



The Quadripartite Joint Secretariat on AMR Progress Report

Coordinating and leading the global One Health response to antimicrobial resistance

February 2024

↓ Foreword

The Quadripartite Joint Secretariat (QJS) on AMR is an innovative model that facilitates strong inter-agency coordination and collaboration among the Quadripartite without creating a new organizational entity. It was a response of the Principals of the Tripartite (FAO, WHO and WOAH) and UNEP to the request of the UN Secretary-General to implement the recommendations of the Interagency Coordination Group of AMR. Thanks to the commitment of the principals, the bureaucratic hurdle of not having UNEP formally incorporated into the Tripartite did not stop the establishment of the QJS in October 2019.

The Quadripartite Strategic Framework on AMR, coordinated by the QJS, sets out a shared vision among the four organizations to support the efforts of countries to scale up national responses to AMR. The framework also paved the way for internal resource mobilization and harmonization, which was critical for the growing international recognition of the Quadripartite as a key actor on AMR in the multilateral system, including by

UN member states and the G7 and G20. The QJS supports the operations of global governance structures, including the Global Leaders Group on AMR and the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Platform, as well as the Multi Partner Trust Fund.

For nearly five years, the QJS has demonstrated that the four organizations can effectively work together around a shared vision and mission by leveraging existing mechanisms and resources. The QJS has high-level commitment and political attention from the principals and the senior management of the Quadripartite, which has helped to enable smart solutions for organizational and bureaucratic challenges.

The QJS is currently a functional arrangement, relying primarily on the goodwill of the principals of the four organizations. There is no formal recognition of the QJS by member states of the Quadripartite organizations. This poses existential challenges in the face of leadership changes and potential erosion of commitment.

The upcoming UN High-level Meeting on AMR offers a unique opportunity to address this major challenge. Recognizing the QJS in the outcome document of the meeting as a key coordination mechanism for the One Health response will consolidate its role and ensure that its impact is sustained with resources and the commitment of the Quadripartite organisations.

As the founding director of the QJS, I sincerely hope that member states of the UN will not miss this opportunity.

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1 Background

In October 2019, the Principals of 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, founded as OIE) responded to the request of the UN Secretary-General to establish a Tripartite and UNEP Joint Secretariat on antimicrobial resistance (AMR). In April 2022, the Secretariat's name evolved into the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat (QJS) on AMR with the formal incorporation of UNEP. The QJS is a functional arrangement that leads and coordinates global efforts across the One Health spectrum by consolidating collaboration and cooperation among FAO, UNEP, WHO and WOAH, drawing on their core mandates and comparative advantages. WHO hosts the QJS as a standing secretariat and work together with dedicated liaison officers in FAO, UNEP, and WOAH through which further technical inputs and resources are availed from each organisation.



2 Key functions of the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat

- 1 Global advocacy and political engagement:** The QJS promotes a One Health approach and supports joint activities of the Quadripartite in the global response to AMR through high-level communication, advocacy and political engagement, and the creation of an enabling environment for the AMR response.
- 2 Support for global governance structures on AMR:** The QJS manages and supports the Global Leaders Group on AMR and the Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Platform on AMR on behalf of the Quadripartite and in close consultation with the UN Secretary-General's office.
- 3 Coordination of interagency engagement and partnership:** The QJS facilitates the engagement of UN and intergovernmental organizations and other key actors in the AMR response based on their mandates and comparative advantages to foster collaboration around priority objectives, prevent duplication and optimize synergies and efficiencies.
- 4 Coordination and monitoring of Quadripartite workplans on AMR:** The QJS facilitates the collective development, updating, coordination, monitoring, and reporting of the implementation of the joint Quadripartite workplans in close collaboration with relevant teams responsible for execution of the activities across the four organizations.
- 5 Map gaps and opportunities:** The QJS monitors strategic gaps and opportunities in the response to AMR and brings them to the attention of the Executive Committee for decision.
- 6 Support the functioning of the AMR Multi-Partner Trust Fund (AMR-MPTF):** The QJS coordinates the AMR-MPTF and supports the Secretariat and Steering Committee managing the Fund. Management of the receipt, administration, disbursement and financial reporting of funds is performed by the United Nations Development Programme.

