



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF) IN ACTION

“ACTION TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF CODEX AMR TEXTS (ACT)” PROJECT

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a global threat to humans, animals, plants and the environment



The Plurinational State of Bolivia spans an extensive land area of 1.1 million square kilometers, with approximately one-third of this territory devoted to agriculture, particularly livestock farming. To support the health and well-being of animals, the Plurinational State of Bolivia has nearly 1 200 veterinarians available, and there are 4 000 approved veterinary drugs for use in the country. Antibiotics and other antimicrobials are commonly used in humans, animals, and plants to treat, prevent and control diseases. However, the extensive and sometimes indiscriminate use of antimicrobials has led to a significant global concern - antimicrobial resistance (AMR), a situation where these drugs stop working or are less effective.

Managing AMR poses a significant challenge for the world. One way AMR can spread to humans is through food, known as foodborne AMR. International Codex Alimentarius standards, guidelines, codes of practice (Codex texts) have been developed to assist countries in controlling foodborne AMR, and the “Action to support implementation of Codex AMR texts (ACT)” project is supporting these efforts in the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Strengths and opportunities to control AMR in the Plurinational State of Bolivia

The Plurinational State of Bolivia has developed a National Action Plan on AMR. Although the plan has not been formalized yet, the country has established an unofficial multisectoral committee that develops and implements various activities to combat AMR. The food and agriculture sector has a wide range of regulations associated with AMR, however, there is a need to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. The country also has carried out various awareness campaigns, but often without a direct focus on AMR.

The AMR surveillance system can be strengthened by expanding its scope to the entire food production chain. Although the country has good animal husbandry practices programs, there is still a need to develop animal health plans that promote the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials. Similarly, those programs are also being developed in plant health and food safety, but their guidelines do not incorporate antimicrobial use.

Landscape of antimicrobial resistance and use in the Plurinational State of Bolivia

- The Plurinational State of Bolivia in 2019, there were 2 500 deaths attributable to AMR and 10 100 deaths associated with AMR. The country has the 50th highest age-standardized mortality rate per 100 000 population associated with AMR across 204 countries ([IHME](#)).
- To preserve the drug's efficacy in humans and to manage antimicrobial resistance, colistin and some other antimicrobials are prohibited in the country ([SENASAG](#)).
- There is a national Network of Official Food Analysis Laboratories (RELOAA) which includes 21 laboratories in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, and the country is also part of the Inter-American Network of Food Analysis Laboratories, known as RILAA ([INLASA](#)).

What is being done in the Plurinational State of Bolivia under the ACT project?

- Collaborating with various partners to tackle foodborne AMR across the food chain such as the Ministry of Rural Development and Lands, the Ministry of Health and Sports, the Ministry of Environment and Water, the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Service, the National Codex Alimentarius Committee, public and private laboratories, private sector entities and others.
- Raising awareness of Codex AMR texts in the food and agriculture sectors.
- Enhancing the national surveillance system for AMR by strengthening laboratory capacities.
- Identifying and assessing regulations related to the implementation of AMR Codex texts, to identify existing gaps in addressing the issue.
- Advocating for the regulatory framework to ensure the sale of antimicrobials only with prescriptions from veterinarians or other trained health professionals.
- Advocating for the phaseout of critically important antimicrobials as growth promoters in selected sectors of animal production.

Project target audience

The ACT project assists the Plurinational State of Bolivia in working with various stakeholders, such as government authorities, farmers raising cattle, poultry and pigs, veterinarians, technicians and importers of veterinary products.

Expected results

- Increased awareness among relevant stakeholders about antimicrobial resistance and appropriate use of antimicrobials.
- Capacity building of a selected laboratory for AMR testing.
- Adopted good practices on the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials in animal production.
- Strengthened regulation on the sale of antimicrobials with prescriptions by veterinarians and the phaseout of critically important antimicrobials as growth promoters in selected sectors.

Codex texts

The Codex Alimentarius, or “Food Code”, is a collection of standards, guidelines and codes of practice (Codex texts) adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. When food producers and traders comply with Codex texts, consumers can trust the safety and quality of the products they buy and importers can have confidence that the food they ordered will meet the recommended specifications.



CODEX ALIMENTARIUS

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