

Communique - Colloquium on State Action Plans for Containment of AMR in India 2022

Background

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is listed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of the top 10 threats to global health, and one of the urgent health challenges for the next decade. Recent studies estimate that 4.95 million deaths a year are associated with AMR and 1.27 million are directly attributable to it.[1]. The response to AMR internationally has been shaped by the Global Action Plan (GAP) on AMR, which was adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2015.

In 2017, India's National Action Plan on AMR was launched at the Inter-Ministerial Consultation on AMR, and 4 Union Ministers signed the Delhi Declaration on Antimicrobial Resistance, a testimony to the government's political commitment for One Health containment of AMR.

Since, human health, agriculture, animal diseases, fisheries, water, and sanitation are state subjects under the Indian Constitution; the engagement and ownership of state governments are critical to effectively contain the AMR problem at the ground level. Therefore, the development of State Action Plans for Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance (SAPCAR) are a key focus under the country's NAP on AMR. Several states are at various stages developing/ implementing their SAPCAR.

However, since early 2020 most of the state-level AMR stakeholders have been fully engaged in COVID-19 containment efforts. Therefore, we need to design strategies to revitalize SAPCARs, recalibrate advocacy efforts and ensure that AMR receives robust attention from policy groups and all key stakeholders.

Representatives from the Government of India, state governments, academia, animal welfare groups, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, and research institutions met in Delhi on 14 March 2022 to strategize on how to efficiently operationalize the existing SAPCARs in India. Besides, the meeting discussed ways to get more states to develop their own SAPCAR. The different stakeholders (list of discussants in Appendix) facilitated exchange of experiences and best practices from various states; and provided concrete recommendations to catalyze the development and implementation of SAPCAR with a One Health approach.

All the participants of the meeting agreed that it was necessary to adopt a holistic and multidisciplinary approach towards prevention and containment of antimicrobial resistance to improve public health, animal welfare, food security, sustainable agriculture, and environmental health

Discussants/AMR Champions

Acknowledged that antimicrobial resistance is one among the biggest threats to public health, animal welfare, food security and sustainable agriculture, environmental health, and development.

Concerned that AMR and its rapid spread across the world will impact past work done in healthcare and gravely jeopardize people's health

Aware that both therapeutic and non-therapeutic use of antimicrobial agents in the human, livestock, fisheries, and agriculture sectors have a profound effect on emergence of resistance in microorganisms and their spread through the food chain and the environment.

To combat AMR, a comprehensive response is needed and all state governments must take the following steps:

[1] Global burden of bacterial antimicrobial resistance in 2019: a systematic analysis, *The Lancet*, Jan 2022

Immediate Strategies:

Administration

- Designate dedicated full-time focal points for AMR in human health, animal health, food, and environment; along with a technical committee to guide formulation/implementation of action plans.
- Establish an inter-sectoral secretariat, with adequate staff capacity and technical skills, in those states which have a SAPCAR in place.
- Ensure the action plans are financed through budgetary allocation from relevant state departments every year and are subjected to performance audits.

Regulation

- Introduce and implement a ban on use of antimicrobials in animal farming for growth promotion, to align with the WHO recommendations; specifically, antimicrobials which are critically important for human health.
- Support the transition towards humane and sustainable animal and plant agriculture, to reduce the environmental impact of intensive farming practices relying on antimicrobial usage as growth promoters.
- Conduct state-level training and provide incentives to farmers to move away from misuse of antimicrobials, and implement biosecurity measures for adopting high welfare production systems.
- Enact legislation for registration of large industrial livestock/poultry farms/aquaculture units and slaughterhouses.
- Introduce adequate legislation to regulate the use of antimicrobials in animal feed products.

Surveillance

- Integrate state surveillance networks for AMR with information from existing microbiology laboratories in human health, veterinary, food, and environment sectors using WHONET.
- One Health surveillance for key AMR pathogens needs to be explored through the WHO's 'Tricycle Protocol' project, which monitors ESBL producing E Coli across the human, animal, and environmental sectors.
- Use surveillance data to identify local 'hotspots' of AMU and AMR for targeted interventions.

