



WORLD BANK SPRING MEETINGS AMR ROUNDTABLE

Accelerating One Health Solutions to combat the “silent pandemic” of antimicrobial resistance to promote better human, animal and environmental health and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

On 14 April 2023, at the World Bank Spring Meetings, the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate Policy, Dan Jørgensen, hosted a high-level roundtable meeting to highlight the cost-effectiveness of investments in AMR-specific and AMR-sensitive interventions, and to foster discussion on commitments that the international community can leverage to improve the political economy of AMR and support country prioritization of AMR.

The roundtable discussion was moderated by Amanda Glassman, Executive Vice President at the Centre for Global Development, and attended by representatives from Denmark, Canada, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Norway, Oman, Spain, United Kingdom, Tanzania, the European Commission, the World Health Organization (representing the Quadripartite), the International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions, the Novo Nordisk Foundation, and the World Bank.

The discussion centred around the reality that AMR is more than a global health threat; it is a compounded global challenge linked to climate change, food insecurity, rapid biodiversity loss and the risk of pandemics. AMR has very tangible effects on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and is exacerbated by climate change, disruptions to food and water systems, and changes in the environment. This calls for intensified investments in both AMR-sensitive and AMR-specific actions.

Although analysis shows¹ that action on AMR constitutes one of the highest-yield development investments available, the reality is that prioritizing AMR has been a challenge in many countries. Interlinking climate change, development and AMR is, however, an area with potential benefits.

Climate change, sustainable development and health are interlinked. Extreme weather – droughts, floods and heat waves – disrupt conditions of life for communities and families and has severe health impacts. When we fight AMR, this connection makes sense: For example, when we adapt societies to climate change, we should include measures against AMR. ICARS’ projects show that it is possible to reduce the threat from AMR and at the same time achieve more sustainable development, higher food security and stronger health systems. I invite more donors and implementing countries to partner with ICARS and join our efforts to fight AMR.

- Danish Minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate Policy, Dan Jørgensen

¹ World Bank (2017), *Drug-resistant infections: a threat to our economic future*, vol. 2



Key messages from the discussion are summarized in five priority areas.

Create one conversation – One world, One planet, One health

1

There is a need to include AMR mitigation in a united conversation about global health, pandemic preparedness, development, climate change and the environment. A strong and integrated One Health approach provides awareness about the challenges across sectors as well as potential solutions, and thus where and how to mitigate it. Furthermore, the discussion highlighted the importance of a clear narrative for AMR, which can be conceptualised to policy makers, the public and other stakeholders.

Strengthen the economic case for AMR financing and investments

2

AMR is a development issue which significantly impacts economies. The total cost could be up to 4 percent of annual global GDP by 2050 if action is not taken. The discussion showed that development and implementation of context-specific and evidence-based AMR-solutions result in reduced hospital stays, fewer AMR-related deaths and economic savings. Furthermore, including AMR-initiatives in commercial agricultural sectors has shown increased economic outcomes and reduced use of antimicrobials. Evidence-based models on AMR-sensitive actions with economic benefits should be established to mobilize finance and investments. No action will be more expensive than inaction.

Understanding the climate-development-AMR-nexus holds potential for positive social and economic outcomes

3

AMR is a global health threat that disproportionately affects Low- and Middle-Income Countries. Rising levels of AMR makes it difficult to achieve the sustainable development goals of health, poverty reduction and promotion of social and economic progress. This is especially true for countries with weak health systems. The discussion stressed that more investments is needed across the One Health sectors. Donor countries, Multilateral Development Banks and relevant actors at the national, regional and global level should prioritize AMR-initiatives in climate- and development related investments. The cost of not acting is (much) higher than the cost of action.

Mobilize investments in systems strengthening – whole of government, whole of society

4

More than 80 pct. of all countries have National Action Plans (NAPs) on AMR, but implementation is lacking. The discussion highlighted global inequality in the way that resources and attention are allocated towards big cities, even in LMICs. Efforts to mitigate AMR must involve a ‘whole of government’- and ‘whole of society’-approach aiming to strengthen coordination, collaboration and governance and create awareness and knowledge. Efforts must include partnerships on health systems strengthening. The best crisis management is to have a good health system.

Create incentives for investments in R&D and equitable access

5

AMR is a silent killer, claiming millions of lives every year. At the same time, AMR risks undermining the achievements of modern medicine including cancer treatment, non-communicable diseases, like diabetes, and hindering our ability to do organ transplants, for example. The business model for antibiotic development is broken. To ensure access to effective antimicrobials for everyone, everywhere, there is a need to create new incentives for investments in the development of new antimicrobials. New payment models should be discussed and considered. Global health security is a global public good and an important part of pandemic preparedness. Ensuring equitable access to effective antimicrobials is an important first line of defence.



Next steps

The Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs will take the abovementioned priorities forward in the international discussions leading up to action-oriented political declaration at the UNGA 2023 high-level meetings on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response and on Universal Health Coverage, as well as the UNGA 2024 high-level meeting on AMR. Others are encouraged to do the same.

Support for implementation of AMR-solutions a priority for the Danish Government

Following dialogue with the World Bank, the Danish government identified a global need for an independent international institution dedicated to supporting LMICs in advancing the implementation of AMR NAPs. To fill this gap, the Danish government in 2018 initiated the establishment of the **International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions (ICARS)**. ICARS works top-down and bottom-up with LMIC governments and local researchers to develop evidence-based AMR solutions that address national needs, are cost-effective and feasible to scale-up. ICARS is experiencing significant demand for partnership and has kick-started the development of over 30 projects across the One Health spectrum, spanning 16 countries and four continents, and proven itself as an agile and effective organisation. The Danish government now invites other countries and foundations to partner with ICARS and take co-ownership of its further development.

“For almost 20 years the World Bank has been working in AMR and been aware of a critical gap - pharmaceutical companies around the world working hard to produce new antibiotics are not keeping pace with what is being lost to antimicrobial resistance. We recognised the need for a research facility that investigates the most effective AMR interventions to prioritise and finance – and welcome the ongoing work of ICARS to tackle this deadly pandemic. Denmark saw the need, funded ICARS, and now the organisation is rapidly growing – if you haven’t already, everyone should connect with and support the important work of ICARS.”

- Juergen Voegelé, Vice President for Sustainable Development, the World Bank

