

RESCAP-MED FIFTH NEWSLETTER



• What is RESCAP-MED?	1
• Third RESCAP-MED PMC and ProMAC Meeting	1
• RESCAP-MED Environmental Health Workshop	2
• RESCAP-MED Writing for Publication Workshop	6
• RESCAP-MED Advanced Epidemiology and Modeling Course	9
• Second Regional Symposium on Non-Communicable Diseases	10
• RESCAP-MED Fellowship Programme	11
• Web-based learning	13

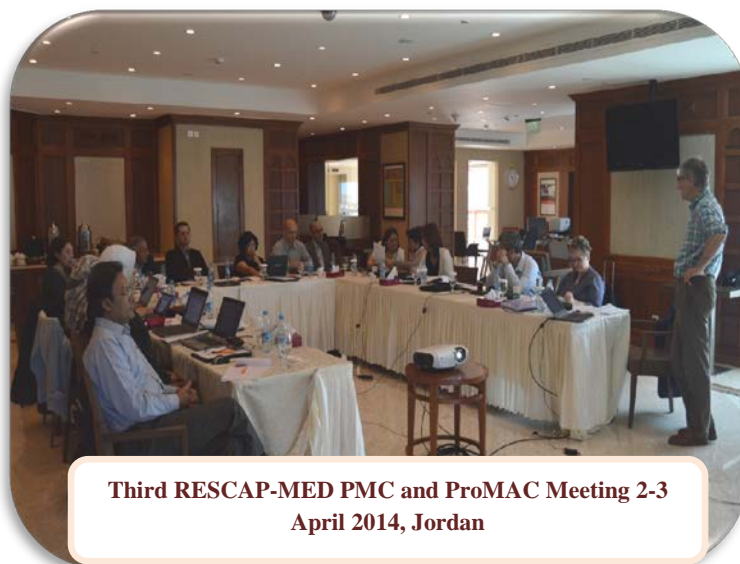
What is RESCAP-MED?

RESCAP-MED aims to build research capacity for public health in countries around the eastern and southern Mediterranean. Its purpose is to develop research skills for the challenge of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and their social determinants: specifically the skills to address the burden of cardiovascular diseases (CVD), diabetes, and cancer.

RESCAP-MED aims to create a Mediterranean regional network for NCD researchers, in five key public health disciplines: epidemiology, health economics, environmental health, medical anthropology, and health policy evaluation.



Third RESCAP-MED PMC and ProMAC Meeting



Third RESCAP-MED PMC and ProMAC Meeting 2-3 April 2014, Jordan

**Dead Sea, Jordan
2-3 April 2014**

The leaders of Work Packages (WP) as well as Project Management Committee (PMC) attended the meeting. During this meeting, the partners discussed the events & achievements of the last 15 months of RESCAP-MED. The partners agreed that they will apply to the EC for a no-cost extension and discussed the potential for additional workshop in early 2015 if a no-cost extension is granted by EC. They finalized the plan for the 2nd International Symposium, Beirut and they planned for the final phase activities including evaluation, sustainability, and looking beyond the grant-term.

RESCAP-MED Environmental Health Workshop

Amman, Jordan

5-9 April 2014

The RESCAP-MED Environmental health workshop was hosted by Jordanian partners. Dr. Balsam Ahmad from Newcastle University together with Professor Yusuf Khader from JUST, Jordan led the planning and organization of the workshop.



Balsam Ahmad

Dr. Balsam Ahmad is a Public Health Specialty Registrar in the National Health Service, and a research associate at the Institute of Health and Society, Newcastle University, UK. Balsam has an interdisciplinary background in environmental and social epidemiology and public health. She has led and contributed to several capacity building activities in environmental health impact assessment in the Middle East and North Africa. Balsam has published on environmental health impact assessment and urban health inequalities.



Yusuf Khader Al-Gaud

Yusuf AL-Gaud is a professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at Jordan University of Science and Technology. Yusuf has published more than 190 articles on NCDs and focal infection theory. He has implemented many health programmes, organised several national and international workshops, conferences, and trainings courses on public health and coordinated several national and international health projects.

Eighteen participants from five countries namely, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Turkey attended the workshop. The participants came from interdisciplinary backgrounds including environmental management; public health; environmental engineering; sociology and medicine.

