Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Antimicrobial Resistance
NEWSLETTER

Achieving FAO's Antimicrobial Resistance Action Plan

September 2022 - Issue #10

GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS

Seeding and scaling up One Health awareness and action on AMR – FAO/ReAct LOA

With the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and World Animal Protection (WAP), ReAct Africa and Students Against Superbugs (SAS) Africa held the student competition Food without harm: Reducing the need for antimicrobials. The competition was part of the Antimicrobial Resistance Leaders Programme for university students in Africa and brought together students from all disciplines working on One Health and action against antimicrobial resistance. Participants had to submit a written paper with their proposed solutions to reduce the need for antimicrobials. A panel of experts that including Emmanuel Kabali selected the three winners. The winning essays were:

- *Reducing the need for antimicrobials in livestock farming: using a robust community engagement approach* by Musiitwa Rogers
- *Strategies to prevent the occurrence of antimicrobial usage among livestock farmers* by Kyembe Ignitius Salachi and Chikwe Mwansa
- *Food without harm: Reducing the need to use antimicrobials* by Adamu Ibrahim

UPCOMING EVENTS

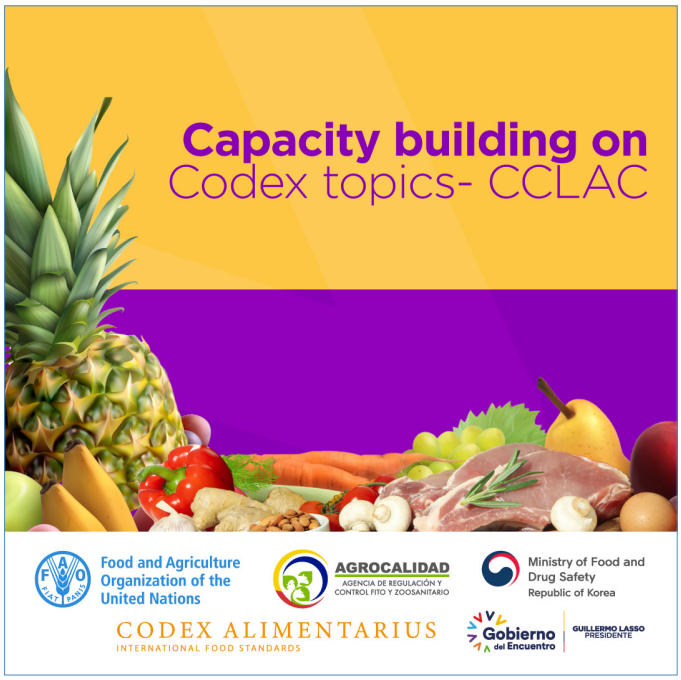
Webinar series for capacity building on Codex topics of interest to the Latin American and Caribbean region in 2022

The ACT Project will host a capacity building webinar series on Codex topics of interest to the Latin American and Caribbean region. The purpose is to promote the application of the Codex Alimentarius standards. The webinar series will be held in Spanish and English.

Module 1: Guide and orientation for new Codex Alimentarius participants, on September 14 and 15,[1] and Module 2: Basic Codex texts, on December 7.[2]

Publications:

Achieving Antimicrobial Stewardship on the Global Scale: Challenges and Opportunities, by Jorge Pinto Ferreira, Daniela Battaglia, Alejandro Dorado García, KimAnh Tempelman, Carmen Bullon, Nelea Motriuc, Mark Caudell, Sarah Cahill, Junxia Song and Jeffrey LeJeune.[3]



[1] https://www.fao.org/americas/eventos/ver/es/c/1603339/
[2] https://www.fao.org/americas/eventos/ver/es/c/1603338/
[3] https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2607/10/8/1599

Quadripartite collaboration and AMR Multi-Partner Trust Fund (AMR MPTF)

Global consultation: awareness raising on antimicrobial resistance

FAO, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), organized a global consultation for awareness-raising on AMR. The meetings were held virtually from 28 to 30 June 2022 and 5 to 7 July 2022. They had the same agenda and process, and the same questions were discussed during the group work.

The consultations brought together representatives and key AMR stakeholder groups worldwide. Participants who registered for the workshops represented 96 countries and 150 governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations. There were 160 representatives from the human health sector, 131 from the animal health and food systems sector and 15 from the environmental health sector.

The deliberations of the two consultations showed a clear global convergence of thinking on the core areas of AMR awareness-raising in terms of common audiences, common areas of work, common approaches and priorities. The discussions brought to light important ideas for shaping the AMR awareness agenda in human, animal, plant and environmental health.

