



MECIDS

**(Middle East Consortium for Infectious Disease Surveillance)
Present and future**

**Jerusalem, *February 28, 2013*
EB Meeting**

**Report for 2012-2013
By Prof. Alex Leventhal , chair of the EB**



**Welcome to our partners
in the present and future**



Who are we?



Palestine



Kingdom of Jordan



Israel





MECIDS members

Governmental	Jordan Ministry of Health	Israel Ministry of Health	Palestine Ministry of Health
Nongovernmental Academic	MESIS Amman	Tel Aviv University	Al Quds University



Vision



Promote long-term health,
stability and **security** in the
region.



The starter

Food-borne disease surveillance project Lab. Based Surveillance for Salmonella

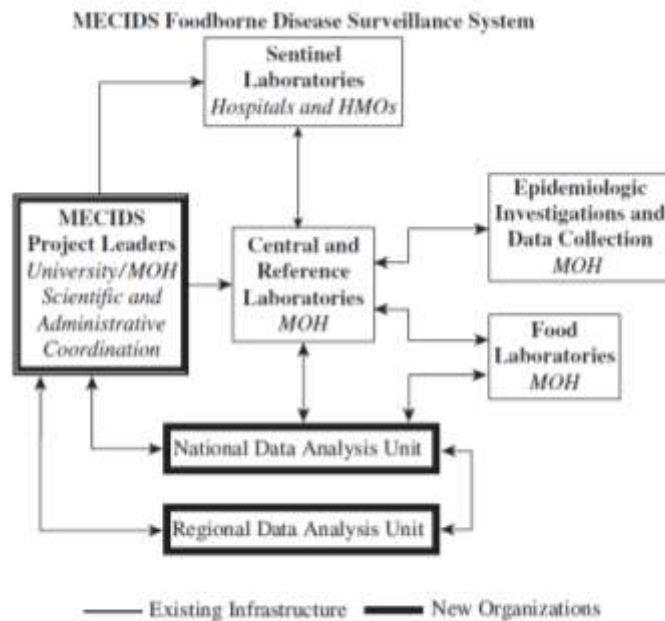


Fig 1. A schematic of the MECIDS foodborne disease surveillance network. Source: MECIDS.



Structure of the food borne diseases laboratory-based surveillance network

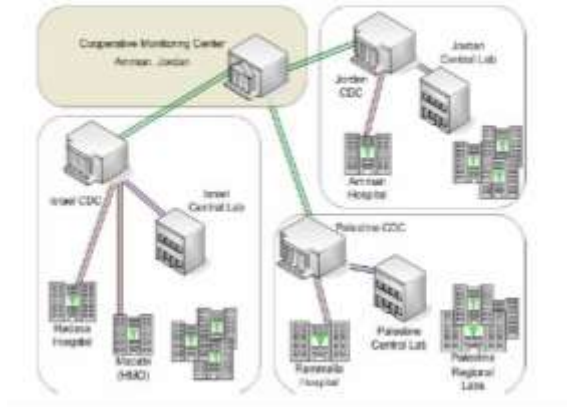
National Level

- Sentinel Community and Hospital Labs
- Reference Lab
- National Data Analysis Unit

Regional Level

- Regional Data Depository
- Joint Data Analysis Meetings

PHAD: Communication Among National Systems



Infrastructure and skills developed for proper national and regional response



Basic skills

Basic infrastructures



Capacity building



Joint training and Workshops:

- Interventional Field Epidemiology
- Salmonella Identification to Harmonize methodology using the same equipment and reagents
- Diagnosis avian influenza virus H5N1, H1N1 by PCR
- PFGE Training
- Risk communication workshop
- Humanitarian response to disaster

2- Equipment and Materials Supply

- Anti sera ,media, reagent and other supplies
- Biosafety cabinets level II
- Portable refrigerators
- PFGE
- Equipment that support process with the PFGE
- Computers for the sentinel sites
- Constructing MECIDS website