Capacity Building

- Prevent emergence of AMR in human health through rational prescription practices, prevention of healthcare-associated infection, and scientific disposal of hospital and pharmaceutical waste.
- The State Department of Health can identify appropriate agency or institution for capacity building for surveillance (AMR/AMC/AMU), infection prevention and control, and antimicrobial stewardship. The Centres can be used for context-specific training programs for different cadres of healthcare workers.
- Allocate resources to create well-trained veterinary services.

Awareness

- Actively promote awareness about AMR, in a tailored and strategic manner, with a focus on public health, animal welfare, food safety, and environmental health through broadcast, print, and new media.
- Identify the most effective medium for IEC that can specifically target its key audience for AMR awareness and engagement activities.
- Improve awareness at the doctor and patient-level on adherence and the protocol for use of antibiotics.
- Share best practices between states as a feature in SAPCARs.

Community ownership

- Encourage community participation in all forms, including effective use of popular media such as films, theatre, and artwork in preventing misuse of antimicrobials and tackling AMR.
- Design health promotion strategies to create equitable partnerships for two-way knowledge exchange process: (i) communicate good science, and (ii) adapt community-generated solutions.

Long-term Strategies:

- Political: All state governments should develop and implement SAPCARs, with a mandate from the highest political offices in the state/UT.
- Preservation: Reduce the incidence of infections and prophylactic use of antibiotics.
- Vaccination: To promote use of safe and effective vaccines where available in both human and animal sectors
- Surveillance: States should develop their own surveillance systems for AMR in human health and provide data for the national surveillance platforms established by NCDC, ICMR, and ICAR.
- Collaboration: Create systems for collaboration between private and government sector for tackling AMR.
- Research: Identify and fund institutions capable of conducting actionable research into causation, prevention, and impact of AMR.
- Investment: Make sustained investments to strengthen microbiology laboratory infrastructure at all district hospitals, large veterinary hospitals, and strengthen environmental and food labs with facilities for automated culture, identification & sensitivity testing.
- Data: Ensure collection of AMC, AMU, and AMR relevant and quality data at local levels in all sectors.
- Awareness: Every state should launch an intensive programme on 'antibiotic literacy' focusing on the One Health approach and based on prevalent WASH, antibiotic prescription, and consumption practices in the state
- Community mobilization: Develop strategy to involve local self-government institutions and other community groups in initiatives to contain the AMR issue. Frame indicators to measure the community drivers of AMR and changes over time.

Monday, 14 March 2022

ENDS

Appendix: List of Discussants

| NAME | Designation | Organisation |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Dr. Anil J Purty | Dean, PG Studies, Department of Community Medicine | Puducherry Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) |
| Dr. Anuj Sharma | Technical Focal Point for AMR, IPC and Labs | World Health Organization Country Office for India |
| Dr. Aravind R. | Associate Professor & Head, Department of Infectious Diseases | Government Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala |
| Dr. A. S. Valan | Public Health Specialist, Infectious Diseases | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) |
| Dr. Daniel VanderEnde | Medical officer, International Infection Control Program, Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion | CDC, India |
| Dr. Deepak Bhati | Program Officer | Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi |
| Mr. Dilip Jha | Deputy Project Director, Training Division | Public Health Foundation of India |

