

TERMS OF REFERENCE
OF
UNITED AGAINST RABIES FORUM

Mission: To galvanise sustained effort, political will, and additional resources to end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030. The United Against Rabies Forum will provide an enabling environment so that members and countries can focus on activities that efficiently contribute to Zero by 30, while sharing knowledge, experience, ideas, and information.

Preamble:

Rabies is an ancient and deadly zoonosis that is usually transmitted to humans by dog bites. Even though it is entirely treatable and preventable, rabies still threatens the lives of hundreds of millions of people in up to 150 countries and kills more than 160 people every day, almost half of them children. An estimated 3,000 people every *hour* face the life-threatening risk of contracting rabies from contact with a potentially rabid dog. Without prompt access to expensive post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), infection is fatal.

Rabies prevention has been possible for well over a century. Louis Pasteur tested the world's first human vaccine for rabies in 1885. Effective vaccines also exist to prevent the disease in dogs, and mass dog vaccination has been a key factor in the elimination of rabies in Europe and much of the Americas.

Today, rabies is a disease of poverty. The poorest and most marginalised are most at risk, not only of trauma of dog bite and death from the disease, but by rabies' harsh economic consequences, estimated to be over USD 8.6 billion per year, mainly in lost livelihoods and high cost of treatment. If no new action is taken, a million people will die from rabies by 2030.

There is considerable global commitment to rabies control and elimination. Among rabies-endemic countries, it is a high priority zoonotic disease. In 2018 a comprehensive global strategy was agreed by FAO, OIE and WHO ("the Tripartite") along with other partners in [*Zero by 30: The Global Strategic Plan to end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030*](#) (Zero by 30). WHO's World Health Assembly has addressed rabies control in resolutions going back to 1950 and most recently in 2013¹, while the OIE's World Assembly passed a resolution on Global Elimination of Dog Mediated Rabies in 2016². In 2020 the FAO Council approved and supported the establishment of a Joint FAO/WHO Centre for zoonotic diseases with full

¹ WHA66.12 Neglected Tropical Diseases

² OIE 84 GS/FR – PARIS, May 2016, Resolution No. 26

involvement of OIE, to build national and international capacities to predict, prevent and control a wide range of zoonotic threats.³

The United Against Rabies (UAR) Forum is being established to use this momentum and accelerate these efforts, building on the work of the United Against Rabies Collaboration. The Forum will expand the Collaboration to create a more inclusive network of state and non-state actors alongside the Tripartite, who share a common vision for rabies elimination and wish to work together to achieve it. The overarching objective of the UAR Forum is to implement the approaches set out in *Zero by 30* and help to achieve its goals.

1. Purpose

To provide a mechanism for implementing the objectives of *Zero by 30*.

2. Vision

To end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030.

3. Objectives

Objective 1: Support the implementation of *Zero by 30*.

Objective 2: Promote networking for the sharing of knowledge, experience and ideas.

4. Activities

The Forum will engage and support national governments to implement sustained rabies control measures using a One Health approach, including through domestic resource mobilisation, mass vaccination of dogs, public education, surveillance, data analysis, and improving access to human PEP.

The Forum will support countries to collect and report programme data, identify interventions that work, and demonstrate return on investment.

Forum members (“Members”) will elevate the understanding of rabies in national and international fora, with relevant levels of government as well as with funders and the public.

Members will also encourage decision makers and stakeholders to see rabies as a public health challenge that can be solved through readily available approaches with proven efficacy, as well as an issue that calls for improving Global Health Security, Universal Health Coverage and operationalising One Health principles.

³ CL 164/REP, paras. 13(e) and (f) and CL 164/3, June 2020 ‘Additional information on the Joint FAO/WHO Centre (CODEX Food Standards and Zoonotic Disease)’

The Forum will encourage countries to engage with national stakeholders to evaluate the potential for new innovations to be incorporated into health systems, and to find and share practical solutions.

Members will support efforts to ensure that rabies elimination efforts receive adequate funding from sources that include international donors, the private sector, governments, and philanthropic entities.

5. Nature of the Forum

- a. The UAR Forum is an informal network of Members committed to achieving global rabies elimination. It is hosted by OIE on behalf of the Tripartite.
- b. The UAR Forum is not a separate legal entity and derives its legal status from OIE, its host organisation. As such, the operations of the UAR Forum shall in all respects be administered in accordance with the OIE Basic Texts and general programme of work, OIE's Financial and Staff Regulations and Rules, and applicable OIE rules, policies, procedures and practices ("OIE Rules").
- c. Subject to the foregoing, strategic direction and oversight provided by a Steering Group that is accountable to the Tripartite.
- d. Working Groups of Members will be formed to carry out the work of the Forum, reporting back to the wider membership via the Steering Group.
- e. The Forum is not a decision-making body and will aim to reach consensus on issues being discussed.