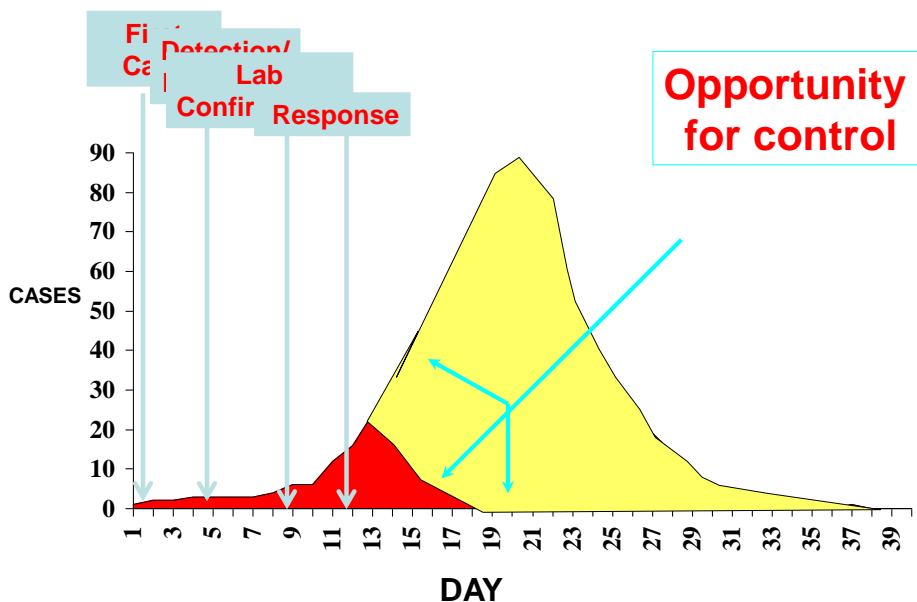


MECIDS partners and stakeholder

- Search for Common Ground
- Nuclear Threat Initiative – NTI
- Becton Dickenson Company donation (Anti sera ,media, reagent and other supplies)
- World Bank-
- European Union
- ICLS-International Council for Life Sciences
- Peres Center for Peace
- UK department of Defense



Outbreak Detection and Response in Avian Flu outbreak of March 2006



Regional collaboration in the Middle East to deal with H5N1 avian flu

Alex Leventhal, Assad Ramlawi, Adel Belhiesi, Ran D Balicer

In 2005-6 Arab and Israeli collaboration contained outbreaks of avian flu in the Middle East. This initiative shows how building relationships through joint efforts creates an infrastructure for cross border collaboration during emergencies

Israel Ministry of Health, PO Box 1176, Jerusalem 91001, Israel
Alex Leventhal
director of public health services

Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health, Ramallah, West Bank

Assad Ramlawi
director general of primary care and public health

Recent emerging infectious diseases have changed the way that outbreaks are dealt with—from a mainly local approach to a regional and even global one. The importance of global collaboration orchestrated by the World Health Organization has been demonstrated during recent outbreaks of severe acute respiratory syndrome and avian flu.^{1,2}

We describe an example of Arab and Israeli collaboration in the Middle East on a public health issue. Cooperation between Israeli, Jordanian, and Palestinian veterinary and public health services contained outbreaks of H5N1 avian flu. The measures

relationships through joint efforts for tackling common infectious diseases creates an infrastructure for cross border collaboration during emergencies.

Geopolitical circumstances in the Middle East

Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, and Israel border one another. The distance between the three capital cities is less than 80 km. Palestinians who live in all three countries have close family and commercial ties with each other. The citizens of these countries live as one "sociodemographic family."³

Mission



To facilitate cross-border cooperation and collaboration to implement action plans in response to disease outbreaks at regional level

Our Goals



- **Initiate** and upgrade regional collaboration
- **Harmonize** research standards,
- **Exchange** data,
- **Implementing** integrated and comprehensive preventative activities:

MECIDS Achievements



Well built infrastructure with capacity for:

- **Implementing epidemiological and lab-based surveillance**
- **Data-sharing**
- **High alert system to detect emerging and re-emerging diseases**
- **Dealing with preparedness against bioterrorism**
- **Publishing scientific papers**

