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**Recommendations of the Conferences of the Regional
Commissions organised since 1st June 2023**

[Administrative Working Document]



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1. 17th Conference of the Regional Commission for the Middle East

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1–5 October 2023

Recommendation No. 1

One Health: Coordination, communication and cooperation between Veterinary, Public-Health and Environmental Protection Services

CONSIDERING THAT

1. The use of the One Health approach, including effective communication with the stakeholders and the general public, will be key in the prevention of zoonotic diseases and future pandemics and other health threats such as Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), food safety hazards and vector borne diseases;
2. The 27th Tripartite Annual Executive Meeting agreed to jointly develop a strategy and action plan to prevent future zoonotic pandemics through the One Health approach;
3. The One Health Joint Plan of Action (OH JPA), which was launched in October 2022, is a collaborative, participatory effort among the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and supported by scientific advice from the One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) to strengthen country-level collaboration, communication, capacity building and coordination equally across all sectors responsible for addressing health concerns at the human-animal-environment interface;
4. Operationalisation of One Health requires a ‘whole of society and whole of government approach’ with leadership from animal, human and environmental sectors, community, non-governmental organisations and academia involvement, including collaboration with sub-regional, regional and global partners. It also requires inter-ministerial cooperation and data sharing as well as coordinated research;
5. Supportive political environment and legislative structure at national, regional and global levels as well as adequate financial support are key for the successful implementation of multisectoral initiatives.
6. WOAHA has invested significantly to play an active role in the Tripartite and later the Quadripartite collaboration on One Health, in G7 and G20, as well as during key ministerial encounters;
7. The UN General Assembly political declaration, adopted in September 2023, calling for strengthening high-level international coordination allowing Members commitment to better prevent, prepare for and respond to pandemics;
8. WOAHA continues to ensure that guidelines, information, and key notes are regularly shared with Members, and relevant activities are organised to provide Members with all the necessary elements to work at national level and advocate to the relevant government authorities to commit and create a national platform for One Health implementation;
9. WOAHA's work has already yielded positive results; one concrete example is the Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway being considered as one of the selection criteria for the Pandemic Fund applications used by the World Bank;
10. The recommendations of the Quadripartite Regional Meeting, held in Muscat in May 2023, to accelerate the implementation of One Health in Eastern Mediterranean Region and that the

'Friends of One Health' group facilitates discussions and exchanges with key partners regarding the articulation of information to be included in the pandemic treaty to ensure the animal health sector is taken into account and included at all levels of the negotiations; and

11. The Regional One Health Operational Framework is aligned with the Global Quadripartite OH JPA and aims to support Members to accelerate the implementation of the One Health concept at national level.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Members recognise the importance of the One Health approach in the prevention of zoonotic diseases, future pandemics and other health threats at the animal-human-environment interface and therefore, equitably allocate sufficient and sustainable funding, domestic and international resources across health sectors to support One Health coordination activities;
2. Members address legislative gaps to ensure that there is a solid legal foundation for One Health coordination and implementation, including policies and legislation that promote intersectoral collaboration and information sharing as well as integration of the environmental health considerations into animal and human health policies and programs, including at regional and subregional level;
3. Members encourage and facilitate collaboration between human health, animal health and environmental health sectors, including research and academia, through establishing or strengthening One Health platforms, plans, strategies and multisectoral coordination mechanisms, as well as Monitoring & Evaluation frameworks;
4. Members ensure the sustainability of communication and information sharing channels between sectors.
5. Members recognise themselves as partners in the health sector and take advantage of the clear strategy and tools available to ensure the operationalisation of the One Health approach at national level, including being part of the 'Friends of One Health' group;
6. Members raise awareness on the importance of the One Health approach to foster political support, create trust with government officials, health workers, veterinarians and farmers, as well as with different civil societies and stakeholders to encourage government officials prioritising One Health in their policies and allocating resources for the operationalisation of One Health at national level;
7. Members take advantage of all the support provided by WOAHA in order to mobilise national authorities and ensure leadership at national level so that the animal health sector is well involved in the One Health agenda, responsibilities regarding One Health are appropriately shared between the relevant sectors, and the contribution of the Veterinary Services to the national, regional and global health security is well recognised by all relevant actors;
8. Members invest in capacity building and training initiatives to enhance the skills and knowledge of the veterinary workforce, including in the field of veterinary epidemiology ;
9. Members establish comprehensive and coordinated monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to monitor the progress of implementation and to assess the impact of One Health initiatives effectively;
10. Members improve risk communication and community engagement strategies to enhance public awareness and engagement in One Health issues;
11. Members ensure risk-based prioritisation of actions highlighted in the OH JPA and improve financing and coordination strategies for effective implementation;

