25 February 2018 – The WHO Regional Office, in collaboration with the Health Care Quality Management and Patient Safety Department of the Ministry of Health in Qatar, will launch a behavioural change pilot project to change behaviours driving the rise in antimicrobial resistance.

A meeting of approximately 60 participants from Qatar representing various ministries concerned with antimicrobial resistance will be held on 25 February 2018 in Doha, Qatar.

The meeting will be followed by a 4-day training workshop from 26 February to 1 March 2018 for 25 participants from different departments of the Ministry of Health to build skills and knowledge on how to develop behavioral change interventions following a methodology known as tailoring antimicrobial resistance programmes developed by the regional antimicrobial reistance programme. The training workshop will equip participants with knowledge of how to collect evidence on behaviours that are driving antimicrobial resistance that can be used to build concept-specific interventions to change these behaviours.

The pilot project is in line with the Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance that calls for countries to improve awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance through effective communication and training to optimize the use of antimicrobial agents.

The methodology is based on the idea that behavioural change programmes must be based on an understanding of social and behaviuoral contexts. Knowledge alone does not change behaviour which is influenced by a number of factors, many of which are cultural and social. Therefore, mass campaigns with generic messages are often ineffective in leading behavioural change. The methodology is based on rapid assessment methods, focusing on understanding local behavioural drivers and identifying local solutions for change. The methodology has been modified from existing behavioural change guides to fit the regional context. The programme will initially be conducted for a period of 6 months.

The results of the the project will inform Qatar on behavioural change programming and the WHO Regional Office will continue to provide technical support to Qatar to implement the project.

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