



Call for Interest

on Designation as FAO Reference Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

Members of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) committed at the 39th Session of the FAO Conference (June 2015) to work on the issue of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) through Resolution 4/2015. The resolution calls upon both FAO members and the organization itself to address the threat posed by AMR to public health, agriculture production and food safety and security. The FAO Resolution on AMR highlights the support of the food and agriculture sector to implement the Global Action Plan (GAP) on AMR which was developed by the World Health Organization in collaboration with FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health. In 2016, the FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance 2016 – 2020¹ was developed and published outlining the role of FAO on implementing the GAP.

Four focus areas were identified in the FAO Action Plan on AMR: 1) improving awareness on AMR and related threats, 2) developing capacity for surveillance and monitoring of AMR and antimicrobial use (AMU) in food and agriculture, 3) strengthening governance related to AMU and AMR in food and agriculture and 4) promoting good practices in food and agriculture systems and the prudent use of antimicrobials.

FAO is seeking suitable institutions that are interested in being designated as Reference Centres for AMR to support FAO and their member countries in the implementation of the activities outlined in the FAO Action Plan.

As per the Director-General's Bulletin 2006/32², FAO Reference Centres (RCs) are institutions designated by the Director-General to provide independent technical and scientific advice on issues related to FAO's mandate and its programme. The institutions to be recommended for designation as a "FAO Reference Centre" should have demonstrated, through previous collaboration with one or more of FAO's technical units, the following:

- Active engagement in fields of expertise relevant to the work of the Organization and contribution to the implementation of its programme priorities and to strengthening capacities in countries and regions;
- Ability to carry out one or several of the following functions:
 - Standardization of technology, therapeutic and other substances, and of methods/procedures;
 - Provision of reference materials and services such as quality assurance;
 - Participation in collaborative research of a scientific, technical or policy nature;
 - Contribution to capacity development *inter alia* through the provision of training;
 - Coordination of activities carried out by other institutions;
 - Provision of information and advice of a scientific, technical and policy nature.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5996e.pdf>

² http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/partners/docs/DGbulletin_2006_32_en.pdf

As it relates to AMR, the selected FAO RCs would be expected to have a history of collaboration with one or more of FAO's technical units of at least two years (or less under special circumstances to be justified and demonstrated by the relevant technical unit) and a team of experts in the subject. The RC would be expected to provide the following types of support:

- Provide scientific, technical and policy advice on matters related to AMR
- Conduct training for Member States on AMR issues
- Provide expertise on laboratory capacity and surveillance of AMR, including
 - Antimicrobial susceptibility testing methods
 - Surveillance system setup
 - Data management, interpretation and reporting of AMR data
 - Review of national laboratory capacities pertaining to AMR in the authorities responsible for food safety, terrestrial and aquatic animal health, plant protection, or environmental health (use of FAO laboratory AMR assessment tool - ATLASS)
 - Provision of reference organisms
 - Provision of reagents and organization of a proficiency testing program for susceptibility testing for a selection of priority pathogens, commensals and indicators such as *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *E. coli*, *Enterococci*, etc
 - Method development (scaled to country needs from development and use of standard operating procedures to Next Generation Sequencing, etc)
- Support the global interpretation of compiled AMR data (including indicators, impact measurement, etc)
- Carry out confirmatory testing of resistant isolates and serotypes of particular concern upon request
- Support the quality control of antimicrobials used in the food and agriculture sector
- Participate in collaborative research on AMR

The FAO AMR RC status would be valid for a period of four years. An annual report of the Institution's support activities related to work as an RC will be required. A renewal of the status as FAO RC is possible depending on the activities undertaken and the value and strength of the collaboration. The designated RC will enjoy name recognition and association with a United Nations agency, including the possibility of using FAO's name, emblem and other logos under set conditions (as described in **Annex 2** of the Director-General's Bulletin 2006/32).

Should this designation as a FAO Reference Centre be of interest to your institution, being able to use the institution's own resources to fulfill several of the above listed functions, please refer to the webpages (http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/partners/en/FAO_Reference_Centres/How_to_apply.html) for information on how to apply. Fill out the attached "Declaration of Interest" (DG Bulletin 2006/32 **Annex 1**) and acknowledge the information provided in the "Disclaimer and other legal provisions" (DG Bulletin 2006/32 **Annex 3**).

We would appreciate if your application could be submitted to FAO with a due date of **15 April 2017** for our review.

Contact: FAO-AMR-Reference-Centre@fao.org