

Report

One Health Partner Platform Meeting Europe and Central Asia

12th June 2024 from 16:00 to 18:00 CEST

University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna, Austria

Summary

During the meeting of the Partner Platform of the Regional One Health Coordination Mechanism (ROHCM), 30 Partners from different sectors had the possibility to exchange information on their current activities in the region and discuss about coordination of technical assistance to countries. Specifically, criteria for selecting priority countries, modalities and collaborative efforts to enhance coordination were discussed. Several criteria for selecting priority countries were highlighted. These included strong political support and commitment, the ability to positively influence other countries in the region, significant health challenges that require adoption of the One Health approach, limited capacities for prevention, preparedness and response, and co-financing capabilities. In terms of the modalities of collaboration among Partners, key modalities discussed were long-term planning in line with existing country strategies and action plans outlining country needs and priorities, proactive information sharing and communication, building trust through active exchanges, maintaining an open and transparent platform for Partners, and utilizing existing national mechanisms as entry points for support. For the next steps, the discussion concluded with several actions to enhance cooperation and coordination. These included conducting a survey on communication modalities, organizing regular online meetings with specific technical and geographic focuses, and using existing Partner networks to disseminate discussed priorities and plans, exchange of expertise, data and information. These discussions underscore the importance of strategic and coordinated collaboration among the Partners involved to effectively support countries on the operationalization of the One Health approach, addressing health challenges across human, animal, and environmental interfaces in a multisectoral manner.

Background

The Tripartite Organizations: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO) and World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) in the European and Central Asia region agreed in April 2021 to join forces to strengthen optimal use of available resources, foster synergies and avoid duplication of efforts in the fight against health risks in the

animal, human and environment interface under the One Health approach and in support of Member States. In 2022, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) joined the initiative. Then, a Quadripartite (QPT) [Regional One Health Coordination Mechanism](#) (ROHCM) for Europe and Central Asia was consolidated to provide leadership by defining the strategic direction, convening stakeholders and partners and coordinating action and support for operationalizing the One Health approach across the region. The ROHCM consists of an executive group, a technical group (Secretariat) and a partner platform. In 2022 and 2023 respectively, the QPT at the global level released the [One Health Joint Plan of Action](#) (OH JPA) and its [Implementation Guide](#) to provide tools, guidance and support to countries to advance their One Health planning and implementation.

The Partner Platform aims to convene multiple partners and stakeholders from various sectors and backgrounds, for mutual exchange of information of work in the area and for the advice and input into the work of the QPT to maximize country impact, foster collaboration and joint efforts. The [first dialogue](#) of the Partner Platform took place on the occasion of the annual World Antimicrobial Awareness Week in November 2021. The overall purpose of the dialogue was to exchange information about the challenges and most urgent One Health issues in the region and to gain insight into how these challenges can be addressed in a coordinated synergistic way. On 6 June 2024, an online Pre-meeting took place to follow up on the first dialogue and introduce the background and objectives of the Partner Platform meeting on 12 June 2024 in Vienna. The pre-meeting gave opportunity to Partners to introduce the objectives of their organizations and their current One Health activities in Europe and Central Asia.

Objectives

The Partner Platform meeting took place in the occasion of the [One Health Seminar for the European Region](#) (11-13 June 2024), with the [general objective](#) of facilitating the interaction between One Health partners in order to discuss future collaborative actions to support member countries in Europe and Central Asia in advancing the implementation of the One Health concept.

The [specific objectives](#) of the meeting were to:

- Discuss and agree on modalities and collaborative efforts to enhance coordination of technical, strategic and financial support to Member States to operationalize the One Health approach
- Define criteria for selecting priority countries to be supported to advance the adoption of the One Health approach
- Agree on concrete next steps for enhanced cooperation and coordination of country support activities among the Quadripartite and partners

Agenda

Moderated by Petra Hongell – WHO

Time	Agenda item
15 min	Opening remarks
30 min	Discussion on the criteria for selecting priority countries for support on their One Health implementation
30 min	Discussion on modalities and collaborative efforts to enhance coordination of support to Member States
30 min	Discussion on specific next steps for enhanced cooperation and coordination of country support activities among the Quadripartite and partners
15 min	Next steps and closing remarks

