Responsible life sciences research for global health security

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Responsible life sciences research for global health security (WHO)

- Awareness raising activities and publications

http://www.who.int/csr/bioriskreduction/lifesciences_research/en/index.html

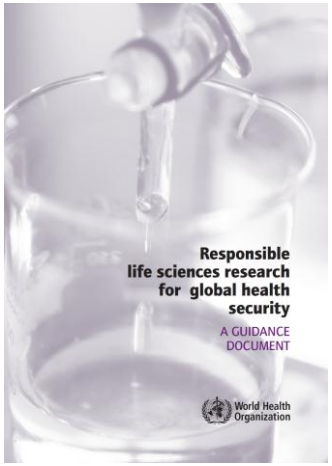
- Recent activities

1. Training course with WHO Biorisk Management Advanced Trainer Programme
2. 2010 WHO guidance and its self-assessment questionnaire

Responsible life sciences research for global health security

WHO guidance 2010

1. Culture of scientific integrity and excellence are the best protection against accidents and potential misuse of life science research, and the best guarantee of progress and development
2. Multi-stakeholder approach
3. Strengthen 3 pillars supporting public health
   - Pillar 1: Research excellence
   - Pillar 2: Ethics
   - Pillar 3: Laboratory biosafety and biosecurity



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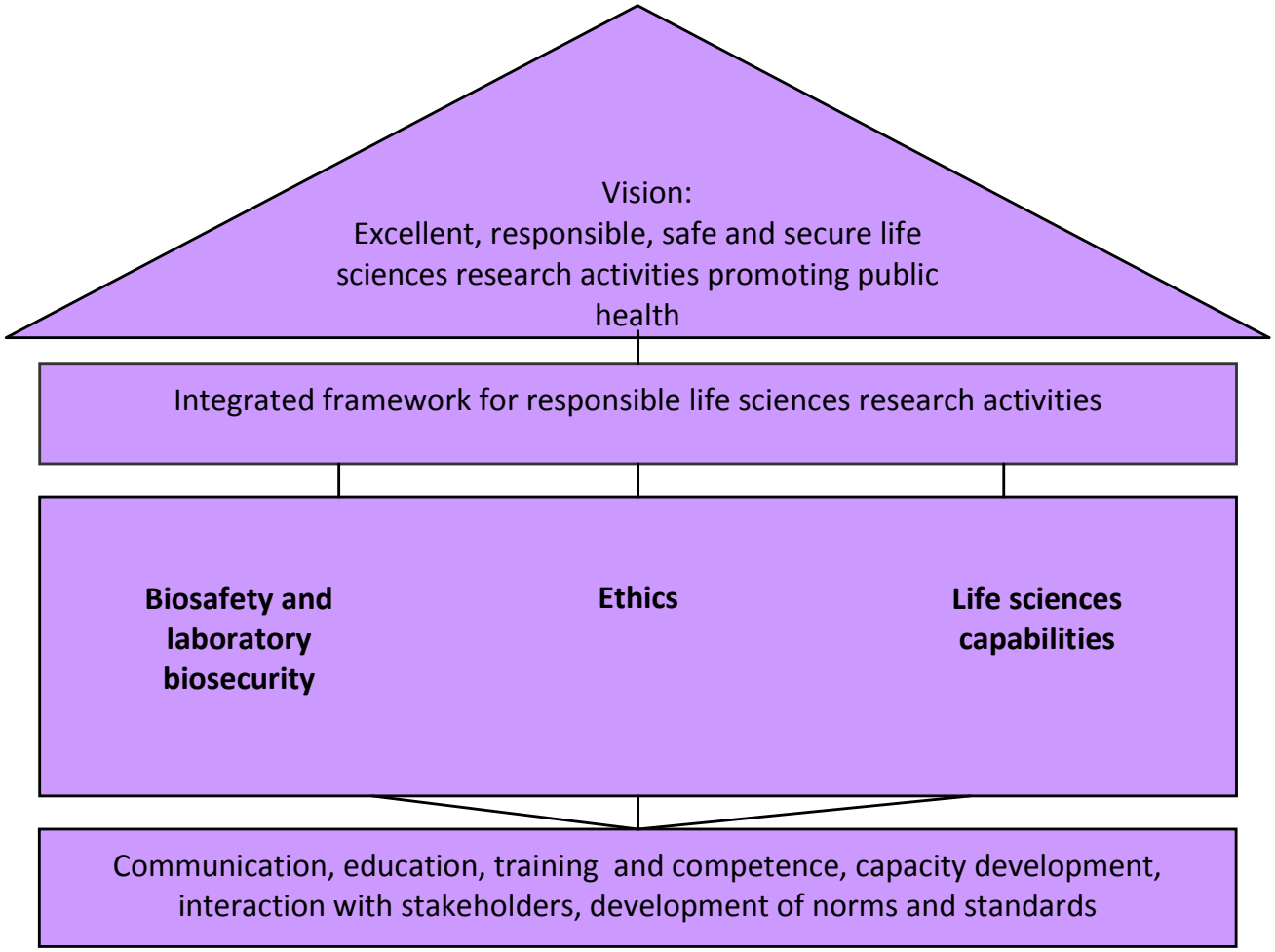

The WHO self-assessment questionnaire on Responsible life sciences research

1. To identify strengths and weaknesses in each pillar
2. To raise awareness on global health security, safe, secure and responsible life sciences activities
3. To identify priority areas for action

Use of self-assessment questionnaire

Assessment of Capacity in Research and Diagnostic Laboratories in Nairobi (June 2011 – June 2012)

1. Determine the diagnostic and biological research capacity
2. Get insights on research excellence, ethics and laboratory biosafety and biosecurity (3 pillars)
3. Raise awareness about the 3 pillars

Some findings for diagnostic labs

- Mapping provided important information

  e.g. Privately owned diagnostic laboratories are an important provider of health services in Nairobi
- There appears to be many areas of agreements (strengths)
- Areas for improvement include:
  - mechanisms for investigating and responding to non-adherence to ethical standards
  - risk assessment procedures
  - measures to double check test results

Some findings for research labs

- There appears to be many areas of agreements (strengths) on scientific collaboration; transparency of research funding, accountability, research priorities aligned with national health needs, risk assessment and ethics committee

- Areas for improvement include:
  - strengthening mentoring
  - education and training on research ethics, suggesting that this kind of training target only a certain category of staff

Some findings for research labs (continued)

- biosafety and biosecurity training
- agreement that education/training is offered on dual-use issues. But data seem to suggest that training may have been concentrated amongst senior staff members
- adequate mechanisms for investigating and responding to non-adherence to ethical standards
- risk assessments associated with the conduct of research. Data seem to suggest that such risk assessments are not routine
- hazardous waste disposal

Conclusions

- Self-assessment tool provides important insights into research, ethics and laboratory biosafety and biosecurity (e.g. mapping, strengths, gaps in knowledge and weaknesses)
- It contributes to the identification of priority areas for action (e.g. what is needed and for whom?)
- It is flexible tool and could be reproduced elsewhere

Thank you