



UKRAINIAN-GEORGIAN PARTNERSHIP IN THE AREA OF BIOSAFETY: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS

O. Yegorova, V. Pushkina

*State Body "I.I. Mechnikov Ukrainian Anti-Plague Research Institute of MOH of Ukraine",
Odessa, Ukraine*

Biological safety happens to be one of the components of the National Security System of Ukraine whose development and strengthening is hardly possible without involving significant intellectual, technological and financial resources, making efficient managerial decisions, and maintaining international cooperative efforts in this domain. Within the framework of international programmes aimed at the reduction of biological threats and biosafety improvement, close attention is currently paid to developing partnerships on the basis of interregional collaboration. For many years both Ukraine and Georgia have been interacting as partnering countries in supporting and promoting the implementation of in-country reforms, especially in their public health sectors, developing joint research programmes and projects, and intersectoral cooperation.

ACHIEVEMENTS

In particular, the commissioning of the Richard G. Lugar Public Health Research Center in Georgia has turned out to be a «laboratory of excellence» for the countries of this Region, including Ukraine, making it possible to exchange experiences in the area of BSL2/BSL3 laboratory biosafety, to use best available laboratory practices, to form biosafety and biosecurity culture, and to serve as a training facility for advanced occupational training of professionals from different countries

Under the umbrella of international cooperation (e.g. Project EU CBRN CoE «Knowledge development and transfer of best practice on bio-safety/bio-security/bio-risk management»), the R. Lugar Center hosted a training of trainers (TOT) course for national experts from Georgia, Armenia and Ukraine who subsequently become trainers at local level. The strategic goal of this project is to promote sustainable knowledge development on bio-safety, bio-security and bio-risk management and to transfer best practices using the TOT model».

Stemming from the experience gained by Georgia, Ukraine is currently introducing into practice the Electronic Integrated Disease Surveillance System (EIDSS) and pathogen inventory system.

Ukrainian and Georgian partnership in conducting joint research is developing successfully.

As an example of such cooperation one may refer to a partnership project carried out the G. Eliava Institute of Bacteriophages, Microbiology and Virology: «Investigation of polymeric biofilms formed by dangerous pathogens, their formation preventing by disinfectants and bacteriophages» (STCU Project).

The polyvalent combined bacteriophage products with high specific activity against a wide range of strains of nosocomial pathogen was created as a practical outcome of this project.



PROSPECTS

So, over the years of cooperation between Ukraine and Georgia, a strong foundation was laid for further studies in the following areas:

- . development of an institute of international experts, inter alia, on the basis of the «excellence» groups;
- . formation and introduction of biosafety and biosecurity culture;
- . development and introduction of standards for the strengthening of national biosafety and biosecurity systems;
- . development and introduction of the training programs on counteracting and rapid response to emergency situations, including bioterrorist threats; and
- . development of joint research in the area of dangerous and high profile communicable diseases.