

Finland-FAO

Side Event
FAO Conference - July 2017

Date, Time and Venue

6 July (Thursday) 17h00-18h30 in the Iraq Room.

Title of the Side Event

Global Health Security - a unique momentum for success, an urgent need for a One Health approach

Background and concept

The purpose of the side event is to raise awareness, share information and initiate dialogue about the current health security work from a One Health perspective among representatives of Members at FAO, in view of ongoing key global processes such as climate change and the SDG implementation. In doing so, it aims at strengthening the already existing and valuable support of the FAO to the human-animal-environment linkage in countries undergoing external evaluations and drawing up national plans for enhanced health security.

Health security is a global public good that is first and foremost based on actions at the national level. The need to strengthen country capacities to prevent, detect and respond to all hazards is an integral part of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and linked to major global processes. Most epidemic outbreaks have a very strong animal linkage, and the emergence and re-emergence of zoonoses is on the rise. Climate change and the globalization of agriculture and food production has rendered the human-animal-ecosystems interface central for achieving effective preparedness and response capacities at the global, regional and national level. Safety of the food chain, consumer confidence and antimicrobial resistance presents an increasing concern to human health and animal production and health, as well as livelihoods. It is clear that the human health sector alone cannot tackle the present threats to health security, and that a much broader One Health approach and high level commitment is needed. It remains equally important to recognize that sustainable capacity building is rooted in inter-sectoral cooperation at the local level.

Capacity building for health security is a process that begins from the recognition of the current strengths and gaps at the local level. In February 2016, WHO adopted a Joint External Evaluation (JEE) tool to support external peer-to-peer evaluations of the implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) in countries. The JEE is built on multi-partner, cross-sectoral efforts, built on the One Health approach. An increasing participation of FAO, OIE and WHO specialists in the JEE missions has proved to be essential to the success of JEEs.

To support country assessment processes and building country capacities for health security, a multi-stakeholder JEE Alliance (Alliance for Country Assessments for Global Health Security and IHR Implementation) was formed on 22 May 2016 in Geneva, Switzerland. The main purpose of the Alliance is to serve as a platform for sharing information about the assessments, as well as for the exchange of views and experiences among partners. It aims to facilitate engagement between countries and other relevant organizations and stakeholders involved in building health security

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across different sectors implementing the One Health approach. This is done through *inter alia* providing a forum for taking stock of the good experiences at the country level and maintaining them in view of the ensuing country planning processes.

In a short period of time, nearly 60 countries, international organizations, NGOs, academic and research institutions, and a network representing the private sector from different sectors and regions in the world have joined the JEE Alliance. At this moment, there is a unique momentum to strengthen commitment and mobilize resources for sustainable and systematic country capacity building - and One Health and FAO must remain at the core of this process.