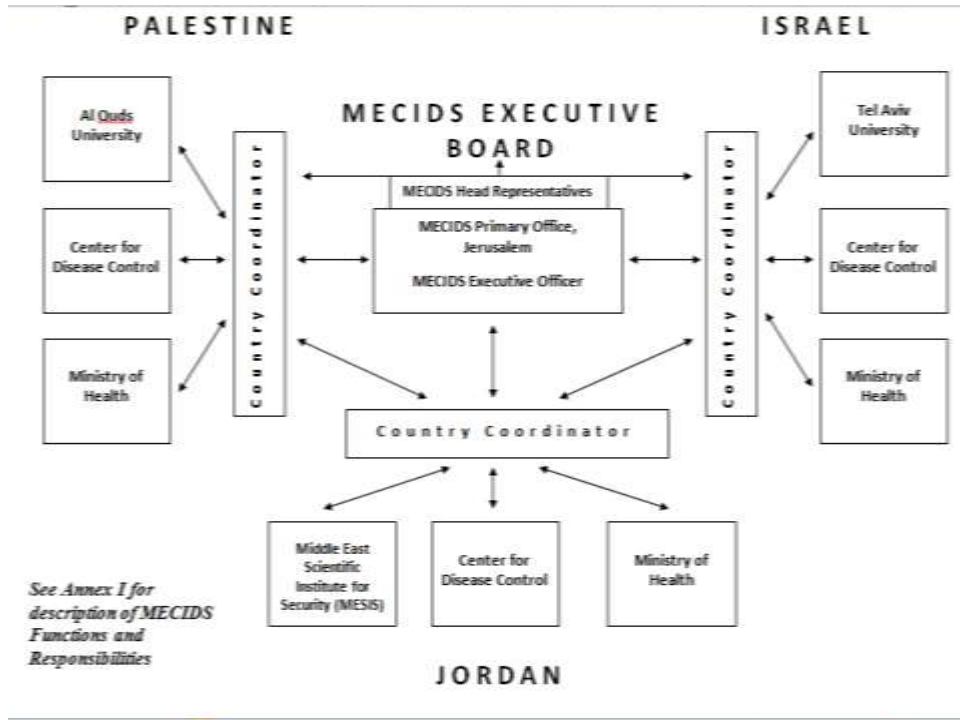
Key Achievements for Regional Cooperation

- **Daily contact in case of urgency and emergency (call phone, Conference call, e-mail, reports)**
 - Avian Influenza outbreak (March, 2006)
 - Pandemic H1N1, 2009
 - Post pandemic H1N1, 2010-2011
 - H1N1 cluster, January 2013 (**Recently**)
- **Harmonization of diagnostic methodologies**
- **Establishment common data-sharing formats**
- **Sample sharing for inter-lab comparison and further investigations**

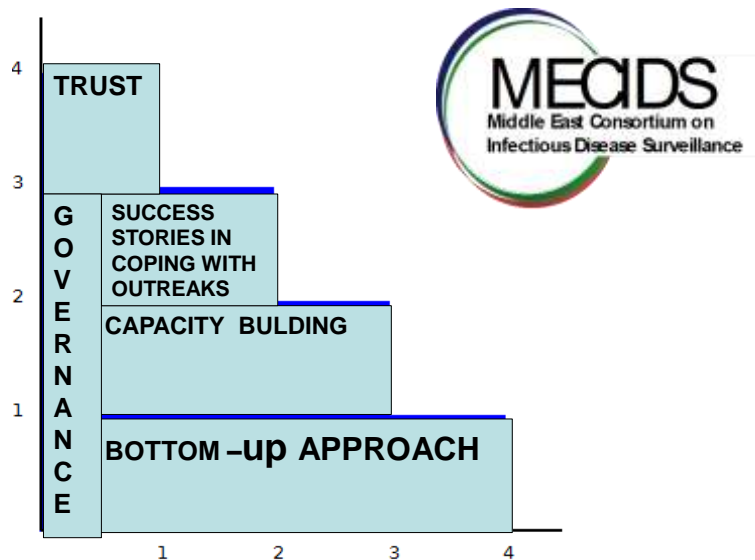
Collaboration with international organizations:

- **WHO- Implementation of the IHR**
- **CORDS- members of the EB and participation in the activities**
- **EpiSouth- members of the EB**
- **Future collaboration with the SEEHN**

