



A H1N1 Preparedness at ESCWA

With the change of seasons and the onset of colder weather, UN staff serving in Beirut were invited to a medical Town Hall Meeting on A/H1N1 Preparedness this week at the UN House.

Dr. Pierre Abi Hanna, from the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health and Dr. Josette Sfeir, Joint Medical Service Medical Officer delivered the informative session and tackled hot issues related to A/H1N1 preparedness. Staff received updates on the A/H1N1 present pandemic situation. They were informed of the differences between the seasonal flu vaccine and that of AH1N1, and were given indications for testing and usage of the Tamiflu medicine, the antiviral medication given as a treatment for A H1N1. Staff members were also advised on how to take care of an ill patient (with A/H1N1) and ways to protect themselves.

UN House preparedness

At the UN House, hydro al-

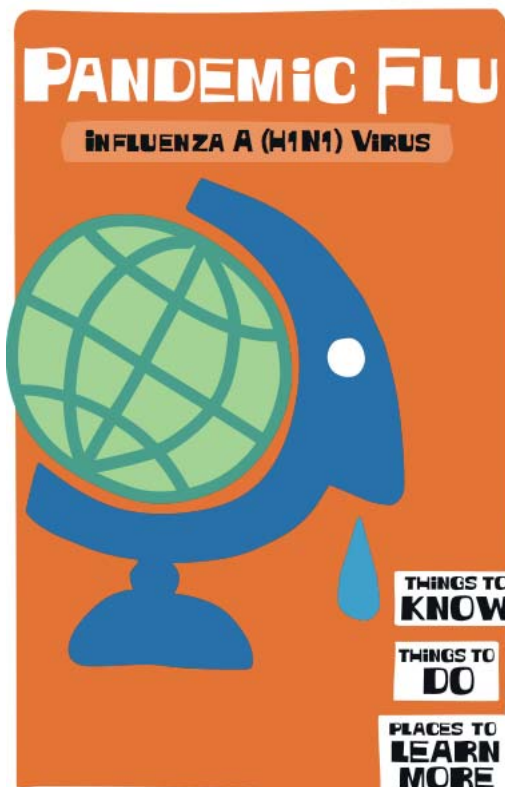
coholic solutions (hand disinfectants) will be available on all floors, at the entrance of each wing. Bottles of disinfectant will also be placed at the entrance of conference rooms and meeting participants will receive "Flu Kits" that are specially provided for them. The kits will include a hydro alcoholic bottle, a box of tissues, and some protective face masks as well as information leaflets with instructions and phone numbers for UN health professionals.

The UN clinic also organized information sessions for staff members to advise them on the pandemic and ways to get protected from it. Special sessions were given to the cleaning and cafeteria staff.

The clinic offered the seasonal flu shots to staff members

as well as the vaccine for pneumonia to selected ones who are at higher risk for developing this disease.

There are two types of flu: the seasonal flu, which recurs yearly, and the pandemic one, which comes around every 20 to 25 years. Over the last 100 years, there were four epidemic influenza spells, the first of which was the Spanish flu (1918-1958). This flu was also an H1N1 type and bears some resemblance to the present pandemic, which means that people born in that period have some immunity to the present H1N1. ■



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ESCWA Guide on Enhancing Public-Civic Participation in Public Policy Processes

The Social Participatory Development Section in the Social Development Division at ESCWA has published a manual entitled "Enhancing Public-Civic Participation in Public Policy Processes". The manual taps the participatory process within a well-defined comprehensive societal development approach that supports change and modernization in the institutional structures and capacities as well as in the systems and norms adopted for executing its functions and advocating its principles. The manual builds on



ESCWA Guide on Enhancing Public-Civic Participation in Public Policy Processes (Cont.)

main conclusions generating from ESCWA literature and field experiences that tap the Local Community Development approach, and draws upon the outcomes of technical advisory reports prepared by ESCWA in response to selected member countries' requests so as to forge participatory capacities between government entities and civil society institutions.

