Bhutan blazes a trail

The Ministry of Health, Bhutan, with support from WHO, has undertaken various activities to support the global drive towards combating AMR. Representatives from the ministries responsible for animal and human health have developed Bhutan's national action plan to combat AMR. Advocacy efforts have included a talk show on national TV to raise awareness of the issue and how to handle antibiotics responsibly. Following the talk show, an animated movie on AMR and its consequences was broadcast. Posters in the local language, Dzongkha, and in English have been distributed to all health centres. A Facebook page to raise awareness of AMR has also been created and members actively update it with the latest news and information. The Facebook page can be viewed here.

In addition, a pilot antimicrobial stewardship programme (ASP) was proposed at the National Referral Hospital (NRH) for which a team of 11 staff went to Siriraj Hospital, Bangkok to undergo a 5-day ASP workshop from 18-22 April 2016. The team will be instituting ASP at the NRH and will also act as trainers for other prescribers in the country and help extend ASP to the regional hospitals. Other activities undertaken include drafting guidelines for antibiotic use in animal health; training of laboratory personnel in AMR surveillance; and, a National Consultative & Awareness Workshop on Antimicrobial Resistance in the Livestock Sector.
Editor’s picks: AMR articles

1. Combating antimicrobial resistance: Examples of best practices of the G7 countries
This publication, by the Federal Ministry of Health Germany, presents some experiences from G7 countries in combating antimicrobial resistance, that other countries might benefit from. At the World Health Assembly in May 2015 Member States of the WHO committed to develop national action plans on AMR within two years. This best practice brochure aims to contribute to the further development and implementation of national action plans on antimicrobial resistance. The best practice examples are categorized into five subsectors: (i) strengthening the One Health approach, (ii) combating and preventing, (iii) promoting the responsible use of antibiotics, (iv) strengthening surveillance, and (v) supporting research and development. To read the full publication, click here.

2. Aquaculture as yet another environmental gateway to the development and globalisation of antimicrobial resistance Cabello et al, The Lancet Infectious Diseases April 12, 2016 Access here.

3. The role of AMR for the achievement of the SDGs This paper examines how specific SDGs are impacted by AMR and suggests how the issue can be better integrated into international policy processes. The paper stresses the need for greater international collaboration and accountability distribution, and suggests steps towards an engagement of countries and United Nations agencies into the policy debate on a global intersectoral action. Published by ReAct, in collaboration with the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. For the full report, click here.

Supporting countries to collect antimicrobial data
At a recent global consultation to consider how to expand and improve the use of methodologies for surveillance of antimicrobial consumption and use, participants concluded that it would be worthwhile adapting the existing approach used in the WHO Regional office for Europe (EURO) for use in a broader range of countries. EURO has, over the past 15 years, developed and adapted surveillance systems suitable for use in lower income, middle income and higher income countries. The Essential Medicines and Health Products Department of WHO is now preparing a tool that will be suitable for countries both beginning to undertake surveillance of antimicrobial consumption, and for those who have already been carrying out such surveillance. Monitoring antimicrobial prescription and consumption provides insights that can be used to improve responsible use of antimicrobials, to assess the public health consequences of antimicrobial misuse, and to evaluate the impact of resistance containment interventions. The 3-day meeting was held in WHO HQ Geneva from 29 March to 1 April 2016 and was attended by international experts, WHO representatives, and Member States and civil society representatives.

Georgia: the first country to enrol in GLASS
Following on from the call for participation (mentioned in Issue No.9 of the newsletter), Georgia has become the first country to enrol in the Global Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance System (GLASS). Georgia has been supported by the WHO Regional Office for Europe through a one year...
**30 minute video on antibiotic resistance**

For an interesting 30 minute video on antibiotic resistance featured recently on the Australian show, *Catalyst*, click [here](#). The transcript of the video is also provided.

**AMR: A growing threat to maternal and newborn health**

Despite gains over the past few decades, infections among women giving birth and newborn babies still account for more than 10% of maternal deaths and 15% of newborn deaths. As bacteria become increasingly resistant to antibiotics, infections are getting harder and more expensive to treat. The success in reducing maternal and neonatal infections could stall or reverse.

Antimicrobial resistance is another reason to strengthen quality of care—including infection prevention and control and rational prescribing—around the time of delivery. Antibiotics may no longer be used as a substitute for poor care.

To raise awareness of this issue, WHO is organizing a breakfast event on the sidelines of the 4th Women Deliver Global Conference. Details as follows:

BrM1, Bella Centre, Center Boulevard 5, S-2300 Copenhagen, Denmark.

07:00 – 08:00 am, Tuesday 17 May

For more information about the conference, click [here](#).