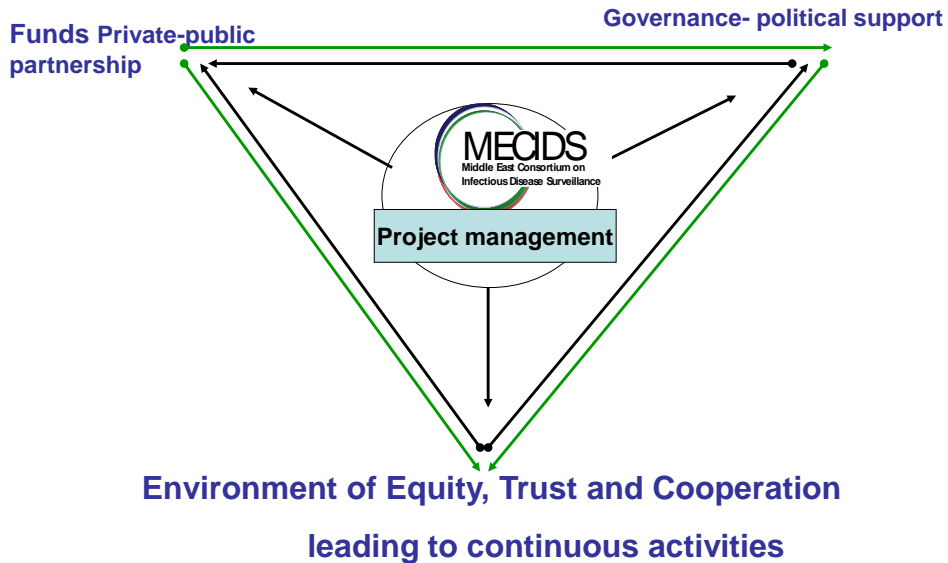




Building blocks of sustainability



The triangle of success: below the radar



Capacity building in the last two



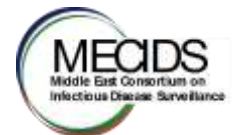
- **February 25-27, 2013:**
 - Three day training for disaster management (Earthquake training).
- **March 3-8, 2013:**
 - Advanced Epidemiology training

CORDS SUPPLEMENT

Enhanced Surveillance for Detection and Management of Infectious Diseases: Regional Collaboration in the Middle East

Alex Leventhal^{1,7*}, Assad Ramlawi², Adel Belbiesi³,
Sami Sheikh³, Akhtam Haddadin³, Sari Hussein⁴,
Ziad Abdeen⁵ and Dani Cohen⁶

¹Ministry of Health, Israel; ²Palestinian Ministry of Health, Ramallah, West Bank, Palestinian Authority; ³Jordan Ministry of Health, Amman, Jordan; ⁴Search for Common Ground, Jerusalem; ⁵Al-Quds Nutrition and Health Research Institute, Faculty of Medicine, Al-Quds University, Jerusalem; ⁶School of Public Health, Sackler Faculty of Medicine, Tel Aviv University; ⁷Braun School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, Hebrew University, Jerusalem



Projects planned in the future:

IHR Implementation

- **MECIDS know-how had been implemented in the IHR**
- **Workshops with collaboration with WHO**
- **In 2012- workshop for cross- border implementation of the IHR**

• **Leishmaniasis project**



Multi sectorial involvement

- **Bringing together:**
 - **Government ministries,**
 - **Academics,**
 - **Technicians,**
 - **Local authorities**

Biosafety and Biosecurity, training:

- **Phase I:** Regional Training of Trainers (TOT) as a tri-national workshop with Dr. Barbara Johnson
- **Phase II:** National training as a national workshop on behalf of MECIDS with Dr. Barbara Johnson
- **Phase III:** Local training- as responsibility of the national MoH



Humanitarian response to disaster

- To create workshop on the district level of cross border knowledge and collaboration with Peres Center for Peace and the RCRC Society

MECIDS website
www.mecidsnetwork.org



What is  secret ?

**A step by step
 building of
 innovative** 
“Governmental NGO”



**FOR THE PARTNERS (ACADEMIA AND GOVERNMENT),
THE DONORS & PARTNERS
THE SECRETARIAT OF ONE- MAN SHOW,
THE PH PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD AND THE LABS
FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT IN THE
PAST, PRESENT AND IN THE FUTURE**

Thank you



EB meeting and capacity building



The distance between the three capitals of Jordan, Palestinian, and Israel is less than 80 km.

WHO EURO



WHO EMRO



MECIDS

Created
Data collection on foodborne diseases

Nov. 2002
July 2005



Past MECIDS Achievements

- Sub national, national and regional table top exercises on Pandemic influenza,
- IHR-Implementation
- Regional and national training on Bio-risk Management (bio-safety and bio-security)
- Training to enhance surveillance system
- MECIDS Data Sharing Workshop

Challenges and obstacles

- Although of the oscillating and instability of the political situation in the Middle East
- **MECIDS** still
 - collects, shares and disseminates data
 - Upload to the regional data analysis unit in the Middle East Scientific Institute For Security "MESIS".