

Dr. Rana Hajjeh

Director of Programme Management (DPM), WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO)

Dr. Rana Hajjeh is the Director of Programme Management (DPM) at the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) since April 2019, and serves as the deputy regional director for technical issues. She is a senior public health leader with 25 years of experience in global health, health policy and diplomacy, and health management, particularly in the Middle East region. In her capacity as DPM, she directs and leads all the technical public health programs at the regional level, including universal health coverage and systems, communicable and non-communicable diseases, information and science, as well as health promotion. She works closely with the Emergency department, HQ in Geneva, and all 22 countries and offices.

Prior to her current position, she held the position of Director of the Department of Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control, where she played a significant role in supporting emergency response in the region and accelerating the agenda for prevention and control of vaccine-preventable diseases, HIV, hepatitis, malaria, tuberculosis, neglected tropical diseases, and antimicrobial resistance. Before joining WHO/EMRO in 2016, Dr. Hajjeh worked with the US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) for 23 years, where she held many senior positions with increasingly complex management responsibilities and worked extensively in the Middle East.

Between 2005-2010, Dr. Hajjeh was the Director of the GAVI Hib vaccine Initiative, which introduced lifesaving vaccines for Hib meningitis and pneumonia to millions of children in limited-resource countries worldwide. Between 1996 and 2016, she led many responses to major epidemics across the world, including meningitis during Hajj in Saudi Arabia in 2000, cholera in Haiti in 2010, and recently, MERS coronavirus in Saudi Arabia and Ebola in West Africa. She has considerable experience in health policies and systems and supported the development of various global policies for the prevention of infectious diseases, such as for new vaccines and strategies for building laboratory and surveillance systems. Throughout her career, she managed increasingly complex departments and initiatives with large budgets.

Dr. Hajjeh is a well-known speaker and advocate for strong public health capacity in the region and for the right to health of every person. She has broad health diplomacy skills, working with ministries

of health and governments in the Middle East and globally, and many global and regional partners and donors. She is fully fluent in Arabic (her mother tongue), French, and English.

Dr. Hajjeh holds a Medical Doctor (M.D.) degree from the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, and has benefited from extensive training in medicine (American board certified in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases) and public health (epidemiology training at the CDC-EIS). She has received many awards, including the prestigious U.S. Federal Employee of the Year Award in 2014 for her global vaccine work. Dr. Hajjeh has published over 150 peer-reviewed papers and book chapters, serves as a reviewer for multiple journals, and holds professor positions in medicine and public health at Emory and Johns Hopkins universities.