



MINISTRY OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED
PERSONS FROM THE OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES, LABOUR, HEALTH AND
SOCIAL AFFAIRS OF GEORGIA



Memorandum of Understanding

Between

The International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solution (ICARS)

And

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia
(MEPA) and the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied
Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (MoIDPLHSA)
On the Establishment of a Partnership on Antimicrobial Stewardship in
Healthcare Facilities and Agricultural and Veterinary Settings

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is entered into and agreed by the International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions (ICARS) and The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) and the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (MoIDPLHSA), hereinafter referred to as “the Signatories”.

WHEREAS ICARS has a mission to be a leading international One Health knowledge, intervention and implementation research partnership, generating, assessing and using evidence to support the development and implementation of cost-effective and context-specific solutions to mitigate antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). WHEREAS ICARS, based on an LMIC government’s request and commitment to act, will work with the country’s AMR Coordinating Committees and other stakeholders to identify and prioritize activities. WHEREAS ICARS will utilise existing experience within the country and build further capacity and capability so that identified solutions can be sustained and scaled up at national and international levels.

WHEREAS MoIDPLHSA of Georgia is responsible for implementation and coordination of the “National Strategy for Combating Antimicrobial Resistance”. The human-health-related objectives of the Strategy are executed by MoIDPLHSA and National Center for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC). WHEREAS MoIDPLHSA of Georgia will work with and fully support ICARS and MEPA to strengthen country’s capacity regarding antimicrobial stewardship, and will commit to sustaining the activities and solutions that were achieved through the partnership.

WHEREAS MEPA of Georgia is responsible, with its competency, for implementation and coordination of the “National Strategy for Combating Antimicrobial Resistance”. The animal-health-related objectives of the Strategy are executed by MEPA and NFA. WHEREAS MEPA of Georgia will work with and

fully support ICARS and MoIDPLHSA to strengthen country's capacity regarding antimicrobial stewardship, and will commit to sustaining the activities and solutions that were achieved through the partnership

WHEREAS the Signatories have a joint interest in implementing antimicrobial stewardship in healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings in Georgia.

RECOGNISING THE EXPERTISE brought in by ICARS in implementing antimicrobial stewardship in healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings and the need to do so in Georgia.

THE SIGNATORIES DECIDE TO establish a partnership on implementing antimicrobial stewardship in healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings in Georgia through the development and implementation of one or more demonstration projects and related activities to develop and strengthen the stewardship framework within Georgia

THEREFORE, the Signatories agree to enter into this MoU which will serve as a framework for collaboration between the Signatories. Specifically, the Signatories agree to the following:

AREAS FOR COOPERATION

Article 1: Scope and Purpose of the MoU

1.1. The purpose of this MoU is to define the overall framework for collaboration between the Signatories on implementing antimicrobial stewardship in healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings in Georgia.

1.2. The scope of this MoU covers healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings in the broadest sense and may include economic, social and environmental aspects of antimicrobial stewardship.

Article 2: Demonstration Projects and Long-Term Commitment

2.1. The Signatories recognise each other as preferred partners for collaboration in the field of antimicrobial stewardship in healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings.

2.2. The Signatories aim to strengthen cooperation and build capacity and capabilities while conducting intervention and implementation research to identify context-specific and cost-effective sustainable solutions that contribute to the implementation of antimicrobial stewardship in healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings in Georgia.

2.3. Entering into this MoU, the Signatories agree to collaborate on developing and conducting one or several demonstration projects and thereafter to explore possibilities for continued long-term collaboration on intervention and implementation research projects of larger scale and scope.

2.4. MEPA and MoIDPLHSA of Georgia agree to be fully engaged and provide needed support and leadership throughout the demonstration project(s) and to take ownership of the outcomes and findings identified.

2.5. The collaboration between the Signatories will be coordinated with and build upon related national and international efforts to implement antimicrobial stewardship in healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings in Georgia.

2.6. For the health sector, MoIDPLHSA will:

- a) through the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC), serve as a principal counterpart to ICARS and coordinate its ICARS supported activities.
- b) through NCDC, act as the executing part and ensure full participation and engagement in the collaborative framework under the MoU.

2.7. For the agricultural and veterinary sectors, MEPA will:

- a) through the National Food Agency (NFA) and the State Laboratory of Agriculture (SLA) of MEPA, serve as a principal counterpart to ICARS and coordinate its ICARS supported activities.
- b) through NFA and SLA, act as the executing part and ensure full participation and engagement in the collaborative framework under the MoU.