6. Members

- a. The UAR Forum welcomes Members from:
 - i. Members of the Tripartite organisations
 - ii. Intergovernmental organisations
 - iii. Non-governmental organisations
 - iv. National governmental institutions
 - v. Private sector entities organised through constituencies or international business associations
 - vi. Philanthropic foundations
 - vii. Academic and research institutions

- b. Stakeholders seeking to apply for the Forum membership must meet the following criteria:
- i. The aims and purposes of the applicant entity should be consistent with the constitutive documents and policies of the Tripartite.
 - ii. Respect the intergovernmental nature of the Tripartite and the decision-making authority of their respective Members.
 - iii. Be an entity and not an individual.
 - iv. Work actively in the field rabies and/or zoonotic disease internationally and align to the objectives, vision and purpose of the Forum.
 - v. Have an established transparent governance structure with accountability mechanisms.
 - vi. Demonstrate support for The Tripartite action plan related to rabies elimination, in particular the implementation of *Zero by 30*.
 - vii. Commit to actively engage in the work of the Forum.
 - viii. Provide information on their organisation to enable appropriate due diligence.
- c. The responsibilities of Members are to:
- i. adhere to the Terms of Reference of the UAR Forum.
 - ii. promote the work, vision, purpose and objectives of the Forum.
 - iii. actively initiate and participate in Forum activities, discussions and deliberations.
 - iv. participate in the annual UAR Forum Membership Assembly.
 - v. participate in Forum activities and when appropriate in the working groups.
 - vi. support the implementation of the Forum work plan.
 - vii. share knowledge, information and innovations (lessons learned, case studies, programme results, etc.) with other Members.
 - viii. support and enhance, without compromising, the scientific and evidence-based approach that underpins FAO, OIE and WHO's work.
- d. Membership of non-state actors will be subject to decisions from the Tripartite reached by consensus.
- e. There are no costs associated with membership.
- f. With the exception of the Tripartite organisations, which will be permanently represented, Members will be admitted for a term of 3 years, that may be renewed based on the needs and priorities of the UAR Forum as determined by the Steering Group.

7. Meetings

UAR Forum Members' Annual Meeting (Membership Assembly)

- a. Members will meet annually virtually or in person to strengthen and build relationships, review progress against *Zero by 30* and propose agendas for the Forum and in particular for the Working Groups for the coming year.
- b. Members may also meet by videoconference/online between annual meetings, as decided by the Steering Group. The Forum may also hold additional *ad hoc* meetings, as necessary and as appropriate.
- c. To the extent possible and appropriate, meetings of the Forum may be combined with meetings of other relevant bodies or events.

8. Steering Group

- a. The Steering Group will provide oversight and support the Forum to create an enabling environment so that Members and countries can focus on activities that efficiently contribute to *Zero by 30*, while benefitting from the sharing of knowledge, experience, ideas, and information.
- b. The Steering Group will be comprised of representatives of the three Tripartite organisations and the chairs of Working Groups.
- c. The Steering Group will be co-chaired by representatives from two of the Tripartite organisations or by one Tripartite representative and one independent person to represent civil society partnership in rabies elimination and jointly designated by the Tripartite organisations for an initial two-year term.
- d. Responsibilities of the Steering Group include:
 - i. Provide the oversight for the operative work of the Forum.
 - ii. Review Forum membership applications, prior to approval by Tripartite organisations.
 - iii. Organise the UAR Forum Annual Meeting and its agenda.
 - iv. Establish Working Groups, develop and approve their TORs.
 - v. Endorse the Forum work plan.

9. Working Groups

- a. Working groups are where Members will come together (usually electronically), to focus on a priority theme or area. Working groups can be formed by the Steering Group as the need arises, work on an ad-hoc basis, and may be disbanded by the Steering Group when their work is done. Members are encouraged but not required to be a part of a Working Group. Non-members may be invited to participate in Working Group activities as observers or as a technical resource subject to approval by the Steering Group.

- b. Working Groups shall have Terms of Reference that are approved by the Steering Group and that describe the objective, work plan and method of work of the Working Group.
- c. Working Groups will report on progress at the Membership Assembly and will also provide a written report on their activities to the Steering Group on an annual basis.
- d. Working Group themes would contribute to the objectives of *Zero by 30*. Working groups developed against these themes are to be decided but could include:
 - i. Effective use of vaccines, medicines, tools, and technologies
 - ii. To generate, innovate, and measure impact
 - iii. Generating sustained commitment and resources