The format of the writing workshop included single lectures, case studies, group discussions and field work. It was led by ten facilitators including Professor Tanja

Pless-Mulloli, Professor Peter Phillimore and Dr. Balsam Ahmad (UK); Dr. Jarrah Al-Zu'bi, Dr. Saad Al-kharabsheh, Dr. Munjed Al-Sharif , Professor Ziad Al-Ghazawi, Dr. Muna Abu Dalo (Jordan); Dr. Fouad Fouad (Syria) and Dr. Reem Musleh (Palestine). The facilitators came from interdisciplinary backgrounds including environmental epidemiology, environmental engineering, medical anthropology, environmental management and public health.

The workshop was intensive and took place over five days, including one day of a field visit to the JUST campus. The main focus of the field visit was to see firsthand a real life small scale wastewater treatment plant and understand the process of waste water treatment and the environmental and health issues relevant to treatment and use of reclaimed water in irrigation. Professor Ziad Al-Ghazawi from JUST led the fieldwork visit. Other topics covered in the workshop included:

- An introduction to environmental health
- Air pollution and health
- Environmental management tools and geographic information systems
- Minimum water requirements for health protection in Jordan
- Environmental Health adaptation to climate change

What participants are saying about RESCAP-MED workshops?



Field visit to the waste water treatment at JUST

A research assistant at the Institute of Community and Public Health –Birzeit University

I had the pleasure to attend the environmental health workshop in Amman-Jordan. The workshop covered various topics of environmental issues and their relation to health. The organizers of the workshop were so welcoming and responsive to participants' needs. The style of the workshop was interactive and interesting with lots of group work and discussions among participants from different countries and participants within the same country. We had also a good time socializing with other colleagues from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Turkey. I got the chance to learn and know about environmental health practices and regulations in other regional countries. I enjoyed the field trip to the Jordan University of Science and Technology where we visited the waste water treatment plan and had a useful explanation about how it works. Finally, I would like to say that this workshop reinforced the link between my civil engineering background and my public health background - both work and interest.

- Environmental monitoring and environmental adaptation to the refugee crises in Jordan.
- Shelter and health at times of peace and war
- An introduction to geographical health inequalities
- Solid and hazardous waste management and health
- Environmental and social justice: principles, methods and case studies
- Lay risk perception and dealing with community concerns
- Contaminated land and health (dealing with the media)

There was a free afternoon on the fourth day and the participants enjoyed visiting historic Jarash and having their Gala dinner there after finishing the field visit to JUST on the third day of the course.

The majority of the participants who left feedback were very positive. Many appreciated the interdisciplinary nature of the course as well as the varied backgrounds and experience of the participants that was reflected in group discussions and group exercises. The majority found the field visit, case studies and group exercises useful.

What participants are saying about RESCAP-MED workshops?



The participants in the historic Jarash city

Madona Elias; A sociologist and senior counselor at Caritas-Jordan

The environmental health workshop was amazing and challenging one. Firstly, it covered different environmental health issues in the Mediterranean region in a clear systematic review. Secondly, it highlighted the current environmental health challenges for Jordan and Lebanon as hosting countries for Syrian Refugees after the Syrian war has occurred. For instance, water shortage in the area. Thirdly, the combination of different nationalities was useful and fruitful in terms of sharing experience and concerns.

The facilitators were so creative and well qualified in providing the information and materials. The variety of facilitators' backgrounds in different public health aspects gave the workshop a general and deep overview of the environmental health issues in different aspects that included social anthropology, economics and psychology in public health perspective.

RESCAP-MED Writing for Publication Workshop



The participants of the writing for publication workshop, Tunisia

Hammamet, Tunisia

3-5th June 2014

The second RESCAP-MED writing workshop, hosted by Tunisian partners and organised by Faten Tlili, Professor Habiba Ben Romdhane and the Tunisian team, focused on developing writing skills by preparing and polishing a draft manuscript for submission to a refereed journal. All participants were asked to prepare a draft manuscript to work on during the workshop. The format of the writing workshop included lectures provided by the facilitators which were interspersed with individual mentoring sessions, providing intensive feedback and advice on the paper writing process.

This workshop covered the following topics:

- Identifying potential journals and understanding what editors are looking for

- Quantitative and qualitative writing
- Planning and outlining a paper
- Structuring a paper (IMRAD: Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion)
- Cover letters, authorship and dealing with feedback from reviewers



Habiba BEN ROMDHANE

Dr Habiba Ben Romdhane is a Professor of Preventive Medicine at the University of Tunis and the head of Epidemiology and Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases Unit. She is a former Minister of Health, co-founder and president of the Tunisian Society of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, co-founder and member of the board of the Maghreb Network on Research on Health Systems (RESSMA), and founder and Chair of the National Observatory of Inequality in Health. Dr Habiba Ben Romdhane has implemented many health programmes, organised several national and international trainings on public health, and coordinated several national projects, including MedCHAMPS and RESCAP-MED.

