

Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance statement on Antimicrobial Use in Food Systems

Antimicrobial use in food systems[1] is common and has an influence on antimicrobial resistance in humans, animals, plants and the environment. Applying a One Health approach, there is a critical need to transform food systems to optimize animal, plant and environmental health, ensure responsible and sustainable antimicrobial use and most importantly, reduce the need to use antimicrobials and promote innovation for evidence-based and sustainable alternatives.

Antimicrobials are important for animal health and welfare and plant production and access to quality and affordable antimicrobials needs to be ensured. However, changes to the current situation are urgently required. While there have been significant reductions in antimicrobial use in animals globally, further improvements to reduce their use and ensure responsible and sustainable use in food systems are both of the utmost importance and attainable. Although challenging in some situations, this must be prioritized by all countries, sectors and organizations.

To promote the responsible and sustainable use of antimicrobials in food systems, the Global Leaders Group calls for the following:

1. Infection prevention and control

- **All countries** should prioritize infection prevention and control, including water, sanitation and hygiene, biosecurity and vaccination programmes as interventions to prevent and mitigate infectious disease risk and AMR across all sectors; and
- **International technical, financing and research and development organizations and partners** should support countries to improve access to and use of existing and new affordable diagnostic testing, disease prediction tools, vaccines, safe and efficacious non-antimicrobial alternatives and appropriate nutrition for infection prevention, control and treatment in terrestrial and aquatic animals, and where applicable for plants

2. Reducing antimicrobial use

All countries should:

- Recognize the importance of antimicrobials for animal health and welfare and plant production in their national policies and regulatory frameworks and eliminate the use of antimicrobials to compensate for inadequate infection prevention and control, management and other modifiable deficiencies in management of animal and plant health;
- Markedly reduce the overall use of antimicrobials, particularly the Highest Priority Critically Important Antimicrobials for terrestrial and aquatic animals and plants;
- End the use of medically important antimicrobials for growth promotion, starting immediately with the Highest Priority Critically Important Antimicrobials, then continuing to other categories; and
- Limit antimicrobial prophylaxis and metaphylaxis in animals and plants to well-defined situations, with a goal of markedly reducing use and ensuring that all use is performed with regulatory oversight and under the direction of an authorized prescriber.

3. Oversight and governance

All countries should:

- Ensure effective governance and professional oversight of the sales and use of antimicrobials and stewardship of antimicrobials in all sectors, including the development and implementation of evidence-based guidelines for treatment, control and prevention; and
- Eliminate or markedly reduce over-the-counter sales of antimicrobials that are important for medical or veterinary purposes and implement stringent rules to strengthen and increase professional oversight for terrestrial and aquatic animal and plant use.

International technical, financing and research and development organizations and partners should:

- Establish mechanisms to improve and broaden appropriate access to good quality antimicrobials worldwide; and
- Encourage and support the development and improvement of comparable national and international surveillance systems to enable countries to establish antimicrobial use and resistance baselines and set progressive, ambitious, science-based and nationally relevant targets for responsible and sustainable antimicrobial use across all sectors.

Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance background

The Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance was established in November 2020 and performs an independent global advisory and advocacy role with the primary objective of maintaining urgency, public support, political momentum and visibility of the AMR challenge on the global agenda. The mission of the group is to collaborate globally with governments, agencies, civil society and the private sector through a One Health approach to advise on and advocate for political action for the mitigation of drug-resistant infections through responsible and sustainable access to and use of antimicrobials.

The group is co-chaired by Their Excellencies Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados and is composed of heads of state, serving or former ministers and/or senior government officials acting in their individual capacities, together with senior representatives of foundations, civil society organizations and the private sector. It also includes principals of the Tripartite organizations - the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) - in an ex-officio capacity.

The Tripartite Joint Secretariat (TJS) on Antimicrobial Resistance, a joint effort by FAO, OIE and WHO, provides Secretariat support for the Group.

Members of the Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance

Co-chairs:

1. **H.E. Sheikh Hasina**, Prime Minister, BANGLADESH
2. **H.E. Mia Amor Mottley**, Prime Minister, BARBADOS

Members:

1. **Dr Hamad A. Al-Batshan**, Deputy Minister for Innovation and Modern Technologies, Ministry of Environment, Water, and Agriculture, SAUDI ARABIA

2. **Dr Hasan Mohammed Abbas Al-Temimi**, Minister of Health and Environment, IRAQ
3. **Ms Inger Anderson**, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations and Executive Director, UN Environment Programme
4. **Ms Tamara van Ark**, Minister for Medical Care and Sport, THE NETHERLANDS
5. **Prof António Correia de Campos**, Former Minister of Health, Professor Emeritus of Health Economics, National School of Public Health, New University of Lisbon, PORTUGAL
6. **Prof C.O. Onyebuchi Chukwu**, Former Minister of Health, Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu Alike, NIGERIA
7. **Dr Guilherme Antônio da Costa Júnior**, Senior Agricultural Attaché, Mission of Brazil to the European Union, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, BRAZIL
8. **Prof Dame Sally Davies**, UK Special Envoy on Antimicrobial Resistance, UNITED KINGDOM
9. **Dr Maggie De Block**, Former Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health, and Asylum and Migration, Member of Parliament, BELGIUM
10. **Dr QU Dongyu**, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
11. **Dr Monique Eloit**, Director General, World Organisation for Animal Health
12. **Prof Sir Jeremy James Farrar**, Director, Wellcome Trust, UNITED KINGDOM
13. **Dr Christopher Fearne**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health, Member of Parliament, MALTA
14. **Mr Jean-Christophe Flatin**, President of Innovation, Science, Technology & Mars Edge, Mars, Inc., UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
15. **Ms Grace Fu**, Minister for Sustainability and the Environment, Member of Parliament, SINGAPORE
16. **Dr Julie Gerberding**, Chief Patient Officer and Executive Vice President, Population Health & Sustainability, Merck & Co., Inc., UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
17. **Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, Director-General, World Health Organization
18. **Ms Lena Hallengren**, Minister of Health and Social Affairs, SWEDEN
19. **Ms Sussan Ley**, Minister for the Environment, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Member of Parliament, AUSTRALIA
20. **Ms Sunita Narain**, Director-General, Centre for Science and Environment, INDIA
21. **Ms Aminata Mbengue Ndiaye**, Former Minister of Livestock and Animal Production, Former Minister of Fisheries and the Maritime Economy, President of the High Council of Territorial Collectivities , SENEGAL

22. **Prof Anna Y. Popova**, Head of the Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being (Rospotrebnadzor), Chief Sanitary Physician of the Russian Federation, RUSSIAN FEDERATION
23. **Mr Yasuhisa Shiozaki**, Former Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Member of the House of Representatives, JAPAN
24. **Ms Dechen Wangmo**, Minister of Health, BHUTAN
25. **Dr Jeffrey Scott Weese**, Professor at the University of Guelph, Director of the Centre for Public Health and Zoonoses, Chief of Infection Control at Ontario Veterinary College, CANADA
26. **Prof Lothar H. Wieler**, President of the Robert Koch Institute, GERMANY

Member biographies can be found at the link [here](#).

Headshots of members can be found at the link [here](#).

[1] FAO defines food systems as encompassing the entire range of actors and their interlinked value-adding activities involved in the production, aggregation, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of food products that originate from agriculture, forestry or fisheries, and parts of the broader economic, societal and natural environments in which they are embedded. The food system is composed of sub-systems (e.g. farming system, waste management system, input supply system, etc.) and interacts with other key systems (e.g. energy system, trade system, health system, etc.)