Role of Africa CDC in Supporting the Biological Weapons Convention implementation in Africa
Africa Centres for Disease Control

Background

Africa CDC is a specialized technical institution of the African Union established to support public health initiatives of Member States and strengthen the capacity of their public health institutions to detect, prevent, control and respond quickly and effectively to disease threats.

Administratively, Africa CDC is designed to operate a decentralized model that allows it to work closely with Member States through five of its Regional Collaborating Centres located in Egypt, Gabon, Kenya, Nigeria, and Zambia, for the Northern Africa, Central Africa, Eastern Africa, Western Africa, and Southern Africa regions, respectively.
Biosafety and Biosecurity Initiative

To strengthen the biosecurity and biosafety systems of African Union Member States to comply with international regulations including the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 and the GHSA action packages (APP3)
INITIATIVE GOAL
To strengthen the biosecurity and biosafety systems of African Union Member States to comply with international regulations including the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 and the GHSA action packages (APP3)

OBJECTIVE 1
Develop a Biosafety and Biosecurity Legal Framework for the Africa Region

OBJECTIVE 2
Establish Regional and Continental Biosafety and Biosecurity TWG to coordinate and monitor implementation

OBJECTIVE 3
Establish a Regional Training and Certification Program for Biosafety and Biosecurity Experts

OBJECTIVE 4
Establish a regulatory and certification framework for institutions handling high risk pathogens

OBJECTIVE 5
Strengthen NPHI and NRL capacities to prevent, detect and respond to Events of public health concern in each MS
Based on the objectives of the Africa CDC Biosafety and Biosecurity Initiative and Regional consultations and priority listing by Member States and Collaborating Partners.

Ensures coordinated implementation of intercessions in BSBS in the Region.

Partners can Implement Directly Activities from the Strategic Plan.

Africa Centres for Disease Biosafety and Biosecurity Initiative 5 Year Strategic Plan

2021 - 2025 Strategic Plan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabling Priority Area</th>
<th>Operational Priority Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Enabling Africa CDC to form a strategic focus on biosafety and biosecurity and effectively implement and evaluate the impact of the BBI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establishment and operationalization of five (5) multisectoral and multi-expert RBB-TWG and a continental TWG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development of an AU-endorsed biosafety and biosecurity legal framework for use across AU Member States</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establishment of a regulatory and certification framework for institutions handling High Consequence Agents and Toxins, or HCAT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establishment of a regional training and certification program for biosafety and biosecurity experts</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
THE REGIONAL BIOSAFETY AND BIOSECURITY LEGAL FRAMEWORK

FOR THE AFRICAN UNION MEMBER STATES

2021
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multi-staged Consultative Iterative Process</th>
<th>Advisory Group</th>
<th>Regional Consultations</th>
<th>Member States Validation</th>
<th>Expert Consultation</th>
<th>Review by African Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate development Process</td>
<td>Through the multi-expert and multi-sectorial RBB-TWGs</td>
<td>All Regionals Consultative Meeting</td>
<td>Regional Experts Review and validate Framework ahead of submission to STCC – Health</td>
<td>Advocacy and Communication Development of Implementation /Domestication plan STCs, Permanent Reps, Executive Council, Heads of States (Assembly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-Weekly Meetings</td>
<td>5 Regional Consultative Meetings</td>
<td>Updated version of Framework</td>
<td>Regional Experts Review and validate Framework ahead of submission to STCC – Health</td>
<td>Advocacy and Communication Development of Implementation /Domestication plan STCs, Permanent Reps, Executive Council, Heads of States (Assembly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desk Review Draft 0</td>
<td>44/55 (80%)</td>
<td>All Regionals Consultative Meeting</td>
<td>Regional Experts Review and validate Framework ahead of submission to STCC – Health</td>
<td>Advocacy and Communication Development of Implementation /Domestication plan STCs, Permanent Reps, Executive Council, Heads of States (Assembly)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Timeline:**
- **July 2020 - May 2021:**
  - Multi-staged Consultative Iterative Process
  - Advisory Group
  - Regional Consultations
  - Member States Validation
- **May 2021 - February 2022:**
  - Expert Consultation
  - Review by African Union
### Legal Framework Domains

| Domain 1 | · Authorization of Lead Entity Responsible for Regulating Biosafety and Biosecurity |
| Domain 2 | · Development of National Standards for Biosafety and Biosecurity |
| Domain 3 | · Authority for Biological Risk Assessment of Agents and Toxins |
| Domain 4 | · Regulation of Laboratory and Facility Level Requirements for Handling Agents and Toxins of Concern |
| Domain 5 | · Education, Training, and Human Resource Requirements for Personnel who Possess, Use, Store, or Transfer Agents and Toxins of Concern |
| Domain 6 | · Transfer, Storage, and Disposal of Agents and Toxins of Concern |
| Domain 7 | · Prohibition of all Activities in the Development, Possession, and Transfer of Biological Agents for the Purpose of Producing Weapons |

### Anticipated Challenges and Proposed Solutions

- Prohibition of all Activities in the Development, Possession, and Transfer of Biological Agents for the Purpose of Producing Weapons
7.1 The prohibition of the misuse of biological agents and toxins. This includes establishing mechanisms for offences and penalties for the;

7.1.1 Violation of the prohibition to develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire, retain or use (i) biological agents or toxins that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes (ii) weapons, equipment or means of delivery designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict.

7.1.2 Violation of the prohibition to transfer to any recipient whatsoever the agents, toxins, weapons, equipment or means of delivery specified in 7.1.1

7.1.3 Assistance, encouragement or inducement in any way to commit the offences referred to in 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 and for other ancillary offences.
• In collaboration with the BWC Implementation Support Unit support
  o Adoption/adaptation of the Regional Biosafety and Biosecurity Legal Framework
    (i) Review of existing BSBS legislation to inform next steps
    (ii) Training on BSBS Legal Framework
    (iii) Drafting/Updating of national legislation in alignment with BSBS Framework
Role of African Union/Africa CDC on Universalization of the BWC

Support National Implementation

- In collaboration with the BWC Implementation Support Unit support
  - Support Member States in the process of ratification of the BWC
  - Requests for official nominations of National Focal Persons for the BWC
  - Advocacy, awareness, training and capacity building of National Focal Persons, civil society, academia, political figures on BWC domestic implementation aspects
THANK YOU!