Nineteen participants from five countries attended the workshop: Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Tunisia and Turkey. Six facilitators from RESCAP-MED partner institutions were also present to assist, including Professor Peter Phillimore and Dr. Catherine Degnen from Newcastle University; Professor Julia Critchley from St George's University of London; Dr. Martin O'Flaherty from the University of Liverpool; Dr. Gul Ergor from Dokuz Eylul University, Izmir; and Dr. Kathleen Bennett from Trinity College, Dublin.

The workshop took place over three full days. The first day started with introductions and after initial introductory lectures on identifying journals and getting started writing the participants were each assigned a facilitator.

The large group of participants meant that each facilitator was assigned 2-4 participants to mentor over the course of the three day workshop. Time was spent with each participant working on their individual paper(s), providing constructive feedback and suggestions for improving the paper in preparation for publication. The interactive group format was lively and provided the opportunity for participants to work on their papers intensively over the duration of the course.

Each section of the paper (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion) was given special attention during the workshop after a lecture on the particular section had been delivered.

There was some time during the course to enjoy Hammamet, either at the Medina, at dinner in the fish

restaurant by the sea, or by the pool/beach after all the hard work. The feedback from the course was very positive.

The vast majority of the participants who left feedback stated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the content of the lectures, the format of the workshops, the practical sessions and

workshop and the course in general. A substantial majority also indicated that the course either greatly or adequately met the learning outcomes of recognizing the need for scientific paper writing and review; understanding the way in which scientific papers are constructed; preparing a paper suitable for publication and using the knowledge gained to get a paper published; and targeting a journal and dealing with feedback from reviewers.



Faten TLILI

Faten is a psychologist currently working at National Institute of Public Health of Tunisia & Epidemiology and prevention of cardiovascular diseases unit, School of Medicine, Tunis. She has published research articles on NCDs and the health system.

What participants are saying about RESCAP-MED workshops?



Rula Ghandour, Alaa Abed and Sawsan Imseeh

As junior researchers from Palestine, we found the second RESCAP-MED Writing Workshop at Hammamet, Tunisia so useful and informative for us. It was organized in a semi-structured way, with some lectures highlighting the main points in each section of an academic paper in addition to one-to-one specific discussion. Throughout the workshop, we went through the key reporting guidelines of the abstract, introduction, methods, results and discussion. Both qualitative and quantitative paper types were addressed.

We came to the workshop already having our own draft papers, and this provided us with the opportunity to apply what we have learned in the workshop, and get direct feedback from the experienced researchers. Moreover, after the workshop, we've agreed to continue to work on revising our papers with ongoing mentoring by these researchers. This has contributed to further success of the workshop.

The workshop provided an exceptional opportunity to improve our academic paper writing skills. The communication between and within teams was so fruitful and effective. The expert team was so generous in sharing their knowledge and skills and they have the ability to stimulate critical thinking and help the trainees in the right way. Generally, we had a wonderful experience participating in this workshop. We would like to thank the organizers of this workshop for providing us this opportunity.

RESCAPMED Advanced Epidemiology and Modeling Course

Kuşadası, İzmir

22-26 September 2014



Professor Belgin Unal

The next training workshop of the RESCAP-MED Project will be hosted by the Turkish partner DEÜ in Kuşadası, near İzmir.

The first 3 days of the course will focus on epidemiological concepts including confounding, interaction, logistic regression, Poisson regression, proportional hazards model, and multilevel analysis.

Facilitators: Gül Ergör, Kath Bennett, Fiona Pearson, Belgin Ünal

The last 2 days will focus on health policy modeling methods including health economic modeling techniques and Markov Models. IMPACT Model will be used as modeling exercise.

Facilitators: Julia Critchley, Kath Bennett, Maria Guzman, Kaan Sözmen.

A half day Ephesus and Şirince tour and a gala dinner will also be organized during the course.



Second Regional Symposium on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

Socio-political Challenges in the Mediterranean Region: Implications for NCD Prevention and Control

December 3-4, 2014, Beirut-Lebanon



Abla Sibai Professor of Epidemiology and Population Health at American University of Beirut

RESCAP-MED is pleased to host the 2nd Regional Symposium on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) entitled "Socio-political Challenges in the Mediterranean Region: Implications for NCD Prevention and Control". The Symposium will take place in Beirut, Lebanon, on December 3-4, 2014.