2.8. In terms of external communication, the Signatories:

- a) shall be duly acknowledged in any work resulting from activities conducted under this MOU and the wording and logos of such acknowledgement shall be agreed between the parties.
- b) may refer to the relationship of the Signatories and any collaborative projects within the remit of this MOU without the prior written consent of the other Signatory, e.g. on the Signatories websites, social media platforms, reports and presentations. The Signatories may not use the other Signatory's name and emblem outside the remit of this MOU without the prior written consent of the other Signatory.
- c) must consult each other's Mutual Media Offices before release of any press statement under this MOU.

IMPLEMENTATION

Article 3: Developing Demonstration Projects

3.1. To implement this MoU, the Signatories have decided to develop one or more demonstration projects to be initiated in 2020.

3.2. The Signatories agree that the demonstration projects should:

- Address antimicrobial stewardship challenges in healthcare facilities and agricultural and veterinary settings which MEPA and MoIDPLHSA of Georgia give high priority to solve.
- Focus on intervention and implementation research.
- Take a One Health approach and thus, when relevant, include human health, veterinary health and environmental aspects.
- Always include economic aspects and whenever relevant behavioural aspects.
- Be described in a project proposal co-developed by MEPA, MoIDPLHSA, local experts at universities, other research institutions and ICARS.
- Engage key stakeholders, including the private sector, when relevant.
- Should obtain needed approvals and permissions in a timely manner.

3.3. The project proposal must outline each Signatory's, and the involved research institutions', tasks, responsibilities, financial commitments, data ownership rights and Intellectual Property Rights.

3.4. Whenever relevant, the Signatories will aim to coordinate, co-develop and collaborate with other stakeholders such as for example the World Health Organisation (WHO).

3.5. For the demonstration projects, a steering committee will be established with representatives from research partners, ICARS, MEPA and MoIDPLHSA. The steering committee is responsible for ensuring that activities are implemented according to the approved project document and making any adjustments needed.

3.6 The Signatories will each appoint a representative that will act as contact point on matters regarding the MoU.

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Article 4: Resources for Cooperative Activities

4.1. Each demonstration project will have its own budget. Within that budget, ICARS will cover all expenses directly related to the execution of the individual research projects by local researchers, research staff appointed by ICARS and, if relevant, other local partners. This includes:

- Salaries and emoluments; expenses for fieldwork; project and research materials and equipment; training courses; publication, dissemination and communication; administration fees (overhead) and external audit.

4.2. MEPA and MoIDPLHSA will cover expenses related to staff representing their corresponding institutions. Staff from MEPA and MoIDPLHSA that is directly involved in the intervention and implementation research and related project activities may have costs covered by ICARS. The specifics regarding this will be agreed on in the project documents.

Article 5: Participation of Other Entities

5.1. The Signatories will encourage local governments at regional level, research institutions, private sector bodies, non-governmental organisations and other entities to participate in cooperative activities under this MoU.

Article 6: Data and Research Outputs

6.1. MEPA and MoIDPLHSA will make available the data necessary to conduct the demonstration projects.

6.2. The involved research institutions, MEPA, MoIDPLHSA and ICARS will own the data generated.

6.3. Research findings will be made publicly available for the wider global community under due consideration of the anonymity of participating institutions, stakeholders and individuals. Research findings may be published in relevant peer-reviewed national and international scientific journals after consultation between the Signatories.

6.4. ICARS is allowed to use and communicate results globally, e.g. in meta-analyses, thereby contributing to the global response to AMR. Before publication, MEPA and MoIDPLHSA are allowed to comment on the material.

6.5. Each project document will specify the data ownership rights mentioned in article 6.1.-6.4.

Article 7: Liability and Status

7.1 This MoU will not affect the validity or execution of any other international agreements concluded or to be concluded by either Signatory.

Article 8: Settlement of Disputes and Representatives

8.1. Any dispute concerning the interpretation, implementation and/or application of this partnership MOU will be resolved by consultation or negotiation between the Signatories.

Article 9: Amendment and Supplement

9.1 This MOU may be amended and supplemented at any time by mutual written consent of the Signatories. Any such amendment and supplement will constitute an integral part of this MOU and will come into operation upon signature of both Signatories.

Article 10: Coming into Operation, Duration and Termination

10.1. This MOU will come into operation on the date of signature by both Signatories.

10.2. This MOU will remain in operation until terminated by either Signatory by giving a written notice to the other Signatory of its intention to terminate the MOU at least six months before the date of termination.

10.3. Unless otherwise decided by the Signatories, the termination of this MOU will not affect the completion of any programmes, projects or activities undertaken and not fully completed at the time of termination.

Signed in Tbilisi, Georgia on September 29, 2020 in three original copies in the English language.

For the International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions (ICARS)

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Scientific Director of International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions

For The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA)

Khatia Tsilosani,
Deputy Minister for Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia

For the Ministry of Internally Displaced persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (MoIDPLHSA)

Tamar Gabunia,
First Deputy Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia.