WHAT IS THE GLOBAL FOODBORNE INFECTIONS NETWORK (GFN)?

GFN is a network of institutions committed to enhancing the capacity of countries to detect, respond and prevent foodborne and other enteric infections. GFN network partners work with countries to build national capacities for integrated surveillance and foster collaboration among human health, veterinary, food and other relevant sectors.

HOW DO PARTNERS BENEFIT FROM BEING PART OF GFN?

- Contributing to the development of sustainable FBD surveillance and response systems around the world
- Partnership and collaboration between centers of excellence and countries with emerging food safety systems
- Involvement in setting up and contributing to global data sets
- Development opportunities for staff
- Networking opportunities with institutions at local, regional and international levels
- Opportunities for the development of applied research in collaboration with partners around the world

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Over 40% people suffering from enteric diseases caused by contaminated food are children aged under 5 years.

Infants, young children, pregnant women, the elderly and those with an underlying illness are particularly vulnerable.

Unsafe food that contain harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemical substances is a global health threat.

There were an estimated 582 million cases of 22 different foodborne enteric diseases and 351,000 associated deaths.*

Unsafe food also poses major economic risks, especially in a globalized world.

Germany’s 2011 E.coli outbreak reportedly caused US$ 1.3 billion in losses for farmers and industries and US$ 236 million in emergency aid payments to 22 European Union Member States.

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Foodborne diseases are a problem for every country in the world but they can be prevented if effective national food safety systems are in place.

Integrated Laboratory-based surveillance of animals, food and humans is an important part of an effective system. It is the only way countries can accurately detect and prevent foodborne pathogens from entering or spreading through the food chain, and to identify foodborne disease outbreaks so that appropriate and evidence-based control measures can be taken.

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* WHO Global Burden of Foodborne Disease Estimates 2010

WHAT DOES GFN OFFER COUNTRIES?

National food safety needs assessments

Access to a global pool of institutions with expertise in the FBD surveillance and outbreak response

Participation in an external quality assurance program for priority Foodborne bacteria

Access to the GFN global surveillance system which includes data on FBD and antimicrobial resistance

Pilot projects aimed at establishing national FBD surveillance systems

Support in establishing multisectoral collaboration between human health, animal health and food safety professionals

Training courses on:
- Integrated laboratory based surveillance
- Foodborne disease outbreak investigation
- Anti microbial resistance surveillance