3 QJS governance and resources

The QJS is a functional arrangement among the four organisations with the following functional governance arrangements:

- The **Executive Committee** comprises the four Principals of the Quadripartite organizations who meet annually and provide overall political and strategic oversight.
- The **Senior Management Group** comprises Deputy or Assistant Directors-General and the relevant directors or heads of department of the Quadripartite organizations who meet at least quarterly and provide strategic direction and guidance.
- The **Quadripartite Joint Secretariat team** comprises liaison officers from each of the four organizations and other Secretariat staff who carry out the day-to-day technical and coordination operations of the Secretariat under the leadership of the Director of the Secretariat.

The QJS is currently funded by voluntary contributions from the four organizations, supplemented by *ad hoc* funding from donors.



4 Progress and major achievements

The Quadripartite Joint Secretariat has attracted significant political visibility as a result of increased global attention to AMR, including individual governments, the G7 and G20. Key achievements of the QJS include both promoting joint multisectoral action on AMR and contributing to advance the sector-specific action on AMR.

4.1 Joint global multisectoral action on AMR scaled up

- **Quadripartite Strategic Framework on AMR:** The QJS developed the [Quadripartite Strategic Framework](#) for collaboration on AMR, a common vision that describes the comparative advantages and catalytic roles of the four organizations in advancing a One Health response to AMR and supporting efforts by their member states, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders. The Framework presents a theory of change and the shared goal of preserving antimicrobial efficacy and ensuring sustainable and equitable access to antimicrobials for responsible and prudent use in human, animal and plant health, contributing to achievement of the SDGs. The Strategic Framework has two-year workplans for its implementation that are carried out by the four organisations under the QJS coordination.
- **National action plan implementation and monitoring:** The Quadripartite organizations have played a critical role in providing targeted technical support and capacity development to countries, including using a wide range of tools such as [Quadripartite guidance on integrating AMR into UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks](#) (2021). Additionally, the monitoring and evaluation teams of Quadripartite organizations worked jointly to conduct assessments and build M&E capacity of AMR Coordination Committees in the targeted MPTF countries, produced a joint country guidance [document](#) on developing M&E frameworks for AMR national action plans, jointly monitored progress in the implementation of AMR national action plans by administering the annual “Tracking AMR Country Self-assessment Survey” ([TrACSS](#)); and publishing the results and country-specific [reports](#). Significant technical assistance is also being provided to countries independently by the four organizations for the implementation and monitoring of AMR national action plans that compliment those provided via the QJS structure.
- **Economic case for AMR investment:** The QJS is leading a Quadripartite technical working group on economics of AMR and working with partners including the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank to model the estimated economic costs associated with AMR, together with the costs of a package of high-impact AMR interventions across sectors and potential returns on investment. This will guide global and national investments on the AMR response.
- **Integrated surveillance of antimicrobial resistance and use:** An expert Quadripartite technical group on integrated surveillance established by the QJS in 2022 has developed and agreed on an action plan for 2022-2024 to develop a list of priority outputs, including a Quadripartite guide on integrated surveillance along the One Health spectrum, which is near finalisation. The Global Integrated Surveillance System on Antimicrobial Resistance and Use (GISSA), now in development, aims to serve as a repository pooling data collected from across sectors by the Quadripartite organizations.
- **Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for AMR:** Since the establishment of the MPTF in 2019, the QJS has mobilized over US\$ 30 million to support implementation of national AMR action plans, with implementation underway in 12 countries with four having completed, including support for a global programme.
- **AMR-related legislation and regulation:** To provide an overview and analysis of international instruments that set standards related to the use of antimicrobials across the human, animal and plant sectors, and their release into the environment, the Quadripartite published the [international instruments on the use of antimicrobials across the human, animal and plant sectors](#). The guide will aid countries to identify existing instruments and standards and to guide both their implementation as well as inform discussions and direction for future international instruments related to antimicrobial use. Similarly, a [One Health Legislative Assessment Tool for AMR](#) (OHLAT) was developed to assist countries in undertaking a systematic and thorough review of their AMR-related legislations across the human health, animal health, Agri-food and environment sectors against the benchmark of existing international standards and best practices. The seven chapters of the tool covers the multi-sectoral, and cross-cutting aspects of AMR-related legislation (such as governance frameworks or integrated surveillance), as well as detailed elements of sectoral legislation to avoid legal fragmentation and duplication.
- **Convening of medicines regulatory authorities:** In May 2023, the QJS organized the [first Global Joint Summit of Human and Veterinary Medicines Regulatory Authorities](#) to Preserve Antimicrobials with over 250 participants from more than 100 countries. A major outcome of the Summit was the establishment of the Regulatory Agencies Global Network against AMR (RAGNA), which will support collaboration on the regulatory measures that have an impact on AMR.
- **One Health priority research agenda for AMR:** The QJS coordinated the development of a [One Health Priority Research Agenda for AMR](#). Launched in June 2023, it helps to catalyze scientific interest and financial investments for a priority research agenda across sectors for countries and funding bodies. It is also expected to support priority-setting and development of policy and practice-relevant evidence for countries to simultaneously address the threat of AMR and support national AMR action plan implementation.
- **World AMR Awareness Week (WAAW):** The QJS coordinates the World AMR Awareness Week (18-24 November) each year through active engagement of all sectors. WAAW aims to raise awareness and improve understanding of AMR and encourage best practices among the public, One Health stakeholders and policymakers, and in 2023 included a global youth summit, media events, technical webinars, and panel discussions.

