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First Meeting of the AMR Technical Advisory Group of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (AMR TAG - SAARC)

July 5-7 2021

14:00 – 16:00 (Bangkok time) | Virtual

Draft Concept Note

Title: First Meeting of the AMR Technical Advisory Group (AMR TAG) of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

Responsible Officer: Mary Joy Gordoncillo, AMR Regional Project Coordinator

Background and justification:

The preliminary Meeting of the AMR Technical Advisory Group for South Asia was held on 19-21 August 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. This initial meeting gathered national and international experts on AMR to initially develop the Terms of References for the TAG, as well as discuss emerging technical issues on AMR surveillance and current needs in setting up and sustaining a harmonized AMR surveillance within countries and across the region. The meeting was attended by seven of the eight SAARC Member States (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) and the SAARC Secretariat. In addition, the meeting was also participated by AMR leading institutions in the region including the Singapore Food Agency (SFA), APQA of Republic of Korea, Chulalongkorn University Veterinary AMR (CU VET AMR) Cluster, Bureau of Quality Control of Livestock Products (BQCLP) of Thailand, Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR) of New Zealand, and the Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia (NACA). The FAO Headquarters from Rome Italy and the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO RAP) were also joined by international partners from the World Organisation for Animal Health Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (OIE RR AP), World Health Organization South East Asia Regional Office (WHO SEARO), Utrecht University of Netherlands, US Agency for International Development, DAI, and Mott MacDonald. The Summary, conclusion, and recommendations from the meeting is attached here (Annex 1).

This initial meeting discussed the current needs in setting up and sustaining a harmonized AMR surveillance within countries and across the region. In view of establishing a future collective force envisioned to mutually strengthen national systems on AMR surveillance, provide timely exchange of information for national and regional policy decisions, and that which will encourage political support to continued and sustained implementation of AMR mitigative actions, recommendations were put forward to the Member States, to FAO, to international experts and partners, and to SAARC, for whom the meeting recommended to coordinate the nomination of and facilitate arrangements for the next meeting of the AMR TAG.

Taking off from this 2019 recommendation, SAARC is now organizing the membership of the AMR TAG of SAARC and is now actively seeking nominations from each of its member states the following: one (1) technical expert on AMR in livestock per country, nominated by the government and one (1) technical expert on AMR in the most relevant discipline (e.g., aquaculture, crops, OIE national focal point for veterinary product and etc.) per country. Nominations are also being sought to create the pool of external AMR experts¹, which may come from research/academia, AMR reference centres (3-5 of these external experts will be invited in each meeting, based on the topic or subject). To complete the TAG, as per the Terms of References indicated, representatives from Regional Tripartite Organizations of FAO, OIE, and WHO will also be participating to support countries.

¹ An external expert roster, as nominated by countries, will be developed by the AMR TAG of South Asia

As a technical platform for AMR discussions concerning the region, this AMR TAG for SAARC is envisioned to: (1) provide technical advice and inputs to the AMR regional surveillance guidelines, ensuring its continued relevance to South Asia; (2) facilitate AMR data sharing across South Asia, with regionally agreed minimum dataset; (3) take the lead in the regional harmonization of AMR data analysis and reporting; (4) facilitate and coordinate activities and inputs from relevant stakeholders (e.g., SAARC epidemiology and laboratory networks) on matters related to AMR; (5) provide evidence-based AMR advice and recommendations to SAARC-CVOs; (6) communicate and advocate AMR findings to relevant policy bodies, development partners, and key stakeholders, and (7) establish and form linkages with other relevant platforms (e.g. residues and/or AMU surveillance).

To move forward with its operationalization, SAARC, with technical support from FAO RAP, is also organizing the **“First Meeting of the AMR Technical Advisory Group of SAARC”** on **5-7 July 2021** every **14:00 – 16:00 (BKK time)** to (virtually) bring together the nominated TAG members for a regional discussion. Taking into consideration the safety of the prospective participants under the ongoing pandemic situation, the meeting will be held as a series of virtual sessions via the zoom platform.

