

## **WHO Meeting of National Influenza Centres**

**17-19 July 2017 – Geneva, Switzerland**

# **SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

## **1. Background**

This year, 2017, marks the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS), a network of 152 institutions in 113 countries, six WHO Collaborating Centres for Influenza and 13 WHO H5 Reference Laboratories.

Long before influenza became a public health priority for many countries, GISRS was fully functioning to monitor the influenza virus evolution, accumulate knowledge and understandings of influenza epidemiology, and recommend viruses that should go to influenza vaccines – both pandemic and seasonal vaccines. Since 2003 the re-emergence of avian influenza A(H5N1) and the more recent pandemic in 2009, GISRS has been playing an increasingly important role in detecting emerging novel influenza virus, assessing associated risks and recommending corresponding risk management measures, in addition to supporting seasonal influenza surveillance and response. All these past and recent experiences highlight the critical role and functions that GISRS fulfils for global health security in particular for influenza pandemics and epidemics.

Global coordination is the key to influenza preparedness and response. The last global NIC meeting, in Tunisia, in 2010, served to better understand the impact of the 2009 pandemic on the functioning of the network. Since then, with available financial resources, notably Partnership Contribution of PIP (Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework) Framework, annual Regional NIC meetings have served to review and strengthen influenza surveillance capacities to meet local and regional needs.

Since 2010, significant amount of work has been conducted at the global level to develop a functioning global system comprising regional and national components with strengthened capacity. Guidance, notably tools and guidelines have been developed, including the Pandemic Influenza Risk Management (PIRM) Framework, the Pandemic Influenza Severity Assessment (PISA) tool, Tool for Influenza Pandemic Risk Assessment (TIPRA), Burden of Influenza Disease Estimation, and WHO Public Health Research Agenda on Influenza. More recently WHO has started developing an influenza strategy based on experience, lessons learnt, knowledge and recent experience with not only influenza but other emerging infectious diseases.

With the WHO Health Emergency reforms, the significant development of influenza capacity at global and regional levels, it is timely to review progress globally for influenza, build inter-regional and global collaboration and coordination and position GISRS as a major international player in seasonal and pandemic influenza response and preparedness in a broader context.

## **2. Objectives**

The overall aim of the WHO meeting is to position GISRS to meet the increasing public health needs in a changing world on influenza, both seasonal, zoonotic and pandemic and potentially other emerging diseases.

The objective of the meeting is to strengthen the GISRS - individual capacity in countries and region, and a robust system globally, specifically through:

1. assessment of *PREPAREDNESS* status of GISRS on influenza surveillance, preparedness and response
2. review and discussion of *GLOBAL STRATEGIES* on influenza
3. strategizing a GISRS *DEVELOPMENT PLAN*
4. discussion and endorsement of GISRS *GOVERNANCE* structure in the context of evolving needs internationally

### **3. Expected outcome:**

1. A renewed landscape of development of influenza surveillance and preparedness
2. A global influenza strategy framework
3. A way forward for a 5-year development plan of GISRS
4. A GISRS governance structure

### **4. Participants including representatives from:**

1. National Influenza Centres
2. WHO Collaborating Centres for Influenza Surveillance
3. WHO H5 Reference Laboratories
4. WHO Essential Regulatory Laboratories
5. National epidemiology institutions
6. National health authority
7. Partners to GISRS
8. Other interested entities

### **5. Agenda outline**

1. How GISRS is prepared
  - a. A 65-year journey – experience, lessons learnt
  - b. Self-appraisal of strengths, weakness, threats and opportunities – national, regional and global perspectives
2. Where GISRS moves towards
  - a. Landscape of development: new knowledge, initiatives and tools for surveillance, preparedness and response
  - b. Discussion of a Global Influenza Strategy
  - c. Discussion of GISRS development priorities under the Global Influenza Strategy
3. How GISRS moves forward (1)
  - a. Technical capacity: priorities and strategies for existing seasonal and emerging pandemic needs
  - b. Communication: strategies with external partners, and internal process strengthening
4. How GISRS moves forward (2)
  - a. Coordination towards a robust system
  - b. Governance: structure and TORs