4.2 Global AMR governance structures supported

- **Global Leaders Group on AMR (GLG):** The GLG, chaired by Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley of Barbados, undertakes global advocacy and political and civil engagement to increase attention to AMR and the One Health approach, including in ongoing discussions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on the WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. The GLG has played a key role in achieving global consensus on reducing antimicrobial use in food systems, unblocking the 2022 Codex AMR negotiations, and advocating for the UNGA High-level meeting on AMR in 2024. The QJS provides essential Secretariat support to this high-level advocacy group, facilitating regular meetings, action plan monitoring, and support to technical advisory groups.
- **Multi-stakeholder Partnership Platform on AMR:** The [Multistakeholder Partnership on AMR](#) was launched in November 2022 and by October 2023 had 150 members. The Coordinating Team of the Platform is hosted by FAO and composed of responsible officers from the Quadripartite organizations. Five stakeholder clusters have been established to provide a mechanism for coordinating views, experiences, best practices, and contributions within the sectors that they represent. Action Groups are also being established to propose activities and set targets and priorities in different fields. At the first Plenary Assembly of the Partnership Platform held in November 2023 at FAO headquarters, members discussed a roadmap for the Platform's work and established the Platform's Steering committee.



4.3 Sector-specific actions on AMR advanced

By driving global multisectoral action against AMR with division of labor, the quadripartite collaboration complements and reinforces action in the respective sectors.