Given the relevance of participation in achieving societal development, the manual encompasses a series of entwined chapters. The first chapter dwells on the development approach at both regional and international levels, with special emphasis on the mandates and legislations upholding such approach, in addition to the findings of discussions held accordingly. Chapter two presents the societal development approach, including its

definition, implementation mechanisms, the policies targeted and the constraints facing its sustainability. As a means to overcome these constraints, Chapter three highlights the conditions governing the sustainability of societal development-related initiatives and its main elements, whereas Chapter four presents an in-depth explanation of the participatory development approach and reviews ESCWA practical experience in this realm as well as the focus on the societal development. Chapter five elaborates on a comprehensive strategy for individual and institutional capacity-building, namely in terms of identifying the actual multi-level capacities, the constituents governing the strategy design, its objectives, programmes, target audience and cooperating groups engaged in its implementation, in addition to its expected outcomes. By issuing this publica-



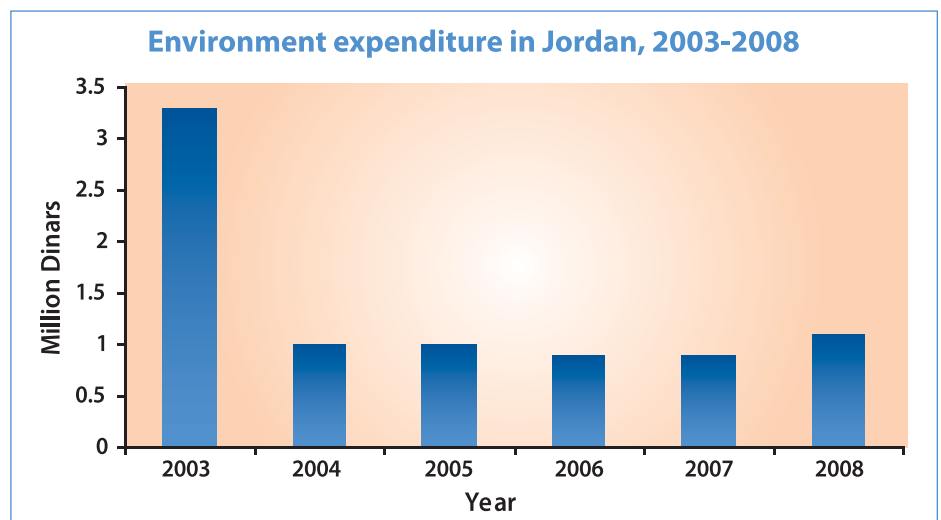
tion, ESCWA seeks to support and uphold the societal development approach including enhancing a developmental culture, promoting individual and institutional capacities as well as encouraging the establishment of networks for knowledge and experience-sharing. ■

Facts and Figures: Environmental Protection Expenditures

While environment-related expenditures are commonly regarded as indicators of environmental commitment, they have to be seen within the context of the “particular environmental conditions in a country and its effectiveness in tackling these conditions.”

In the ESCWA region, only Egypt and Jordan have a completed and ongoing Country Environment Analysis (CEA), while Lebanon's CEA is in the planning stage. The figure below illustrates the environment expenditure in Jordan between 2003 and 2008.

Several ESCWA member countries explicitly mention Government environmental expenditures within their yearly budget reports. For example, Bahrain includes in its yearly budget all revenues and expenditures, including those relating to environmental protection. In 2005 and 2006, the Public



Commission for the Protection of Marine Resources, Environment and Wildlife spent approximately 4.85 and 1.46 million Bahraini dinars, respectively, on their projects and services. ■

Source: Ministry of Finance in Jordan, “General Government Finance Bulletin”, vol. 10, No. 6 (Studies and Economic Policies Directorate, 2008), which is available at: [http://eng.mof.gov.jo/english/PDFs/2007/PDF%20English%20\(July2008\).pdf](http://eng.mof.gov.jo/english/PDFs/2007/PDF%20English%20(July2008).pdf).

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