12. WOAHA continues working actively to ensure that the voice of Veterinary Services is heard in all relevant political fora in which the global health governance is discussed;
13. WOAHA continues to promote strong multisectoral collaboration with FAO, UNEP and WHO through the Quadripartite Collaboration on OH supported by the scientific advice of the OHHLEP;
14. WOAHA continues to provide support to Members through the PVS Pathway, especially through IHR-PVS National Bridging Workshops (NBWs) and other One Health operational tools developed under the Tripartite Zoonosis Guide to facilitate operationalisation of the One Health approach at national level; and
15. WOAHA encourages harmonised sub-regional and regional coordination mechanisms for providing technical support, knowledge and expertise sharing to Members.

2. 17th Conference of the Regional Commission for the Middle East

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1–5 October 2023

Recommendation No. 2

Ensuring Strong Performing and Financially Sustainable Veterinary Services in the Region

CONSIDERING THAT

1. Veterinary Services provide the fundamental management system for animal health and welfare and veterinary public health in WOAHA Members and play a crucial role in ensuring food security and safety and safeguarding health security by controlling animal diseases and tackling emerging zoonoses at their animal sources;
2. Veterinary Services activities are expanding to embrace evolving trends and challenges, highlighting the need to develop skills and competencies to adapt to these changes;
3. Veterinary Services generate significant financial resources from services rendered and the need for increasing financial investments and funding for animal health and food safety;
4. The increasing risk of global health threats, particularly outbreaks of transboundary animal diseases and emerging zoonoses, can rapidly expand to affect multiple Members, highlighting the need for mutual assistance among Members and collective and coordinated preparedness and response, nationally, regionally and globally;
5. The Middle East region remains vulnerable to increased risk of introduction and spread of animal diseases and zoonoses via trade and cross border movements of animals and animal products;
6. Controlling transboundary animal diseases of concern for the Middle East (such as peste des petits ruminants [PPR] and food and mouth disease) are a shared interest between infected and uninfected Members and should be considered as a global public good;
7. The PVS Pathway missions conducted over the past decade have shown that Veterinary Services are chronically under-funded in many Members with critical deficiencies in various competencies of the veterinary domain;
8. Members in the Middle East give a strategic importance to capacity building to develop and maintain a skilled, competent and appropriately resourced workforce in order to address the challenges facing national Veterinary Services in the region; and
9. During the 15th Conference of the Regional Commission for the Middle East, Members were encouraged to facilitate the establishment of legal and administrative frameworks for effective, efficient and sustainable Public-Private Partnerships.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Members deploy all efforts to further invest in the animal health sector and the Veterinary Services to strengthen their governance, sustainability and capabilities to meet national, regional and international obligations, including with WOAHA, therefore contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030;
2. Members develop a regional strategy creating an enabling environment for cooperation, collaboration and solidarity between the Members in the region and beyond to collectively

address challenges facing the Veterinary Services, including the risk of introduction and spread of diseases through uncontrolled cross border animal movements, regional and interregional trade.

3. Members further engage in the PVS Pathway and implement the relevant PVS report recommendations to improve the capability of their Veterinary Services for effective control of the sanitary status of animals and animal products;
4. Members pursue their efforts to update and complete their legislative and regulatory frameworks to increase authority of each element in the veterinary domain, and to implement and enforce the overall animal health and welfare policies and strategies in compliance with WOAHS standards;
5. Members strengthen existing national financial mechanisms and actively seek alternative financial arrangements, for example engaging with the private sector and other relevant competent authorities to help leverage the necessary expertise and resources, developing advocacy packages to build the case for engagement and investment in animal health, while setting up priorities and generating additional revenue streams for long-term sustainability;
6. Members commit to capacity building activities, in coordination with WOAHS and development partners, to strengthen the competencies of public and private veterinary services for ensuring better animal health and welfare and safer trade in animals and animal products;
7. Members work actively with WOAHS and partners to utilise funding opportunities for building resilient and sustainable health systems including prevention, preparedness and response to pandemics, global strategies and initiatives and other global efforts such as prevention and control of AMR, global eradication of PPR and rabies by 2030.
8. WOAHS continues to support Members through the PVS Pathway and associated capacity building programmes to improve the performance of their Veterinary Services (VS) particularly in management and regulatory aspects, strategic planning, animal health surveillance systems, laboratory capacities, disease control policies and trade in animals and animal products;
9. WOAHS works closely with partners such as FAO, WHO and UNEP, as well as resource partners to support Members in building the capacity of their Veterinary Services to effectively manage the risk of transboundary animal diseases and emerging zoonoses of global and regional concern; and
10. WOAHS continues through its Regional and Sub Regional Representations, and in collaboration with its global partners, to support its Members to strengthen regional cooperation and coordination and maintain a regular dialogue on disease control policies and emerging regional issues pertaining to animal health and welfare, food security and global health security.

