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Consultation response: draft Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance

CALL FOR WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS ON THE ZERO DRAFT OF THE UPDATED GLOBAL ACTION PLAN ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (GAP-AMR)

Greater emphasis is needed on providing capacity and infrastructure for collecting, analysing, and storing global data, to enable robust trend analysis across the globe. Building accessible, standardised global databases is critical for identifying patterns and responding effectively. In parallel, more attention should be given to citizen science projects, which not only expand available data but also enhance public engagement and trust in AMR strategies.

The scope of the Global Action Plan (GAP) must extend beyond bacterial and fungal pathogens to encompass all organisms that cause AMR, including parasitic and viral. Relevance varies geographically, and while GAP should remain broad in coverage, National Action Plans (NAPs) can then prioritise what is most urgent within their specific contexts. This balance will ensure GAP is globally useful while avoiding an overwhelming level of detail.

Both intra- and international considerations must be addressed. Regional collaboration is essential, as neighbouring countries often share health systems, trade routes, and ecosystems. Countries should liaise when developing NAPs, ensuring strategies align across borders while also being sensitive to national contexts.

The current draft places undue emphasis on behavioural science and individual behaviour, while overlooking the wider social and political systems that constrain people's choices. Health decisions are shaped by structural determinants—such as access to healthcare, wastewater systems, and pharmaceutical supply chains—that cannot be reduced to individual behaviours. Behavioural insights are important, but they must be balanced with equal attention to structural and systemic drivers of AMR.

Accountability for strategic objectives also needs clarification. Responsibility for delivery varies across contexts, particularly in LMICs, where governments, NGOs, donors, or foundations may each play a role. Clear accountability systems must be established, with mechanisms for longevity. Overemphasis on LMICs risks framing them as “problem” geographies, neglecting the borderless nature of AMR and reinforcing power asymmetries both between and within countries. A more equitable approach must highlight the responsibility of the international community, while recognising disparities within LMICs—for example, between elites and rural communities.

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The draft's references to emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, are welcome but incomplete. Access to these tools must be equitable. High- and middle-income countries have a responsibility to share innovations and expertise, ensuring technological solutions reduce rather than exacerbate global inequalities.

The monitoring and evaluation section also requires strengthening. It remains unclear whether the goal is to measure the impact of NAPs on AMR itself, or simply whether NAPs have been implemented. More precise indicators, with standardised reporting mechanisms, are needed to make progress comparable across countries. This must also take account of the resources required, as effective monitoring is highly context-specific and dependent on sufficient time, funding, and capacity.

Finally, the GAP must remain agile and future-proof. A ten-year review cycle is too infrequent in light of rapidly evolving AMR dynamics. More regular reviews, supported by strong surveillance systems and faster communication between scientists and policymakers, are essential. Without timely adaptation, the GAP risks losing relevance and effectiveness in addressing this urgent global challenge.