The RESCAP-MED Regional Symposium aims to bring together researchers and public health actors to present, document and debate prospects for action in NCD surveillance, management, control and prevention, within the context of the recent geo-political developments in the region. The Arab Region displays the highest worldwide levels on some key indicators of NCD burden and is projected to witness the second largest proportional increase in NCD mortality worldwide. Furthermore, these developments are taking place against a background of political upheaval and profound transformation unanticipated even a few years ago.

The Symposium organizers are looking forward to vibrant and engaging abstracts (up to 400 words) that revolve around non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and:

- Displacement and migration
- War and conflict
- Socio-political transformations
- Demographic transitions
- Capacity building, training and education
- National health systems and provision of care in times of crisis

Keynote Speakers:

- Sultan Barakat (Professor and Chairman, Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York, UK)
- Dawn Chatty (Professor of Anthropology and Forced Migration, Director of Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford University, UK)
- Rita Giacaman (Professor of Public Health, Institute of Community & Public Health, Birzeit University, West Bank, occupied Palestinian territory)
- Nigel Unwin (Professor in Public Health & Epidemiology, University of the West Indies, Barbados)

➤ **Deadline for abstract submission is August 15, 2014**

➤ **The Call for Abstracts and Abstract Submission Form can be found at:**
<http://research.ncl.ac.uk/rescap-med/activities/symposia/beirutsymposium2014/>

➤ **For more information, please email**
RESCAP_symp2014@aub.edu.lb

RESCAP-MED Fellowship Programme: Updates



Dr Kathleen Bennett

The RESCAP-MED fellowship programme is intended to build research capacity, encourage collaboration and foster links in partner countries, through the training and mentoring of early career and mid-career research staff. The first fellowship was undertaken in March 2013 and so far nine researchers from four Mediterranean partners have completed fellowships.

Turkey: Duygu İşlek returned to the University of Liverpool for a second fellowship visit in March 2014, working with Prof Simon Capewell and Dr Martin O’Flaherty on developing the stroke model for Turkey and receiving training in modelling equations and software and in running policy scenarios.

Ceyda Şahan also returned to St. George's University of London for a second fellowship visit in March 2014, working with Prof Julia Critchley on developing the Turkish CHD IMPACT model for future projection and developing scenarios for policy analyses, and receiving training in CHD epidemiology and modelling.

Palestine: Niveen Abu-Rmeileh undertook two fellowship visits to the University of Liverpool, in August 2013 and January 2014, working with Prof Simon Capewell and Dr Martin O'Flaherty to design and construct a population-based diabetes complications model and acquiring a copy of the UKPDS model to be populated with Palestinian data. Two follow-up visits are planned for late 2014 and early 2015.

Tunisia: Faten Tlili followed up her fellowship at Newcastle University with a second visit in June 2014, working with Prof Peter Phillimore and Dr Shahaduz Zaman to work on a second qualitative paper on patient experiences of traditional healing in Tunisia.

Olfa Saidi visited the University of Liverpool in February 2014, working on stroke model for Tunisia with Prof Simon Capewell and Dr Martin O'Flaherty. She produced a first prototype and is now working in data issues and implementing a probabilistic sensitivity analysis. Work was also begun on a paper describing the model and exploring policy scenarios around stroke prevention and treatment. A return visit is planned for later in 2014.

Lebanon: Anthony Rizk undertook a fellowship at Newcastle University in June 2014, working with Dr Shahaduz Zaman to develop a research proposal on the medicalisation of non-normative identities and identity formation in Lebanon, for an application to graduate studies in Anthropology. Hala Kerbage also visited Newcastle University in June 2014, working with Dr Shahaduz Zaman on paper-writing, with the aim of producing a critical review of the concept of PTSD with an overview of her current psychiatric practice with Syrian refugees from an anthropological perspective.

Web-based learning

The North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean and Turkey Public Health (NETPH) Network website has gone live. You can find it at: www.netph.org

**Several more
fellowship visits from
Mediterranean to UK
partners are currently
in the pipeline for
later in 2014.**



The aims of the network are to encourage interaction between public health specialists in North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean & Turkey, provide training materials for public health professionals, provide a detailed literature library of relevant material that focuses primarily on non-communicable diseases, and provide recent report and features relating to public health in the NETPH region.