The AMR Multi-Partner Trust Fund supports Morocco in establishing the first One Health governance mechanism

For the first time in Morocco, the AMR MPTF project enabled the establishment of a One Health Governance Mechanism for AMR, bringing together key stakeholders to address common problems. This mechanism consists of:

- A steering committee that includes ministers and representatives from FAO, WHO and WOAH;
- A Technical Coordination Committee composed of FAO, WHO and WOAH technical officers and the focal points of three ministries;
- A national scientific project coordinator has been recruited specifically for the project, whose role is to bring all partners together and facilitate the implementation of the project.

The official launch event of the project was a crucial step in raising awareness, mobilizing and engaging high-level decision-makers on AMR. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Health and the secretaries general for agriculture and environment respectively, as well as representatives from FAO, WHO and WOAH. Their active participation demonstrated their strategic vision and commitment to work together to address AMR.

In addition, a national workshop on the FAO Progressive Management Pathway for antimicrobial resistance (PMP-AMR) was organized under the coordination of FAO and the participation of the Technical Coordination Committee. The approach consisted of a progressive self-assessment of the implementation status of national action plans on antimicrobial resistance. While the workshop focused on the food and agriculture sector, it also demonstrated the methodology and assessment tools that can be tailored to other sectors to achieve sustainable use of antimicrobials and stewardship.

The governance mechanisms adopted in this project have enabled a solid and lasting common ground for reflection and exchange, allowing for a structural strengthening of the capacities of the three ministries concerned with AMR in Morocco.

FAO REGIONS

Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Country updates

- FAO Viet Nam published a factsheet on restrictions of antimicrobial use (AMU) in terrestrial animal production[4] in July 2022. It provides an overview of the current legal restrictions and prescription requirements for AMU intended for terrestrial food animal production in Viet Nam.
- In Nepal, an assessment of AMR ATLASS laboratory module was conducted at the National Avian Disease Investigation Laboratory in Chitwan from 14 to 15 July 2022. The mission was led by team members and trained ATLASS national assessors from the FAO Nepal ECTAD Programme, along with with observers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development.
- Team members from FAO Cambodia ECTAD programme held meetings with catfish farmers in Kandal and Prey Veng provinces from 18 to 20 July 2022. This was following the pilot

[4] https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc0895en

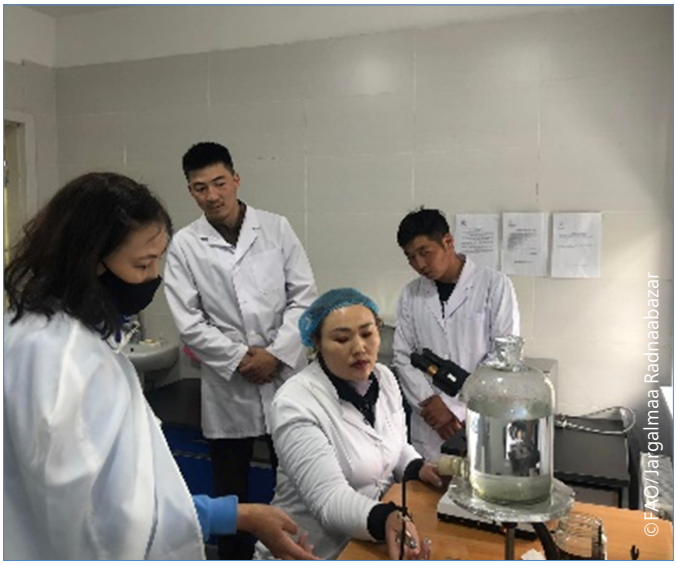
surveillance on *Aeromonas hydrophila* in striped catfish in March. The Cambodian National Animal Health and Research Institute and the Department of Aquaculture Development worked with FAO to share the surveillance findings, raise awareness of good farming practices and promote the prudent use of antimicrobials in aquaculture.

- Enkhtur Byakharjav, FAO Mongolia AMR Codex Texts (ACT) Project Coordinator, attended two regional meetings of the Mongolian Veterinary Medical Association where he presented the ACT Project to 320 public and private veterinarians. He raised awareness on AMR and AMU using FAO training materials. He also presented the results of an AMR survey conducted in 2021, which outlined the development of the Mongolian National Action Plan on AMR.