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| Dr. D. Mohana Krishna | Joint Director (CDP) | Health, Medical & Family Welfare Department, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh |
| Mr. Gajender K. Sharma | Country Director | World Animal Protection, India |
| Dr. Geetanjali Kapoor | Head of South Asia | Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy |
| Mr. George Cheriyan | Director | Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) International |
| Dr. Gursimrat Sandhu | Deputy Program Manager | Centre for Science and Environment, India |
| Ms. Harsha Doriya | Senior Campaign Officer | World Animal Protection, India |
| Dr. Hosterson Kylla | A. H and Veterinary Officer, Disease Investigation Office | Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary, Shillong, Meghalaya |
| Dr. Jasmine Ruth Baluja | Consultant | ReAct AsiaPacific |
| Dr. Jyoti Iravane | Prof and Head, Department of Microbiology | Government Medical College, Aurangabad |
| Dr. Jyoti Misri | Principal Scientist, (Animal Health) | Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) |
| Dr. K. Nagamani | Professor of Microbiology | Gandhi Medical College, Telangana |
| Dr. Lata Kapoor | Joint Director and Head, Center for Bacterial Diseases and Drug Resistance and AMR Programme Unit | National Centre for Disease Control, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India |
| Ms. Leena Menghaney | Regional Head, South Asia | MSF Access Campaign |
| Dr. Mahendra Kendre | Assistant Director Health services | NHM, Mumbai, Maharashtra |
| Dr. Pallavi Mishra | Post Doctoral Fellow | JNU, Delhi |
| Dr. P Anand Kumar | Professor & Head, Veterinary Microbiology | NTR College of Veterinary Science, Gannavaram, Andhra Pradesh |
| Dr. Parthipan K. | Senior Health Officer, Mobile Epidemiological Unit, Incharge of Tamil Nadu State Emergency Operations Center for COVID control | Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Tamil Nadu |
| Dr. Philip Mathew | Consultant | ReAct AsiaPacific |
| Mr. Piyush Mohapatro | Programme Coordinator | Toxics Link |
| Mr. Prabhakar V S | Drug Inspector | CDSCO |
| Mr. Pranav Johri | Founder | Vitalis Phage Therapy |
| Dr. Preeti Thaware | Program Officer- AMR | DHS Punjab |
| Dr. Pushkar Kumar | Senior Public Health Specialist and Head, Training Division | PHFI |
| Dr. PX Antony | Professor | RIVER (Veterinary University), Puducherry |
| Dr. Rajeev Sadanandan | Chief Executive Officer | Health Systems Transformation Platform |
| Dr. Rajesh Dubey | National Operations and Programme Officer, Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) | Food And Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) - India |
| Dr. Rajib Dasgupta | Chairperson, Centre of Social Medicine & Community Health | JNU, New Delhi. |

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| Dr. Ranga Reddy Burri | President | Infection Control Academy of India (IFCAI) |
| Ms. Renu Bisht | Digital Communication Associate | Superheroes against Superbugs |
| Dr. Renu Gupta | Asst. Professor | Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences, Delhi |
| Dr. Robert Leo Skov | Scientific Director | International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions |
| Dr. Robin J. Paul | Quality manager, SLLP | Dept. of Animal Husbandry, Government of Kerala |
| Dr. Sagar Khadanga | Associate Professor, Department of Internal Medicine | AIIMS Bhopal |
| Dr. Sandeep Ghatak | Principal Scientist | ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Umiam, Meghalaya |
| Dr. Sangeeta Sharma | Professor, Dept. of Neuropsychopharmacology | Institute of Human Behaviour & Allied Sciences, New Delhi |
| Dr Santosh Indraksha | Assistant Drugs Controller (India), Government of India | Central Drugs Standard Control Organization, DGHS, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India |
| Dr. Sarah Iqbal | Consultant | Foundation for Advancing Science and Technology, India |
| Mr. Satya Sivaraman | Communications Coordinator | ReAct AsiaPacific |
| Ms. Sehr Brar | Senior Research Analyst | Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy |
| Dr. Shruthi Anna Thomas | Junior Consultant | ReAct AsiaPacific |
| Dr. Snehal Bagatheria | Joint Director (R&D) | Gujarat State Biotechnology Mission |
| Dr. Sumaiya Mullan | Professor & Head, Department of Microbiology | Government Medical College, Surat |
| Ms. Surbhi Chopra | Senior Campaign Officer | World Animal Protection, India |
| Dr. Suresh Kumar Dalpath | Deputy Director | Public Health Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt of Haryana |
| Dr S Venkataramanaiah | Professor | Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow |
| Dr. Tara Sharma | State Nodal Officer | Sikkim AMR Containment Program |
| Prof. Y K Gupta | Principal Advisor, India Strategy Development | Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership, Delhi |
| Dr. Y Premchandra Singh | Deputy Director Public Health | Directorate of Health Services, Manipur |

Kindly note that the 'List of Discussants' contains the name and designation of all attendees at the 'Colloquium on State Action Plans on Antimicrobial Resistance in India 2022', in whose presence this communique was discussed and drafted. This is not a document of endorsement by the organizations associated with attendees.

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