



# TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## GOAL 8 DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

### PREVENTION & CONTAINMENT OF ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE



**TARGET:** In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential medicines in Iraq.

**OBJECTIVE:** Increase access to affordable quality essential medicines on a sustainable basis and their rational use.

#### WHY IS DRUG RESISTANCE AN ISSUE?

Antimicrobial agents have saved millions of lives, substantially reduced the burden of diseases, improved the quality of life and helped increase life expectancy. But in the recent past years, the emergence and spread of resistance to these medicines in several microorganisms is rendering the management of many communicable diseases difficult.

The consequences of resistance are severe, infections caused by resistant microbes fail to respond to standard treatment, resulting in prolonged illness and infections and greater risk of death. The development of resistance also has a negative impact on the functioning of the health system and economy at large.

Improving antimicrobial rational use must be a key action to contain resistance. This requires improving access and changing behaviors; such change is the main challenge of today.

**DRUG RESISTANCE COSTS MONEY, LIVELIHOODS, AND LIVES AND THREATENS TO UNDERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HEALTH DELIVERY PROGRAMMES. IT HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS A THREAT TO GLOBAL STABILITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY.**

- Of the 10,000 Tuberculosis reported cases in 2010, 150 cases were Multi-Drug Resistant TB causing 5 deaths.
- In the case of malaria, no drug resistance was reported in Iraq and no malaria cases were reported cases in 2009 and 2010.
- With regard to HIV/AIDS, there was no resistance reported in the 21 HIV reported cases in 2010.

#### CHALLENGES AND GAPS

- Wide spread drug resistance has been observed in Iraqi health facilities.
- There is no systematic approach to identifying the magnitude of this problem.
- Antibiotics are among the most highly misused and irrationally prescribed medicines by health professionals and this directly contributes to the drug resistance problem.
- Inappropriate and irrational use of antimicrobial medicine is still a major problem in Iraq and elsewhere.
- In Iraq, recent studies have revealed that more than 70% of prescriptions contain antibiotics, which is a high percentage compared to similar countries in the region. The rate was found higher at Primary Health Care centres than at out-patient clinics in hospitals. However, in both cases, the rate is considered higher than practically acceptable in such medical service settings.
- Inappropriate and irrational use of medicines provides favorable conditions for resistant microorganisms to emerge and spread. This can be the case when patients do not take the full course of a prescribed antimicrobial or when poor quality antimicrobials are used.
- Underlying factors that drive antimicrobial resistance include:
  - Inadequate national commitment to a comprehensive and coordinated response, ill-defined accountability and insufficient engagement of communities;
  - Weak or absent communicable disease surveillance and monitoring systems;
  - Inadequate systems to ensure quality and uninterrupted supply of medicines;
  - Inappropriate and irrational use of medicines, including in animal husbandry;
  - Poor infection prevention and control practices;
  - Depleted arsenals of diagnostics, medicines and vaccines as well as insufficient research and development on new products.



## COMBAT ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

### WORLD HEALTH DAY 2011

*Antimicrobial resistance - the theme of World Health Day 2011 - and its global spread, threatens the continued effectiveness of many medicines used today to treat infectious diseases. On this day, WHO will be calling for intensified global commitment from governments and stakeholders to implement the policies and practices needed to prevent and counter the emergence of highly resistant microorganisms and to safeguard these medicines for future generations. WHO will issue an international call for concerted action to halt the spread of antimicrobial resistance and recommends a six-point policy package for governments.*

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- Ensure stronger commitment by stakeholders through strengthening the national action plan to combat antimicrobial resistance
- Sustain stronger surveillance of resistance
- Ensure drug quality
- Sustain infection control through increasing hospital hygiene and strengthening infection control measures
- Promote advanced research in prevention and containment of antimicrobial resistance
- Encourage rational drug use in particular promoting the use of antibiotics wisely in all sectors

### WHO RESPONSE TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH IN IRAQ

1. WHO continues to support the Iraqi MOH in building the capacity of its staff on rational drug use, through national and international training courses on promoting rational use of drugs in the community and participation to activities of the global programme on monitoring and reporting of adverse drug reactions, managed through the Uppsala/Sweden Monitoring Centre (UMC), a WHO Collaborating Centre as well as to activities of the International Conference on Drug Regulatory Authorities (ICDRAs). On the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2010, Iraq has become the 102<sup>nd</sup> country to be a full member of the UMC Programme.
2. WHO continues to build the capacity of Drug Regulatory Authorities and local drug manufacturing industries to meet and apply current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP) and internationally accepted standards for quality assurance.
3. WHO continues also to support the government of Iraq in its efforts to develop framework for national medicines policy and strategies that promote good governance for medicines (GGM). In this regard, Iraq has joined in December 2010 the global WHO programme on Good Governance for Medicines (GGM). The programme's goal is to contribute to health systems strengthening by promoting good governance in the pharmaceutical sector.
4. WHO is supporting the start-up of programmatic management of Multi-Drug Resistant (MDR)-TB Programme through:
  - Institutional capacity building such as rehabilitation of MDR-TB hospitals, establishment of drug susceptibility testing (DST) laboratories, etc.
  - Training of staff in managing TB programmes, including conducting drug resistance survey, good procurement practices, monitoring and evaluation

**MUCH PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE.** *The Government of Iraq and development partners can take pride in these achievements. However, more efforts and investment are necessary to make further progress by 2015 to achieve all the health-related MDGs.*