

The UKRI GCRF One Health Poultry Hub - A briefing note following announcement of ODA funding cuts



The UKRI GCRF One Health Poultry Hub is an impact-driven programme for better control of zoonotic infectious diseases and antimicrobial resistance

Relevance of the Hub to UK Government policy

Geopolitical positioning

The Hub aligns with UK Government's 'Global Britain' policy agenda, especially its strategic interest in the Indo-Pacific region. We can provide technical support for international agreements with countries in south and southeast Asia through links with global and regional organisations with mandates for human and animal health and with national governments in these countries. The context in which we work is complex and competitive. If UK reduces its presence in this geopolitical space the gap will quickly be filled by other global players.

International partnerships/ diplomacy

The Hub is building and nurturing partnerships between scientists, socio-economists, government departments, private sector, NGOs and trade organisations in the UK, Europe, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia. This creates opportunities for sharing data and experiences, building common understandings for collaboration, and using common approaches to evidence-led regulation in the poultry sector and One Health public health strategies. Trust takes years to build but can be destroyed rapidly. If UK withdraws it will take time to re-establish relationships, if it is indeed possible.

One Health leadership

The Hub is a global leader in One Health research and impact activities linked to zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance and global health policy. This aligns with UK Government's desire to "strengthen the One Health approach worldwide" as stated in its Integrated Review [IR, p94] as well as its championing of the One Health approach in its Presidency of the G7.

The Hub includes UK and international expertise on avian influenza, foodborne disease, health systems, modelling and pandemic response and can make critical contributions to the "One Health Intelligence Hub, providing countries and organisations with a single source of intelligence on human, animal and environmental risks" [IR, p94].

Pandemic preparedness and capacity building

The Hub's interdisciplinary, evidence-based approach to safer food systems is perfectly positioned to feed knowledge and expertise on public health risks linked to animal source protein production into the UK Government's Situation Centre that plans to "build on the lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic to improve our use of data to anticipate and respond to future crises". [media release, IR]

We are building capability and capacity in zoonotic disease surveillance and pathogen evolution within the UK and internationally, supporting the UK Government's intention to "drive towards a more science-led approach to the problems we face". [media release, IR]

Build Back Better

As a nation we need to see the bigger picture and Build Back Better by making necessary investments for our future. COVID-19 has (so far) cost the UK taxpayer over £200 billion. It is beholden on researchers, innovators, politicians and regulators to do all they can to avoid another pandemic. Our Hub research and impact activities will make a significant contribution to UK preparedness by improving understanding, detection and control of emerging infectious diseases linked to the rapid intensification of chicken production.

GCRF One Health Poultry Hub in brief



Director: Professor Fiona Tomley ftomley@rvc.ac.uk,

Co-Director: Professor Dirk Pfeiffer dirk.pfeiffer@cityu.edu.hk

Lead organisation: Royal Veterinary College, UK

Focus: Foodborne disease, avian influenza, antimicrobial resistance

Major study countries: Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam

Partners: 10 countries, 27 partner institutions, > 50 researchers

Media: Naomi Marks n.marks@ids.ac.uk; +44 (0)7881 456498

Website: www.onehealthpoultry.org **Twitter:** @PoultryHub

Links to basic Hub information–

[What we do and why we are doing it](#) - a summary of our programme.

[Media release from January 2019](#) - on the launch of the One Health Poultry Hub.

[Blog at the start of the pandemic](#) - detailing some of the Hub's involvement in the response (not comprehensive).

[Case for One Health](#) - a blog early in the pandemic from four Hub experts argues the case for a 'joined-up' response to zoonoses and a One Health approach (as advocated also by the UK Government in its Integrated Review).

[Blog one year on from start of the pandemic](#) - reflecting on lessons.

[Directors' statement on the current £120m funding gap](#)

Key messages from the Hub's Impact, Communications, Engagement strategy

- Chicken meat and eggs are a major global source of animal protein for people and there is an urgent need to meet the growing demand for low-cost poultry meat and eggs in a safe and sustainable way. This is especially so in South and Southeast Asia.
- Rapid expansion and intensification of chicken and egg production can present public health risks, including bacterial food poisoning, the emergence of diseases with epidemic, even pandemic, potential such as avian influenza, and the development of antimicrobial resistance. The One Health Poultry Hub is taking a One Health approach to researching these challenges in different contexts and exploring how these risks can be minimised.
- ***The emergence and rapid spread of the coronavirus causing the covid-19 pandemic from one point in the food system has illustrated the critical importance of research into zoonotic disease emergence, transmission and management, the safety of food supply systems and food security, and the intersections of these – all central to the Hub's work.***
- The work of the One Health Poultry Hub is in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially it will contribute towards SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 3 (Good health and wellbeing).