10. Secretariat Support

- a. The Secretariat will be tasked with supporting the UAR Forum and will not be located but will rely on the OIE Global Rabies Coordinator who will be subject to OIE rules and procedures. The main responsibilities of the Secretariat are to provide administrative and operational support to the Forum as necessary and appropriate subject to the availability of funds and in accordance with OIE Rules. These responsibilities include:
 - i. operating day-to-day administrative business of the Forum (in consultation with the Steering Group).
 - ii. developing, maintaining, and coordinating implementation of the Forum work plan.
 - iii. coordinating the organisation of the United Against Rabies Forum meeting
 - iv. maintaining the Forum website.
 - v. facilitating engagement of Members and the development of the Forum strategy thereby ensuring the effective functioning of collaborative work.
 - vi. conducting periodic reviews of the role, functioning, and impact of the Forum and initiate or consider amendments to these Terms of References, as appropriate, with a view to improving the functioning of the Forum.
 - vii. preparing and distributing documentation for the Membership Assembly (such as agendas, meeting reports, list of participants).
 - viii. establishing a central repository of information and documents relevant to the Forum.
 - ix. preparing the Forum work plan and resource requirements for submission to the UAR Forum for consideration and advice.
- b. Day-to-day technical support to the Secretariat is provided by the OIE Global Rabies Coordinator in consultation with FAO and WHO.

- c. The Secretariat reserves the right, in consultation with the Steering Group and Tripartite organisations, to not implement any Forum recommendation or activity that it determines gives rise to undue financial, legal or reputational liability or is contrary to rules and procedures of the Tripartite organisations.

11. External Communications and Visual Identity

- a. To ensure that the UAR Forum communicates with one voice to external parties, external communications will be agreed by the Steering Group and communicated through the Secretariat.
- b. The UAR Forum may develop a visual identifier such as a logo which will help identify the network to its audience. The visual identifier, if any, will be determined jointly by the Tripartite organisations.
- c. The UAR Forum will not use the FAO, OIE or WHO tripartite logos as a visual identifier without approval of each organisation.
- d. The right to use the FAO, OIE, or WHO tripartite logos, including on publications, may be granted to Members on a case-by-case basis with the prior written approval of the concerned organisation.
- e. Members shall not use names, acronyms, or emblems of FAO, OIE or WHO. This includes the display of any of the Tripartite's emblems and names on any premises, equipment, as well as on any communication and/or training materials, training certificates, social media tools, or publications.

12. Publications

In general, and unless agreed otherwise by the Tripartite or Steering Group, there will be no Forum publications. Any publication by a Member, other than FAO/OIE/WHO, referring to Forum activities shall contain appropriate disclaimers as decided by the Tripartite, including that the content does not necessarily reflect the views or stated policies of the Members. In the case of publication, the Tripartite organisations will agree on copyrights in accordance with existing agreements.

13. Forum membership Website

The Forum will have a public-facing website with content jointly managed by the Tripartite. Weblinks to the Tripartite organisations will be included, but the logos of the Tripartite organisations will not be used as a visual identifier, unless otherwise agreed by all Tripartite organisations. Weblinks to Members may be included in the Forum website upon request by the concerned Member(s) and subject to Steering Group approval as well as OIE Rules.

14. Financing for the Forum

- a. All funding received by the Secretariat for Forum activities will be administered in accordance with OIE Rules. Day-to-day operations of the Forum will be financed by voluntary contributions from the Forum Members, but can also be mobilised/provided from other sources to support the work of the Forum. Should other Members receive funding for Forum activities these funds will be administered in accordance with the rules and procedures/financial regulations of their organisation.
- b. Contributions including donations (in cash or in kind), will be acknowledged by the Forum in accordance with applicable visibility rules, policies and practices of the Tripartite. Contributors will be listed on the Forum website, subject to approval from the Tripartite organisations.
- c. Each Member will, in principle, be responsible for meeting its own expenses in relation to the Forum (including, but not limited to, travel and subsistence for the attendance of the Forum meetings, Working Group meetings and country focused initiatives), unless agreed otherwise on a case by case basis by the Steering Group.
- d. Members shall disclose to the Steering Group any third-party funding support that they have received to participate in Forum activities.

15. Termination of participation in the Forum

- a. Any Member may terminate its involvement in the Forum by providing one month's written notice to the Steering Group.
- b. A Member will be deemed to have withdrawn from the Forum if such Member is not present at two successive meetings such as UAR Forum Members' Annual Meetings (Membership Assemblies) without providing explanation to the Steering Group.
- c. The involvement of any Member shall terminate if the Member: a. no longer subscribes to the vision, goals, objectives of the Forum; and/or b. is engaged in activities that are incompatible with the policies of the Tripartite or contrary to the goals and objectives of the Forum.
- d. The decision to terminate involvement of a Member shall be made by the OIE in consultation with the Tripartite organisations, as appropriate. The Secretariat shall be responsible for informing Members of any termination notices it has received or termination notices it has issued.

- e. OIE may, with the provision of a three months' prior written notice to the Steering Group and Members of the Forum, terminate its role as the host of the Forum or withdraw from the Forum. In the event of such termination or withdrawal, OIE will cooperate with the other Tripartite organisations and jointly agree on measures to bring all Forum activities to an orderly and prompt conclusion or to ensure a smooth transition of commitments (including hosting) assumed by OIE to one of the other Tripartite organisations so as to minimise costs and expense.

16. Amendments

These Terms of Reference may be amended from time to time by the OIE in consultation with the Tripartite Organisations.

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