The Action Package Prevent-3 (APP3) on Biosafety & Biosecurity is a community of experts and leaders from countries and non-governmental organizations that seek to advance global biosafety and biosecurity capacity under the auspices of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA), in support of various international instruments and agreements including the International Health Regulations, the Biological Weapons Convention, and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540.


APP3 2021 Workplan Focus: Call for volunteers to work with the APP3 Secretariat to define specific actions to advance biosafety and biosecurity using regional approaches and improving visibility among national stakeholders. Email: wallacsa@carpha.org

May 2021 meeting recording available at: https://youtu.be/g_Milicg9Sw

For information on joining APP3, email the Chair at GHSA.APP3@gmail.com

KEY RESOURCES

Biological Risk Assessment General Considerations for Laboratories

Biosafety and Biosecurity Aspects of SARS-CoV-2

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Monthly APP3 Teleconference; June 24, 2021; Details to follow by email

- APP3 will present an update at GHSA Steering Group meeting on June 7, 2021.

- CARPHA in collaboration with the US CDC WHO Collaborating Center for Biosafety & Biosecurity will host a webinar series on the Implementation of the WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual 4th Ed. (LBM4). Session 1 will be on June 10, 2021 @ 10.00 AST. Click here to register.

- VERTIC Launch of BWC and CWC Legislation Survey Templates for related requirements under UNSCR 1540 on June 10, 2021 @ 9.00 AST. Register here
"We learn how specific actions have enhanced Biosafety & Biosecurity in other countries, consequently, we become aware of our own gaps, the guide towards improvement and the urgency needed. **APP3 is a community for shared learning and awakening for action.**"

Anthony Ahumibe  
Nigeria Centre For Disease Control (NCDC)  
Nigeria
Beth Cameron serves as the National Security Council’s Senior Director responsible for the United States’ global COVID-19 response and detecting, preventing, and responding to emerging and future biological threats. Beth was formerly the Vice President for Global Biological Policy and Programs at the Nuclear Threat Initiative where she built a major program focused on reducing global catastrophic biological risks, promoting global biosecurity capacity, reducing biological risks associated with advances in technology, measuring advances in global health security, and implementing the Global Health Security Agenda. In her previous role on the National Security Council staff, Beth was instrumental in developing and launching the Global Health Security Agenda and addressing homeland and national security threats surrounding biosecurity and biosafety, biodefense, emerging infectious disease threats, biological select agents and toxins, dual-use research, and bioterrorism. Here is Beth addressing the role women play in global health security:

“I have been inspired by a series of strong and brilliant women in biosafety and biosecurity. It was many of this cadre of global leaders who originally came together to build the Global Health Security Agenda in 2014 – and who used their combined formidable convening power and perseverance to bring together the health, security, development, agricultural, and defense communities around a new approach. This remains true today as we work to inspire the next generation of women health security leaders and challenge them to build a stronger bridge between the global health and international security communities and to embrace biosafety and biosecurity as essential elements of global health. Together we will work to end the COVID-19 pandemic, build back better, and prevent future biological catastrophes.

We must all play a major role in a transformative approach to the fields of biosafety and biosecurity, including promoting sustainable, safe, and secure biological innovations, while also protecting the most vulnerable from accidental or deliberate biological events. Biosecurity and biosafety are under-resourced and vital elements of health security and pandemic preparedness. While most countries are unprepared for any natural, emerging infectious disease threat, we also know that countries are even less prepared for an event that is accidental or deliberate [references JEE scores & GHS Index]. Additionally, there is no international organization or entity that is dedicated to promoting biosafety and biosecurity norms.

Throughout my career, I have worked for concrete actions that accelerate prevention – actions which, if taken and sustained, will result in a safer and more secure world by avoiding biological catastrophes while simultaneously maximizing biotechnology innovation and sustainable development. While biosecurity and biosafety are often seen through the lens of national security and foreign policy, they should also be viewed as integral to global health, sustainable development, biomedical research, and bioeconomic development. COVID-19 has cost millions of lives, trillions of dollars, and created setbacks in global health and development from which it will take years – maybe decades – to recover. As it becomes easier and cheaper to create and modify potentially pandemic agents, governments and nongovernment organizations alike should take urgent action to fund and spur innovations in biosafety and biosecurity. No longer should safety and security be tacked onto research projects as a box to check or as an afterthought; or seen as “securitizing” health research. Instead they should be included as integral components of innovation – part of an envisioned future in which biosafety, biosecurity, and “biosecurity-by-design” approaches are considered as fundamental across international research, investment, and infrastructure for life sciences research and biotechnology development.”
74th WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY Agenda Item “Enhancement of Laboratory Biosafety” took place on May 29, 2021, with many APP3 participating countries and organizations making statements in support of continued reporting to the WHA. Read more: https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA74/A74_18-en.pdf

On May 24, 2021, WHO and the Swiss Confederation signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch the first WHO BioHub Facility as part of the WHO BioHub System, which was announced in November 2020. This facility will enhance the rapid sharing of viruses and other pathogens between laboratories and partners globally. See more at: https://www.who.int/news/item/24-05-2021-who-and-switzerland-launch-global-biohub-for-pathogen-storage-sharing-and-analysis

