

Antimicrobial resistance

The Seventy-second World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report by the Director-General on follow-up to the high-level meetings of the United Nations General Assembly on health-related issues: antimicrobial resistance;¹

Recalling resolution 71/3 (2016), the political declaration of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on antimicrobial resistance, and acknowledging the establishment of the Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance to provide practical guidance and recommendations for necessary approaches to ensure sustained and effective global action to address antimicrobial resistance;

Recognizing the importance of addressing growing antimicrobial resistance to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

Reiterating the need to address antimicrobial resistance through a coordinated, multisectoral, One Health approach;

Recalling resolution WHA68.7 (2015) in which the Health Assembly adopted the global action plan on antimicrobial resistance, which lays out five strategic objectives (improve awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance; strengthen knowledge through surveillance and research; reduce the incidence of infection; optimize the use of antimicrobial agents; and develop the economic case for sustainable investment), and noting the progress made in establishing the Global Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance System (GLASS);

Recognizing the pressing need for investing in high-quality research and development, including basic research for antimicrobials, diagnostic technologies, vaccines and alternative preventive measures across sectors, and for ensuring adequate access to those in need of quality, safe, efficacious and affordable existing and new antimicrobials, diagnostic technologies and vaccines, while promoting effective stewardship;

Acknowledging the threat posed by resistant pathogens to the continuing effectiveness of antimicrobials, especially for ending the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria;

Acknowledging also the positive effect of immunization, including vaccination, and other infection prevention and control measures, such as adequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), in reducing antimicrobial resistance;

¹ Document A72/18.

Recognizing the need to maintain the production capacity of relevant older antibiotics and promote their prudent use;

Recalling FAO resolution 4/2015 on antimicrobial resistance, World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) resolution No. 36 (2016) on combating antimicrobial resistance through a One Health approach: actions and OIE strategy, and the UNEP resolution UNEP/EA.3/Res.4 (2018) on environment and health;

Noting the importance of providing opportunities for Member States to engage meaningfully with and provide input into reports, recommendations, and relevant actions from WHO, FAO, and OIE, together with UNEP, and from the Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance aimed at combating antimicrobial resistance;

Reaffirming the global commitment to combat antimicrobial resistance with continued, high-level political efforts as a coordinated international community, emphasizing the critical need to accelerate Member States' development and implementation of their national action plans with a One Health approach,

1. WELCOMES the new tripartite agreement on antimicrobial resistance, and encourages the Tripartite agencies (WHO, FAO, OIE) and UNEP to establish clear coordination for its implementation and to align reporting to their governing bodies on progress under the joint workplan, according to their respective mandates;
2. URGES Member States:¹
 - (1) to remain committed at the highest political level to combating antimicrobial resistance, using a One Health approach, and to reducing the burden of disease, mortality, and disability associated with it;
 - (2) to increase efforts to implement the actions and attain the strategic objectives of the global action plan on antimicrobial resistance, and take steps to address emerging issues;
 - (3) to further enhance the prudent use of all antimicrobials, and consider developing and implementing clinical guidelines and criteria according to which critically important antimicrobials should be used, in accordance with national priorities and context, in order to slow the emergence of drug resistance and sustain the effectiveness of existing drugs;
 - (4) to conduct post-market surveillance of antimicrobials and take appropriate action to eliminate substandard and falsified antimicrobials;
 - (5) to strengthen efforts to develop, implement, monitor, and update, adequately resourced multisectoral national action plans;
 - (6) to participate in the annual antimicrobial resistance country self-assessment survey administered by the Tripartite;

¹ And, where applicable, regional economic integration organizations.