AMR Codex Texts (ACT) project has a coordinator in Pakistan

Farooq Tahir is the national project coordinator in Pakistan of the new AMR Codex Texts (ACT) project: Implementation of Codex standards to support containment and reduction of foodborne antimicrobial resistance. He will lead the project's activities in the country.

"Pakistan is a country of about 220 million people and has an agro livestock-based economy, where 40 percent of the population is directly or indirectly engaged with livestock farming. Antimicrobial resistance is an emerging public health challenge, not only globally but also locally, with serious food safety and food security implications. I am very excited to join this important project," said Tahir on his appointment.



In his new position, Tahir will be responsible for coordinating activities to increase AMR awareness, surveillance and governance in Pakistan. He is a veterinary microbiologist and field epidemiologist with about ten years of experience in disease diagnosis, monitoring and surveillance.

The ACT project works nationally and globally to promote the adoption of Codex standards that will lead to better management of foodborne AMR according to the needs of the six participating countries the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cambodia, Colombia, Mongolia, Nepal and Pakistan). The experiences gained in the project countries will be shared to plan future programmes in other countries and regions.[5]

FAO mission assesses ability of labs to detect AMR in food and agriculture in Mongolia

As part of the new AMR Codex Texts (ACT) project, laboratory experts from FAO led a mission to assess the antimicrobial resistance surveillance system in Mongolia. In addition, the mission also engaged stakeholders from the food and agriculture sectors to raise their awareness of foodborne AMR.

The aim of this mission was to assess the ability of the national laboratories to detect AMR in the food and agriculture sectors. The assessment considered activities related to data collection and analysis, governance, communication, sustainability, and identifying next steps," said Jargalmaa Radnaabazar, the ACT project coordinator in Mongolia.

The international laboratory experts introduced the FAO Assessment Tool for Laboratories and Antimicrobial resistance Surveillance Systems (FAO ATLASS) to 25 laboratory specialists. This ATLASS tool was developed to help countries systematically assess the various factors that are necessary to sustain laboratory operations. Following the introductory workshop, the FAO team visited five laboratories to train two national assessors on how to apply the tool to identify areas for improvement. The future assessments will be conducted by the national assessors. The findings from these site visits will be incorporated into the ACT project workplan.[6]

[5] https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/news-and-events/news-details/en/c/1600211/
[6] https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/news-and-events/news-details/en/c/1599338/

Regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean

- European Union-funded Tripartite AMR project: July 2022 in Mexico City, FAO RLC held a public–private roundtable discussion on Policy Guidelines for AMR Containment in the Production and Use of Medicated Feed - Moving towards decision-making.
- The official sector on animal feeding from seven South American countries and representatives from national private associations (embodying about 80 percent of the regional feed production) agreed on the importance of the animal feed sector as part of the AMR response and its governance, defined from animal production systems. Gaps and opportunities were identified to strengthen the public and private components of AMR risk management, as a shared responsibility.
- FAO RLC advances in the systematization of policy benchmarks for AMR containment in the medicated feed sector. A validation process with WOAH, SENASA Argentina and SAG Chile was recently completed. The tool compiles and systematizes a set of policy recommendations associated with AMR through a stepwise approach, from production to use of medicated feed. The objective is to support and guide countries to identify strengths and gaps in their sectoral policies and prioritize actions to reduce AMR.
- ACT project: In July and August 2022, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Colombia participated in a national socialization event. During the virtual events, the background, scope and expected results of the ACT project at the global and local levels were presented to stakeholders (from the public and private sectors) by the project coordinator. Country representatives shared their progress on AMR under the One Health approach and their national challenges in the area of foodborne AMR.
- AMR- MPTF Peru: The FAO AMR Reference Center, UISDC-SENASICA conducted a virtual training event entitled Diagnostic Methods on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) aimed at technicians from four official laboratories in Peru, from 22 to 26 August, 2022. The laboratories were from food safety (DIGESA, Ministry of Health), fisheries (SANIPES, Ministry of Production), animal health (SENASA, Ministry of Agriculture) and plant health (SENASA, Ministry of Agriculture).

FAO Reference Centres for AMR

Thailand

The first course of the FAO RAP Virtual Learning Centre on AMR[7] was launched on 1 August 2022. The seven-week course was developed by FAO RAP in collaboration with key technical colleagues from the AMR WG and the FAO Reference Centre for AMR at Chulalongkorn University. It focused on capacity building for monitoring and surveillance of AMR in bacteria from healthy food animals.

[7] https://virtual-learning-center.fao.org/course/index.php?categoryid=4

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