3. 33rd Conference of the Regional Commission for Asia and the Pacific

New Delhi, India, 13–16 November 2023

Recommendation No. 1

Preventing Zoonoses at Source: Towards enhancing capacity for prevention, rapid detection, awareness, control and research on zoonoses

CONSIDERING THAT

1. About 72% of the emerging infectious diseases that have an animal origin or reservoir have a wildlife origin. The Asia and the Pacific Region has witnessed emergence of several important zoonoses including SARS, high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses, Nipah virus, and incursion of rabies in previously free areas/islands, and that zoonoses continue to pose significant threats to humans and animals, including due to climate and habitat change;
2. Veterinary Services are a critical partner in ensuring global health, and WOAHA has developed international standards and guidelines as well as initiatives, strategies and tools, in collaboration with partners, to support Members in ensuring global animal health and the operationalisation of the One Health approach;
3. The 31st Conference of the Regional Commission for Asia and the Pacific recommended Members to establish or sustain Multisectoral Coordination Mechanisms (MCMs), for zoonotic diseases issues, in consultation and agreement with relevant partners and stakeholders, and with identification of reliable functions, mechanisms, infrastructure and resources, under a clear governance;
4. The importance of reviewing the progress and challenges faced by Members' Veterinary Services in the Region on zoonotic diseases, the state-of-play for MCMs, research on vector-borne zoonoses, information sharing and risk assessments since the two questionnaire surveys in 2019 that identified difficulties in terms of government support, availability of resources and technical capacity, hampering the creation of new MCMs in some Members;
5. The One Health Joint Plan of Action (OH JPA), which was launched in October 2022, is a collaborative, participatory effort among FAO, UNEP, WHO and WOAHA and supported by scientific advice from the One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) to strengthen country-level collaboration, communication, capacity building, and coordination equally across all sectors responsible for addressing health concerns at the human-animal-environment interface;
6. The 2023 survey questionnaire identified that Members' MCM capacities appeared to be low regarding either the coordination mechanisms, response coordination to zoonotic diseases events or the engagement of the environment and wildlife sectors, and that solid MCMs and collaboration frameworks among the wildlife, environmental and veterinary sectors are key;
7. The epidemiological capacity, surveillance and laboratory systems are critical for early warning, event confirmation and rapid response, whereas effective biosecurity systems and an effective multisectoral workforce strategy and workforce training are essential for prevention and research on zoonoses; and
8. Various initiatives on OH at global and regional levels for long-term financing to strengthen critical pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response capabilities in low- and middle-income countries, including contributing to the reduction of pandemic risk by strengthening environmental aspects of OH.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Members recognise the importance of a One Health risk-based approach in the prevention of zoonoses, future pandemics and other health threats at the animal-human-environment interface;
2. Members develop policy frameworks and strategies to support research, surveillance, laboratory capacities as well as to improve multisectoral coordination of the response to zoonoses;
3. Members equitably allocate sufficient and sustainable funding of the Veterinary Services as well as provide domestic and international resources across health sectors to support multisectoral One Health coordination activities;
4. Members strengthen multisectoral coordination and collaboration mechanisms in surveillance and laboratory diagnostic capacities by creating effective national monitoring networks under the OH approach, including with the environmental and wildlife sectors;
5. Members strengthen the leadership and high-level advocacy capacities of Veterinary Authorities on policy development towards policy and decision makers, key partners and stakeholders, to clearly define the role and impact of the animal health sector in OH systems, and share responsibilities to improve national multi-sectoral collaboration;
6. Members give strategic importance to capacity building to develop and maintain a competent and appropriately resourced Veterinary Services workforce in order to prevent zoonoses at source including by partnering with the Veterinary Education Establishments;
7. Members take advantage of several important global initiatives such as the Pandemic Fund, Preventing Zoonotic Disease Emergence (PREZODE), Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC), among others to implement the OH Joint Plan of Action and to focus on prevention, including biosecurity and biosafety measures;
8. Members implement WOAHA standards and recommendations regarding laboratory diagnostic specimen referral and transport to strengthen surveillance, disease intelligence and information sharing among Members for collective and coordinated preparedness and response at national, regional and global levels;
9. Members maintain transparency through timely and comprehensive reporting of animal health and zoonotic events to WOAHA as described in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*;
10. WOAHA continues to support Members through the PVS Pathway and associated capacity building programmes to improve the performance of their VS and the workforce, in compliance with WOAHA standards, particularly in management and regulatory aspects, as well as in terms of animal health surveillance systems, laboratory capacities, biosecurity, research and awareness regarding prevention of zoonoses; and
11. WOAHA works closely with its Quadripartite partners, as well as with resource partners to support Members in building the capacity of their Veterinary Services to effectively manage the risk of zoonoses and continue to advocate at the highest-level for a strong collaboration between Veterinary, Public Health, Environmental Health Services and biodiversity, as well as other relevant authorities.

