector, highlighting their strategic importance in enabling the sector to contribute to sustainable development in the Arab region. Additionally, the conference will provide a specialized platform for exchanging experiences and deepening discussions on the most effective approaches to assess and mitigate corruption risks in the health sector. It will also explore potential areas for collaboration and funding among key stakeholders, including the public and private sectors, civil society, international financial institutions, and development partners.

The conference is expected to issue a series of regional recommendations on enhancing integrity in the health sector, which will be formulated in consultation with the participants. Efforts will be made to follow up on these recommendations and build on them within the framework of existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation programs with UNDP, international financial institutions, and other development partners.

The languages used are Arabic and English, with simultaneous interpretation. The detailed agenda is provided below, and related documents will be published on the website www.undp-aciad.org within a month of the conclusion of the conference. For inquiries and suggestions, please contact us via email at aciad@undp.org.

Agenda

Monday 21/10/2024

11:00 – 12:00 Registration and welcoming participants

12:00 – 12:30 Opening Session

Objective: Enable the organizers and supporting entities to welcome the participants and present a comprehensive overview of the significance of this regional conference, sharing their vision for its expected outcomes and reaffirming their commitment to supporting the resulting initiatives.

Official Opening Statements

- Khaled Abdel Ghaffar, Deputy Prime Minister for Human Development and Minister for Health and Population, Arab Republic of Egypt, TBC
- Abdallah Al-Dardari, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States, United Nations Development Programme

12:30 – 13:15 First Session: Challenges facing the health sector in the Arab region and the role of integrity in addressing it from a sustainable development perspective

Objective: Enable participants from both the health sector and the fields of integrity and anti-corruption to establish a shared understanding of two critical areas that will serve as the foundation for the remaining conference sessions. The first area is the current state of the health sector in the Arab region, particularly in relation to its sustainable development needs as outlined in Agenda 2030, with a focus on SDG3 “Good Health and Well Being”. The second

area is the concept of corruption and its manifestations within the health sector, along with the social and economic costs it incurs. This will highlight the essential role of integrity in strengthening the sector's ability to address its challenges and supporting its contribution to sustainable development in the region, especially in relation to water, food, and energy security.

Panel

- Dr. El Fatih Abdel Raheem, Policy Specialist in Health and Development, United Nations Development Programme
- Izhar Mahjoub, Expert in Digital Health Transformation
- Nicola Ehlermann, Expert in Governance, Anti-Corruption and Gender

Discussion

13:15 – 14:15 Lunch

14:15 – 15:30 **Second Session – At Ministerial Level: Governance of the health sector and ways to strengthen it drawing on international standards and national priorities**

Objective: Provide health ministers, senior officials, integrity and anti-corruption commissions, and oversight bodies with the opportunity to highlight key areas for health governance reforms and identify entry points to strengthen transparency, accountability, participation, and corruption prevention while aligning these efforts with national priorities and international standards, including the UN Convention against Corruption. Drawing on their experiences in their respective countries, the goal is to develop strategic pathways that guide regional collaboration in promoting integrity within the health sector.

Speakers

- Khaled Abdel Ghaffar, Deputy Prime Minister for Human Development and Minister for Health and Population, Arab Republic of Egypt, TBC
- Dr. Majed Abou Ramadan, Minister of Health, State of Palestine
- Dr. Saleh Al Hasnawi, Minister of Health, Iraq (TBC)
- H.E Raed Radwan, President of the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission
- H.E. Muhannad Hijazi, Chairperson of the Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission

15:30 – 15:45 Break

15:45 – 17:00 Third Session: Good practices and lessons learned in enhancing health sector integrity

Objective: Building on the discussions from the previous session, this session aims to establish participatory, coordinated, and effective mechanisms to enhance integrity in the health sector. It will facilitate a collective reflection on successful experiences and lessons learned in identifying, assessing, and addressing corruption risks across the sector, whether in specific areas such as service provision, health financing, human resource management, procurement of medicines and medical supplies, or hospital administration. Special attention will be given to the gender dimensions of these issues, particularly in conflict settings.

Panel

- Anouar Ben Khelifa, Anti-Corruption and Integrity Specialist, United Nations Development Programme Regional Hub for the Arab states
- Ines Mouhli, Public Services Advisor, General Directorate of Governance and Prevention of Corruption at the Presidency of the Government, Republic of Tunisia
- Dr. Mostafa Hunter, Founder and President, Health Governance International, United States of America
- Dr. Adam Coutts, Lecturer in Psychology, Researcher on Health Governance in Conflict-Affected Areas, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
- Ali Fayyad, Executive Director, Partners Jordan

Discussion

17:00 – 17:30 Closing Session

Objective: Launching the process of developing regional recommendations to enhance integrity in the health sector, enabling participants to provide feedback and suggest specific means for their implementation and follow-up, followed by the conclusion of the conference.

Towards regional recommendations on health sector integrity

- Arkan El Seblani, Regional Chief Advisor and Programme Manager on Anti-Corruption and Integrity, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab states

Closing Statement

- Dr. Mohamad El Tayeb, Deputy Minister of Health for Governance, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Institutional Development, Arab Republic of Egypt