On June 10, the International Working Group on Strengthening the Culture of Biosafety, Biosecurity, and Responsible Conduct in the Life Sciences will host Dr. Tricia Delarosa from the US Department of Agriculture for a virtual presentation on “Application of High Reliability to the National Bio- and Agro Defense Containment Facility”. If you are interested in attending this presentation and/or joining the International Working group, contact Dr. Dana Perkins at dana.perkins@hhs.gov

NTI | bio is partnering with the Next Generation Global Health Security (GHS) Network to launch the fifth annual Next Generation for Biosecurity Competition to foster biosecurity professional development within the Next Generation GHS Network. We are seeking innovative and creative papers for online publication by NTI | bio and the NextGen GHS Network focused on responsible conduct of life science research. The winning team also will receive travel and lodging support to attend and present during a side-event at the 2021 Biological Weapons Convention Meeting of States Parties in Geneva. For details see: https://www.nti.org/newsroom/news/nti-and-next-generation-ghs-network-launch-5th-annual-next-generation-biosecurity-competition/

Tracking BSL-4 labs around the world: This site aims to increase public knowledge about maximum containment facilities around the world and to strengthen national and international biorisk management policies and practices. For more information, please view the map and read the policy brief at: https://www.globalbiolabs.org/
ANNOUNCEMENTS

The IFBA would like to announce an update to their Professional Certifications in “Biological Waste Management” and “Biological Safety Cabinets Selection, Installation and Safe Use”. In accordance with ISO 17024 “Conformity Assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons”, the IFBA revalidates their examinations with enough frequency to ensure the competency requirements being assessed reflect current practice. These new examinations reflect current risk-based approaches outlined in the WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual and supporting monographs in “Decontamination and Waste Management” and “Biological Safety Cabinets and other Primary Containment Devices”. A copy of the study guide including sample questions and references can be downloaded at the following link: https://internationalbiosafety.org/certification/prepare-for-an-exam/

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7th African Conference on One Health and Biosecurity

27-29 Oct 2021
For additional information contact
bobadoyed@getafrica.org
or ifeoluwa@getafrica.org

CARPHA released its first video on biosafety/biosecurity to help raise awareness among national stakeholders.

Click to watch the video on “Sustainable Systems for Pathogen Biosafety and Biosecurity”

To highlight in future issues of GHSA APP3 Community Corner newsletter any initiatives, data, and/or profiles of individuals leading change in empowering women in biosafety and biosecurity, send your contributions to Dr. Dana Perkins at dana.perkins@hhs.gov

A new factsheet on “Gender and Biological Weapons” is available for download at: https://unidir.org/Gender-biological-weapons

The IFBA’s Equity- Focused Coordinating Committee collected feedback regarding experiences and challenges in meeting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) across the global biosafety and biosecurity community. A summary of the survey findings has been attached and further details can be found at the following link: https://internationalbiosafety.org/program-activities/ifba-equity-focused-
Advancing discussions on an Article VII Database under the BWC

The Permanent Missions of France and India to the Conference on Disarmament and the BWC Implementation Support Unit organized an online workshop on the establishment of a database to facilitate assistance under the framework of Article VII of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

The workshop, structured around three webinar sessions held in May and June 2021, had the objective to promote an informal exchange of views on the database proposal made by France and India (BWC/CONF.VIII/PC/WP.38/Rev.1) https://undocs.org/BWC/CONF.VIII/PC/WP.38/REV.1 and facilitate the preparatory work needed for the further elaboration of the database concept. In addition, the event sought to contribute to the deliberations within the BWC Meeting of Experts on Assistance, Response and Preparedness (MX4).

The workshop helped to advance discussions on the advantages, objectives and functions of an Article VII database and also to exchange on relevant issues concerning its development, implementation and maintenance.

The interactive sessions featured expert presentations drawing on lessons learned from databases utilized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the World Health Organization. Furthermore, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) also contributed to the workshop by co-moderating the interactive discussions. The workshop brought together more than 360 participants from over 60 countries. The research presented at the workshop was made possible by a voluntary contribution from France to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

Further information on the workshop including the background papers, presentations and recordings can be found on the United Nations Meetings Place. https://meetings.unoda.org/section/bwc-mx-2020-mx4_workshop/
VIRTUAL EVENTS

Netherlands Biosecurity Office

Webinar Monday June 21st 13:00-14:30

Laboratory Research: Biosecurity and Dual-Use Implications
For all researchers working with (high-risk) pathogens

Can the results of your well-intended research be misused?
If you lose your pass: where can the ‘honest’ finder all get access to?
Would you notice if 12 eppendorf tubes disappeared from the freezer?

Program
Introduction: Biosecurity Office
Biosecurity awareness
- Bioterrorism
- Pillar of good practice
- IOM/F code of conduct
Dual-use awareness
- Biosecurity Challenges: examples from ICES
  Piers Millet (UK), Vice President for Safety and Security at ICES
- Export Control
  Daniel Schepers, Policy Officer for Expert Control and Strategic Goods – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Questions

Free Registration:
https://www.bureaubiosecurity.nl/webinar

https://ghsagenda.org/biosecurity-biosafety/