(7) to develop or strengthen monitoring systems that will contribute to the annual antimicrobial resistance country self-assessment survey administered by the Tripartite and to participation in the Global Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance System (GLASS), and to use this information to improve implementation of the national action plans;

(8) to enhance cooperation at all levels for concrete action towards combating antimicrobial resistance, including through: health system strengthening; capacity-building, including for research and regulatory capacity; and technical support, including, where appropriate, through twinning programmes that build on best practices, emerging evidence and innovation;

(9) to support technology transfer on voluntary and mutually agreed terms for controlling and preventing antimicrobial resistance;

3. INVITES international, regional, and national partners, and other relevant stakeholders:

(1) to continue to support Member States in the development and implementation of multisectoral national action plans in line with the five strategic objectives of the global action plan on antimicrobial resistance;

(2) to coordinate efforts in order to avoid duplication and gaps and leverage resources more effectively;

(3) to increase efforts and enhance multistakeholder collaboration to develop and apply tools to address antimicrobial resistance following a One Health approach, including through coordinated, responsible, sustainable and innovative approaches to research and development, including but not limited to quality, safe, efficacious and affordable antimicrobials, and alternative medicines and therapies, vaccines and diagnostic tools, adequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), including infection prevention and control measures;

(4) to consider antimicrobial resistance priorities in funding and programmatic decisions, including innovative ways to mainstream antimicrobial resistance-relevant activities into existing international development financing;

4. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to accelerate the implementation of the actions of, and advance the principles defined in, the global action plan on antimicrobial resistance, through all levels of WHO, including through a comprehensive review to enhance current work in order to ensure that antimicrobial resistance activities are well coordinated, including those with relevant United Nations agencies and other relevant stakeholders, and that they are efficiently implemented across WHO;

(2) to significantly enhance support and technical assistance provided to countries in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies for developing, implementing, and monitoring their multisectoral national action plans, with a specific focus on countries that have yet to finalize a multisectoral national action plan;

(3) to support Member States to develop and strengthen their integrated surveillance systems, including by emphasizing the need for the national action plans to include the collection, reporting, and analysis of data on sales and use of antimicrobials as a deliverable that would be integrated into reporting on the WHO indicators;

- (4) to keep Member States regularly informed of WHO's work with the Tripartite and UNEP, as well as with other United Nations organizations to ensure a coordinated effort on workstreams, and of their progress in developing and implementing multisectoral approaches;
- (5) to consult regularly with Member States, and other relevant stakeholders, to adjust the process and scope of the global development and stewardship framework,¹ considering the work of the Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance to ensure a unified and non-duplicative effort;
- (6) to support Member States to mobilize adequate predictable and sustained funding and human and financial resources and investment through national, bilateral and multilateral channels to support the development and implementation of national action plans, research and development on existing and new antimicrobial medicines, diagnostics, and vaccines, and other technologies, and strengthening of related infrastructure, including through engagement with multilateral development banks and traditional and voluntary innovative financing and investment mechanisms, based on priorities and local needs set by governments and on ensuring public return on investment;²
- (7) to collaborate with the World Bank and other financial institutions, OECD, and regional economic communities, in order to continue to make and apply the economic case for sustainable investment in antimicrobial resistance;
- (8) to facilitate, in consultation with the United Nations Secretary-General and the Tripartite and UNEP, the development of a process to allow Member States to consider the Secretary-General's report requested in United Nations General Assembly resolution 71/3 (2016);
- (9) to maintain and systematically update the WHO list of Critically Important Antimicrobials for human medicine;
- (10) to submit consolidated biennial reports on progress achieved in implementing this resolution and resolution WHA68.7 (2015) to the Seventy-fourth, Seventy-sixth, and Seventy-eighth World Health Assemblies, through the Executive Board, incorporating this work into existing antimicrobial resistance reporting, in order to allow Member States to review and evaluate efforts made.

Seventh plenary meeting, 28 May 2019
A72/VR/7

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¹ As requested in paragraph 4(7) of resolution WHA68.7 and called for in paragraph 13 of the political declaration of the high-level Meeting of the General Assembly on antimicrobial resistance.

² Paragraph 12b of United Nations General Assembly resolution 71/3.