

Antimicrobial resistance

Summary report on progress made in implementing resolution WHA67.25 on antimicrobial resistance

Report by the Secretariat

1. In resolution WHA67.25 the Health Assembly requested the Director-General to develop a draft global action plan to combat antimicrobial resistance, including antibiotic resistance, and to report on progress in implementing the resolution. It also made additional requests, which are summarized below. The Director-General was requested:

- to ensure that all relevant parts of the Organization are actively engaged and coordinated in promoting work on containing antimicrobial resistance;
- to set aside adequate resources for the work of the Secretariat, in line with the Programme budget 2014–2015 and the Twelfth General Programme of Work, 2014–2019;
- to strengthen the tripartite collaboration between FAO, OIE and WHO for combating antimicrobial resistance;
- to explore with the United Nations Secretary-General options for a high-level initiative to increase political awareness, engagement and leadership on antimicrobial resistance.

2. This report responds to the Health Assembly's request for a summary of progress made in implementing the four aspects of the resolution referred to above. The accompanying document EB136/20 sets out the draft global action plan.

COORDINATING THE SECRETARIAT'S WORK

3. The Secretariat's work on antimicrobial resistance, which takes place across the Organization and involves all three organizational levels, is coordinated through the WHO Global Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance. Through this body, all programmes and regional offices have contributed to the development of the draft global action plan and are working together to ensure that the work of the Secretariat is adequately reflected in the proposed programme budget 2016–2017.

4. In addition, in line with a request made in resolution WHA66.22 on Follow-up of the report of the Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Financing and Coordination, the Director-General is establishing a global health research and development observatory within the Secretariat in order to monitor and analyse relevant information on health research and development.

As part of this work, a project has been initiated to incorporate information on research and development in respect of current and new antimicrobial medicines and diagnostics.

SETTING ASIDE ADEQUATE RESOURCES

5. The programme budget 2014–2015 was approved by the Health Assembly in resolution WHA66.2 in 2013, before the adoption of resolution WHA67.25; it does not, therefore, reflect the current priority given to antimicrobial resistance. Nevertheless, the Secretariat has estimated that, across the categories and programme areas and three levels of the Organization, there is a budgetary provision of about US\$ 15 million for work on antimicrobial resistance in the current biennium, in addition to the provision for established programmes on HIV, tuberculosis and malaria which include work to address antimicrobial resistance. However, it has not been possible to allocate all the staff and financial resources required, owing to the demands placed on the Organization in responding to the outbreak of Ebola virus disease in West Africa. In dealing with antimicrobial resistance, the Secretariat has therefore concentrated on its response to the requests made in resolution WHA67.25, in particular the development of a draft global action plan on antimicrobial resistance. The Secretariat has benefited from the support of the several Member States that have hosted consultations on antimicrobial resistance, which has mitigated the pressure on its resources.

6. The draft global action plan has been used as the basis for defining the work of the Secretariat on antimicrobial resistance for the biennium 2016–2017. An output that reflects the expected result of the Secretariat's work in this area has been defined for the proposed programme budget 2016–2017, including deliverables at each of the three levels of the Organization. The corresponding budget requirements will be submitted to the Sixty-eighth World Health Assembly for its consideration.

STRENGTHENING THE TRIPARTITE COLLABORATION OF FAO, OIE AND WHO

7. In 2010, FAO, OIE and WHO agreed a tripartite concept note on collaboration¹ that emphasizes stronger collaboration between the three organizations. They have identified antimicrobial resistance as one of the three flagship topics for collaboration under the tripartite arrangement. The areas of collaboration that have been strengthened in 2014 include collection of data on use of antimicrobial medicines in food-producing animals, integrated surveillance of antimicrobial resistance, capacity building through training workshops and national pilot projects, and development of joint advocacy material.

8. The FAO and OIE focal points for antimicrobial resistance have participated in all the meetings that WHO led or cosponsored on the development of the draft global action plan, including those of the Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on Antimicrobial Resistance. The focal points also participate in meetings of the WHO Advisory Group on Integrated Surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance, continuously providing essential and coordinated inputs. This cooperation is reflected in the draft global action plan on antimicrobial resistance, in which several actions are attributed jointly to the three organizations within the tripartite collaboration.

¹ The FAO-OIE-WHO Collaboration: sharing responsibilities and coordinating global activities to address health risks at the animal-human-ecosystems interfaces – a tripartite concept note, 2010, available at http://www.who.int/influenza/resources/documents/tripartite_concept_note_hanoi_042011_en.pdf (accessed 20 November 2014).

EXPLORING OPTIONS FOR A HIGH-LEVEL INITIATIVE

9. The Director-General has written to the United Nations Secretary-General informing him of resolution WHA67.25 and in particular the Health Assembly's request for exploration of a high-level initiative, including a high-level meeting, to increase political awareness, engagement and leadership on antimicrobial resistance. In reply, the Secretary-General has assured the Director-General of his full support for the work of WHO and Member States on antimicrobial resistance. The consultations leading to the draft global action plan on antimicrobial resistance have identified some options particularly with regard to the needs of developing countries, and the need to establish partnership(s) to facilitate development of and access to new medicines and other interventions. These options are described in the draft global action plan.

10. In resolution WHA67.25, the Health Assembly also urged Member States to take action to combat antimicrobial resistance. The Secretariat has worked with Member States to collate information on the status of national action plans on antimicrobial resistance and on regulations and policies for the use of antimicrobial medicines. A report based on this information will be published before the Sixty-eighth World Health Assembly and will provide a baseline against which future progress at national and global levels can be monitored and reported.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

11. The Board is invited to note this report.

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