Proof-of-Principle project in routine diagnostics and surveillance of antimicrobial resistance (the PoP project). Under this project, the EUCAST standard was introduced to microbiology laboratories and clinics in Georgia. Additionally, there has been improvement in clinical laboratory diagnostics capacity. The project aims to demonstrate that routine bacteriological diagnostics and AMR surveillance can provide clinicians with the information needed to guide antimicrobial treatment decisions and inform infection prevention and control policies in clinical settings. Through this study, baseline data on the main pathogens causing bloodstream infections and their antimicrobial susceptibility patterns will become available. In the process of generating this data, the microbiologic diagnostic capacity at the local hospital laboratory and the national reference laboratory will be strengthened and will serve as a starting point for the creation of a national AMR surveillance network.

**Integrated AMR surveillance in Colombia—from pilot project to a fully integrated national system**

In Colombia, the rapid development of the animal production industry highlighted a number of food safety issues including the emergence of antibiotic resistance. In response, the Colombian Integrated Surveillance Program for Antimicrobial Resistance (COIPARS) was established as a pilot project to monitor AMR on poultry farms, in abattoirs and in retail markets. The poultry industry was selected as it had the most integrated and standardized animal production system in Colombia. An Integrated Surveillance System for AMR collects and analyses resistance data obtained from food animals, foods, environmental sources and clinically ill humans using harmonized methods for sampling and testing. The research project was initially designed as a pilot project before implementing a fully integrated system at the national level. The implementation of the pilot project included three steps: (i) Engagement of stakeholders and planning, (ii) Rigorous implementation of a pilot program, and (iii) Building on trust to consolidate COIPARS.

This successful integrated programme was the first of its kind in Colombia and the first established in Latin America. It has been used as an example in the region by the WHO Global Foodborne Infections Network (GFN) and PulseNet International. For more information, click [here](#).
UPCOMING
MEETINGS/EVENTS

May 10  Nordic Health Summit “Antibiotic resistance - are we responding too late?”  Oslo, Norway
May 10-11  Collection of antimicrobial consumption data WPRO training workshop  Manila, Philippines
May 11  AMR Strategic & technical advisory group  Teleconference
May 12  Global Leaders Conference on One Health and AMR  London, UK
May 16-20  Collection of antimicrobial consumption data AFRO training workshop  Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
May 17  AMR breakfast side event at “Women Deliver” conference  Copenhagen, Denmark
May 23-28  Sixty-Ninth World Health Assembly  WHO HQ (Palais)
May 24-26  AMRO National Action Plan workshop  Lima, Peru
May 26-27  G7 Summit  Shima, Japan
Dates tbc  SEARO National Action Plan workshop  Bali, Indonesia
May 31  Meeting of Public Health Institutes active in the GHSA-AMR Action Package  Amsterdam, Netherlands
June 2-3  DRIVE-AB conference on new business models for AMR  Amsterdam, Netherlands
June 8  “Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Implementing Commercial Incentives for Antibiotics”  San Francisco, USA
June 27-28  GHSA meeting  Bali, Indonesia
Jun 29-Jul 1  Wilton Park AMR meeting  Sussex, UK
July 21-22  RIMSA 17. 17th Inter-American Ministerial meeting on Health & Agriculture: One Health and the SDGs  Asuncion, Paraguay

Please let us know of your upcoming events for inclusion in the newsletter. We also welcome your suggestions and comments. For all communications, please contact the Secretariat at whoamrsecretariat@who.int. Responsibility for newsletter contents rests with the AMR Secretariat Director: Marc Sprenger.

Newsletter editor: Breeda Hickey.

Members of AMR Steering Group: Keiji Fukuda, Chair; Bruce Aylward OHE, Flavia Bustreo, FWC; Marie-Paule Kieny, HIS; Ren Minghui HTM; Ibrahima-Socé Fall, AFRO; Marcos Espinal, AMRO; Jaouad Mahjour, EMRO; Nedret Emiroglu, EURO; Takeshi Kasai, WPPO; Roderic Ofrin, SEARO.

Members of Technical Coordination Group: Work stream leads HQ - Carmem Pessoa da Silva, Gilles Forte, Benedetta Allegranzi, Peter Beyer, Kate Medlicott, Awa Aidara-Kane, Martin Friede, Francis Moussy, Olivia Lawe-Davis and Karin Weyer.; Yahaya Ali Ahmed, AFRO; Pilar Ramon Pardo, AMRO; Ali Mafi, EMRO; Danilo Lo Fo Wong, EURO; Sirenda Vong, SEARO; Klara Tisocki, WPPO.