- **Human health:** Human health: Recognizing that other sectors had developed their own sector-specific strategies and plans to supplement the global action plan on AMR, at the World Health Assembly in 2023, the Director-General of WHO called for the development of a WHO strategic and operational priorities document to address drug-resistant bacterial infections in the human health sector. This will likely be adopted at the World Health Assembly in 2024. The country-level operational priorities promote a [People-centred approach to AMR and an accompanying package of essential interventions](#) that address people's needs and barriers, and health system gaps and challenges.
- **Food safety:** The QJS strongly supports and promotes development and implementation of AMR-related guidance by the CODEX Alimentarius Commission, which sets international standards and develops guidelines and codes of practice on the safety, quality and fairness of the international food trade. In 2021, CODEX updated its [Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne AMR](#). In 2022, after a years-long process and with the encouragement of both the QJS and GLG, CODEX approved new guidelines on [Integrated Monitoring and Surveillance of Foodborne AMR](#).
- **Agri-food systems:** Responding to the GLG's call for reduced antimicrobial use in the agri-food system, FAO started RENOFARM, a 10-year initiative aimed at reducing antimicrobial reliance in farm production. RENOFARM will support 100 countries and train 50% of their agrifood workforce and will help to harvest and scale up best practices including enhanced biosecurity, animal vaccination as well as alternatives to antimicrobials. After successful pilot programs in Indonesia, Nigeria, and Uganda conducted in 2023, a global rollout of RENOFARM is scheduled for early 2024. FAO is in near final stages of the establishment of the InFARM system to systematically gather, analyze, and disseminate AMR data from food and agriculture, and antimicrobial use data in crops. InFARM data will also be integrated to the GISSA system and help to improve global surveillance.
- **Animal health:** WOAHA has been collecting data on the amounts and reasons for antimicrobial use in animals since 2015. With encouragement from the QJS and its other Quadripartite partners, WOAHA has now established ANIMUSE, a global database on animal antimicrobial use in animals, which facilitates access to this crucial and growing set of information and aims to improve the practices of countries' animal health services. Similarly, FAO enhanced AMR surveillance, responsible use, lab diagnostics, workforce training at country level, and implemented Farmer Field Schools in 12 countries to combat AMR in the livestock sector in 2023. A Farmer Field School offers space for hands-on group learning, enhancing skills for critical analysis and improved decision making by local people.
- **The environment:** The QJS has been a leading advocate for increased attention to the environmental dimensions of AMR and supported the launch of the [UNEP Report - 'Bracing for Superbugs - Strengthening environmental action in the One Health response to antimicrobial resistance'](#) in February 2023. The report provides evidence that the environment plays a key role in the development, transmission and spread of AMR, offering a comprehensive overview of scientific findings on the subject and describing critical environmental actions needed to address AMR through a One Health approach. The QJS has supported work to include AMR into environmental events including COP28 and mobilised actors addressing the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and waste.



4.4 Global engagement of Quadripartite facilitated

- **Call to Action on AMR 2021:** The QJS supported the organisation of the UN General Assembly High Level Dialogue on AMR in April 2021 and its key role in the global AMR response was recognized in the ‘[Call to Action on Antimicrobial Resistance](#)’, which was endorsed by 113 Member State signatories and 40 supporting organizations.
- **G7 & G20 outcome documents:** The QJS has been engaged with the presidencies and members of the G7 and G20, to advocate for AMR and the work of the Quadripartite. AMR was explicitly mentioned by the G7 in outcome documents from the [UK \(2021\)](#); [Germany \(2022\)](#) and [Japan \(2023\)](#) and G20 Leaders’ Declarations in [Saudi Arabia \(2020\)](#); [Italy \(2021\)](#) and [Indonesia \(2022\)](#). The 2021 G20 Leaders’ Declaration recognized the coordinating role played by the Quadripartite organizations.
- **Third Global High-level Ministerial Conference on AMR:** The QJS supported the Government of Oman in the organization of the Third Global High-level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) that was held in Muscat, Oman, 24-25 November 2022. The [Muscat Manifesto](#), endorsed by more than 40 countries, includes, for the first time, targets on antimicrobials in agri-food systems, animal health and human health sectors.
- **UNGA High Level Meeting on AMR 2024:** the GLG and the QJS successfully advocated for the UNGA resolution A/RES/76/257¹ of 31 March 2022 to hold a second, high-level meeting on AMR in 2024. The QJS works with the two co-facilitators of the meeting (Barbados and Malta) and coordinates the input of the Quadripartite organizations and the GLG and is advocating for game changer outcomes of the meeting including specific commitments with specific stakeholder and targets. The QJS also negotiated with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that the 4th Ministerial Conference on AMR will be held in November 2024 so that to follow through the outcomes of the high-level meeting.



5 A call to formalise QJS

QJS has a critical role in the global AMR response based on the growing recognition of the work of the Quadripartite to coordinate the multistakeholder and catalyse the sector specific response and especially in the lead-up to the UNGA high-level meeting on AMR in September 2024 and following through its recommended actions in future. Sustaining the current momentum of QJS is important both to advance the One Health response to AMR at global, regional and national levels, and to maintain the gains achieved so far and boost the response in the future.

The outcome document of the 2024 UNGA HLM on AMR presents an important opportunity for Member States to formalize these functional arrangements into a sustainable corporate response of the Quadripartite organisations and ensure that the vital work of the QJS is predictably and sustainably financed in the coming years regardless of change in leadership of the Principals.

For more information on the QJS, visit <https://www.qjsamr.org> or email amr-qjs@who.int