4. 33rd Conference of the Regional Commission for Asia and the Pacific

New Delhi, India, 13–16 November 2023

Recommendation No. 2

One Health Approaches to Addressing Risk: Optimising Avian Influenza preparedness and response through enhanced Multi-Sector Collaboration in Asia and the Pacific

CONSIDERING THAT

1. Avian influenza viruses pose ongoing threats to animal health, public health, wildlife populations and regional economies and livelihoods in Asia and the Pacific due to their ability to persist, evolve, reassort and transmit between diverse hosts;
2. Current unprecedented spread of high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) H5Nx clades in wild birds, poultry and mammals across the globe, including Asia and the Pacific, heightens concerns over the mounting impact and pandemic risk of avian influenza viruses;
3. Gaps in biosafety and biosecurity in poultry farming and sales practices along value chains have enabled amplification and spread of avian influenza viruses, causing recurring large-scale outbreaks and heavy losses in poultry production;
4. Optimising mitigation measures requires breaking down sectoral barriers for surveillance, data sharing, risk analysis, messaging and outbreak response through expanded One Health (OH) collaboration as well as the timely notification of disease events;
5. While OH initiatives exist at regional and sub-regional levels in Asia and the Pacific, gaps remain in systematic data integration, coordinated risk assessment, joint outbreak investigation and harmonisation of disease control strategies among animal health, human health and environmental sectors;
6. Comprehensive OH collaboration promises to strengthen regional preparedness, curb unprecedented threats and mitigate the mounting impact of avian influenza on public health, trade and livelihoods; and
7. Mainstreaming OH requires high-level commitment, adequate resourcing, coordination mechanisms, technical capacity building and monitoring frameworks for multisectoral initiatives.

THE WOAHP REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Members urgently establish or strengthen OH collaboration frameworks, including under the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) umbrella, policies, coordination mechanisms and resourcing to optimise avian influenza prevention, preparedness and response;
2. Members conduct regular joint risk analysis, simulations, outbreak investigations, monitoring and assessments, involving public and private sector representatives from animal health, human health and environment sectors;
3. Members maintain transparency through timely and comprehensive reporting of animal health events to WOAHP, as described in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*;

4. Members build timely genetic sequencing capacity and foster systematic and timely sharing of data from existing data sources among sectors and with the global community for integrated surveillance, including the sharing of field epidemiology data, genetic sequences and isolates;
5. Members strengthen surveillance by integrating novel and innovative surveillance tools such as environmental sampling at the human-animal-environmental interface coupled with rapid action and response strategies that increase speed and comprehensiveness of detection and prevention while reducing costs and maintaining sustainability;
6. WOAHA considers developing standards or guidelines on the use of novel and innovative surveillance tools such as environmental sampling to complement existing surveillance approaches, notably in a One Health approach;
7. Members coordinate public awareness and risk communication messaging in collaboration with other relevant sectors for behaviour change and biosafety/biosecurity compliance;
8. Members establish or strengthen collaboration mechanisms with human health and environment sectors, both nationally and regionally, to harmonise avian influenza prevention, detection, control and recovery strategies, including through Public-Private Partnerships;
9. WOAHA supports Members in leveraging the PVS Pathway as well as other tools and expertise to enhance OH policy, coordination, technical capacity and resource mobilisation;
10. WOAHA fosters high-level advocacy for political commitment, equitable resourcing of the animal health sector, and accountability towards OH collaboration goals in Asia and the Pacific;
11. WOAHA works closely with its partners, continue to promote OH initiatives and resource networks to empower optimised sharing of experiences and best practices, and strengthen regional prevention, preparedness and response; and
12. WOAHA actively engages partners, regional organisations and Members in support of coordinated regional approaches and the implementation of Resolution no. 28 on the 'Strategic challenges in the global control of high pathogenicity avian influenza' adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates during its 90th General Session.