This meeting will follow through with the outcomes from the preliminary AMR TAG meeting in 2019, and will aim to: (1) provide updates on national, regional, and global initiatives on AMR surveillance; (2) review the progress made to date with regards to the 2019 recommendations; (3) identify additional cross-cutting regional concerns and determine the ways forward to collectively address these as a region; and (4) plan on the ways forward for the AMR Technical Advisory Group (AMR TAG) for SAARC, taking into context the agreed Terms of References (TORs) of the AMR TAG for SAARC (Annex 2).

Objectives/Outcomes

The Objectives of *The 1st Meeting of the AMR Technical Advisory Group for SAARC* aims to:

1. Provide updates on national, regional, and global initiatives on AMR surveillance;
2. Review the progress made to date with regards to the 2019 recommendations;
3. Identify additional cross-cutting regional concerns (Technical Items) and determine the ways forward to collectively address these as a region;
4. Plan on the ways forward for the AMR Technical Advisory Group (AMR TAG) for SAARC, taking into context the agreed Terms of References (TORs) of the AMR TAG for SAARC

Expected Outputs:

1. A summary of ongoing initiatives on AMR surveillance South Asia;
2. A list of accessible tools and resources for AMR surveillance for South Asia;
3. A list of priority technical needs/technical items to be addressed for South Asia;
4. Plan of action for the AMR TAG for SAARC.

Key inputs/ Main Activities:

1. Country and partners presentations
2. Facilitated virtual discussions, brainstorming sessions, and deliberations
3. Development of time tables for target outputs

Implementation Methods:

1. Presentations
2. Brainstorming/consultative sessions

Timing/duration and Location:

Date: 5-7 July 2021 (3 days meeting), every 14:00 – 16:00 Hours

Location: Virtual



First Meeting of the AMR Technical Advisory Group for SAARC

5-7 July 2021 | 14:00 – 16:00 Bangkok time

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Day 1

Time	Agenda	Resource person
02:00 – 02:10	Opening Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Kachen Wongsathapornchai Regional Manager, ECTAD FAO RAP • Mr Jamal Uddin Ahmed Director, SAARC – ARD and SDF • Dr Khurshid Ahmad Animal Husbandry Commissioner Ministry of National Food Security and Research Chair SAARC CVO Forum
02:10 – 02:15	Overview of the meeting (Background of the meeting, introduction of the virtual participants, briefing on virtual meeting house rules)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Mary Joy Gordoncillo AMR Project Coordinator, FAORAP
SESSION 1 - Global, Regional, and National updates on initiatives on AMR surveillance : Virtual Posters Viewing		
02:15 – 02:25	Viewing of virtual posters (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants
02:25 – 02:55	Panel discussion on AMR Surveillance: Partner highlights <i>FAO, OIE WHO, CLSI, Mott MacDonald, ASEAN, SAARC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: TBD
02:55- 03:25	Panel discussion: Country highlights (30 minutes) <i>Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: TBD
03:25 – 03:55	Panel discussion: Country highlights (30 minutes) <i>Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: TBD
03:55 – 04:00	Wrap up	

Day 2

Time	Agenda	Resource person
SESSION 2 - Review of the progress made since 2019 AMR TAG meeting		
02:00 – 02:15	Updates on Technical Items #1 to #8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Mary Joy Gordoncillo AMR Project Coordinator, FAORAP
02:15 – 02:30	Presentation: Successes and remaining challenges in AMR surveillance in the food and agriculture sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBA • FAO RAP
02:30 – 03:00	Discussion: Cross-cutting regional concerns and priorities	All participants
SESSION 3 - Identifying priority gaps on AMR surveillance in food and agriculture sector		
03:00 – 03:30	Planning session: Deliberation of identified gaps, inputs from national and international experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBA SAARC
03:30 – 03:55	Discussions: Addressing priority gaps on AMR surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants
03:50 – 04:00	Wrap up	

Day 3

Time	Agenda	Resource person
SESSION 3 - Business Meeting of the AMR TAG for SAARC		
02:00 – 02:10	Presentation of TORs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TBA SAARC
02:10 – 02:30	Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All participants
02:30 – 03:30	Development of the AMR TAG for SAARC roadmap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All participants
03:30 – 03:30	Recommendations and ways forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All participants
03:40 – 04:00	Closing remarks	