Participants present

In person


	Partner
1	Una Europa
2	EFSA – European Food Safety Authority
3	FAO/IAEA joint Center
4	EEC – Eurasian Economic Commission
5	European One Health Association
6	FLI - Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute
7	EU-JAMRAI
8	CMS - Convention on Migratory Species
9	EHP Youth Partnership Mechanism
10	European Commission DG Sante
11	IUCN
12	Carpathian Convention
13	US AID - Agency for International Development
14	ECDC – European Center for Disease Prevention and Control
15	WCS - Wildlife Conservation Society

16	IOM - International Organization for Migration
17	Ramsar
18	GIZ Germany
19	One Sustainable Health for All Foundation
20	Balkan One Health Network
21	World Bank
22	One Health Center – University College Dublin
23	AGES-Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety
24	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
25	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
26	World Health Organization (WHO)
27	World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)

Online

1	IFRC - International Federation for the Red Cross
2	World Bank
3	Ecohealth
4	EC One Health Directorate
5	ISS – Istituto Superiore di Sanità

Discussions and Outcomes

 **Introductions:** The moderator Petra Hongell from WHO introduced the objectives of the meeting and topics to be discussed. She also introduced the Partners that did not have the opportunity to present themselves during the pre-meeting on 6 June 2024 and gave them the opportunity to present their organization's current One Health activities in the region, namely:

1. Carpathian Convention
2. Wildlife Conservation Society
3. International Convention for Migration
4. International Federation for the Red Cross
5. EC One Health Directorate



- ✚ Outcomes of the discussion on the **Criteria for selecting priority countries** for support on operationalizing the One Health approach :

The discussion highlighted several key characteristics for prioritizing countries for support:

- **Political Support and Commitment:** Countries with a strong political support, commitment and sustainability, which translates into more chances of success.
- **Catalytic Potential:** Countries that can positively influence other countries in the region. Supporting one country that could have a positive effect on neighboring countries.
- **Health Challenges:** Countries with health challenges that require adoption of the One Health approach and which have limited prevention, preparedness and response capacities.
- **Co-Financing Capacities:** Countries with co-financing capacities.

Furthermore, participants discussed targeting sub-regions and/or cities instead of individual countries, emphasizing that diseases transcend borders. It was also stressed that priority selection should equitably consider countries regardless of income level.

- ✚ Outcomes of the discussion on the **Modalities and collaborative efforts to enhance coordination** of support to Member States:

Key points of agreement on modalities of collaboration and communication among Partners included:

- **Long-Term Planning in line with country needs and priorities:** Provide technical assistance in line with existing country strategies and action plans outlining country needs and priorities.
- **Proactive information sharing and communication:** Partners will keep the Quadripartite informed about planned support to Member States and the Quadripartite will reach out to relevant partners for country support.
- **Building Trust:** Foster trust through active exchange and information sharing.
- **Open and Transparent Platform:** Maintain an open, dynamic, and transparent platform for partners across various sectors.
- **Utilizing Government Mechanisms:** Use existing national mechanisms as entry points for support.

One participant proposed establishing an official framework to promote long-term engagement between partners and the Quadripartite, with the UNESCO template mentioned as a potential model. Mapping of actors, interests, geographic focus, and activities were also highlighted to avoid duplication



and create synergies; however, the challenge of maintaining an updated database was mentioned. The establishment of an e-platform/forum for better partner interaction was suggested.

- ✚ Outcomes of the discussion on the **Next steps for enhanced cooperation and coordination** of country support activities among the Quadripartite and partners:

The next steps include:

- **Modalities survey:** A survey will be conducted by WOAHA on communication modalities.
- **Regular Online Meetings:** Organizing regular online meetings with specific technical and/or geographic focuses to share upcoming activities.
- **Dissemination through Partner Networks:** Utilizing existing Partner networks to disseminate discussed priorities and plans.

Conclusions

This meeting was the second opportunity for the One Health Partners for networking, exchange information and discuss criteria and modalities to coordinate support to Member states on their One Health operationalization. The discussion highlighted criteria for selecting priority countries like political commitment and support, catalytic potential, health challenges and limited response capacities, and co-financing possibilities. In addition to individual Member States, emphasis was placed on targeting sub-regions. Modalities for coordination efforts focused on building long-term countries strategies and plans, trust building, maintain the platform open to new Partners, and using national mechanisms as entry points. Next steps include a survey to define communication modalities, regular online meetings, and disseminating priorities via partner networks. Open discussions include the suggestion to formalize the platform, the approach of the support at country, city, or sub-regional level, the possibility of the development of an e-platform, and the real utility of developing a mapping of Partners.