

## "The African voices at the UNGA 2024 High-level meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance"

### CONCEPT NOTE FOR THE AFRICA CDC SIDE EVENT ON THE MARGINS OF THE UNGA HLM AU Permanent Observer to the United Nations, New York City, USA 25 September 2024, 3:00-5:00pm

#### BACKGROUND

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) poses a rapidly escalating global threat to human health, animal welfare, environmental safety, and overall health and food security, with significant economic implications. This problem is particularly acute in Africa, where it presents a multifaceted barrier to sustainable development, impeding the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and visions laid out in the African Union's Agenda 2063.

Alarming, an estimated 700,000 people die annually from infections caused by drug-resistant pathogens globally. Without timely intervention, this number is projected to rise to 10 million by 2050, with Africa accounting for an estimated 4.5 million. When compared to the rest of the world, Africa has the highest mortality rate from infections caused by antimicrobial-resistant (AMR) pathogens with 27.3 deaths per 100,000 attributable to AMR. This is particularly significant as it surpasses the combined death toll from HIV/AIDS and malaria in Africa. According to the new Lancet Series, each year, an estimated 7.7 million deaths globally are caused by bacterial infections - 1 in 8 of all global deaths. Out of these bacterial infection deaths, almost 5 million are associated with bacteria which have developed resistance to antibiotics. Babies, children, the elderly, and people with chronic illness are most vulnerable to AMR. All of these negative effects of AMR occur despite the knowledge that around 750,000 deaths linked to AMR could be prevented each year using current vaccines, water and sanitation, and infection control approaches, according to a new Lancet Series.

The African Union recognises the critical role of sustainable access to effective antimicrobials in human and animal health and the need to ensure our ability to treat human, animal, and plant diseases and ensure food safety and food security. Every patient should have access to effective antibiotics. Today, millions of people in Africa are unable to get the antibiotics they need. A regional project The Mapping Antimicrobial Resistance and Antimicrobial Use Partnership (MAAP) led by Africa CDC and Africa Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) reported that a mere 1.3% of microbiology laboratories across 14 Member States were equipped to perform bacteriological testing for five priority AMR pathogens.

During the 77th UNGA meeting in September 2022, the Global Leaders Group (GLG) held a side event on political leadership and action on AMR, which focused on the road to the UNGA 2024 high-level meeting on AMR. The 2024 HLM on AMR aims to secure concrete, specific, bold commitments with aspirational targets and strengthen [accountability in line with the proposed targets](#).

AMR poses a critical and escalating challenge in Africa, and efforts must be prioritized within the continental context. There is an urgent need to elevate the African priorities in international agendas, which are too often underrepresented in global AMR strategies.

At this year's High-Level Meeting on AMR at UNGA, the African Union is reiterating the political commitment of the African Heads of State and Governments **Assembly/AU/Decl.3(XXXIII) Declaration on African Common Position on Antimicrobial Resistance**. The upcoming UNGA High-Level Meeting on AMR in

2024 presents a unique opportunity to stem the tide of the spreading AMR problem and make specific commitments towards this goal. It is a vital platform for national, regional, and global stakeholders to contribute to the AMR conversation and collaboratively shape our response to this global challenge.

In preparation for UNGA 2024, the African Union, led by its technical institutions **Africa CDC and AU IBAR**, launched a Landmark report highlighting well-defined and evidence-based proposals that align with Africa's position and needs on AMR containment. The report outlines specific actions, policies, and initiatives, including investments Africa recommends for inclusion in the UNGA 2024 agenda. The objectives are anchored on the African Union Leader's **Assembly/AU/Decl.3(XXXIII) Declaration On African Common Position On Antimicrobial Resistance** *"To Strengthen the African Union to become a unified and influential voice in global governance and accountability in AMR"*.

#### Key messages of the continental landmark AMR report:

- The need to address AMR drivers in the African context:
  - Preventative measures to reduce burden of infectious diseases and address transmission should be strengthened through building AMR awareness into WASH and IPC practices, vaccination campaigns, and animal husbandry/biosecurity practices, improving capacity building with health workers, and increasing general public awareness.
  - Access and affordability for diagnostics and vaccines remain a challenge, where progress (e.g. through supporting local manufacturing) needs to outpace the spread of resistance.
  - Overall, health systems strengthening can help close these gaps in prevention and access.
- The need to build evidence and improve reporting:
  - It is a priority action to improve AMR baselining, surveillance systems, and information-sharing platforms (e.g. through regular impact studies sub-regional peer learning groups) amongst others.
  - There is interest in tracking a set of core continental AMR measures with high-quality and comparable data across countries.
  - The cost of inaction (e.g. cost to quality of life and livelihoods) should be systematically measured to motivate policymakers and other stakeholders to prioritize AMR funding.
- The need to mobilize and coordinate resources with a One Health approach:
  - Predictable, equitable, and sustainable funding is required across all African countries, including access to grants for the implementation of AMR initiatives.
  - Funding and technical assistance need to be mobilized against measurable milestones outlined in NAPs and integrated with broader health frameworks for an effective multi-sectoral response.

#### **Objectives and Expected Outcomes of the AU Side event at UNGA**

The goal of the high-level side event is to reaffirm the landmark report findings and recommendations and harness the common African position and strategies required for Africa's collective action on AMR. The side event will put the cohesive narrative that reflects Africa's aspirations, challenges, and solutions to combat AMR effectively on the global agenda. To achieve this goal, we will:

- Raise awareness of Africa's unique position and opportunities in the global AMR conversation to highlight Africa's specific context, challenges, and strengths related to AMR. We emphasise the importance of Africa's voice and participation in shaping global policies and initiatives on AMR.

❖ Identify and articulate the specific investments required to advance AMR work in Africa. Focus on resource allocation, capacity building, research, surveillance systems, infrastructure development, and public awareness campaigns.

### Participants

Presidents and Heads of State and Government, Ministers of Health, Agriculture and Environment of the African Union Member states, senior officials representing line ministries including human, agriculture and environmental health technical and funding partners, media, CSOs and youth groups.

**The event will be hosted at the AU Permanent Observer to the United Nations, New York City, USA  
25<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 3-5pm**

**This is a preview programme and, as such, may be subject to change.  
This is an invitation-only conference.**

### PROVISIONAL AGENDA

		Moderator
<b>25 SEPTEMBER 2024 AU HOUSE 3-5 pm</b>		
3:00- 3:10 PM	Entry of delegates Welcome and introductions	Dr Benjamin
3:10- 3:30 20 mins	Official Opening <i>H.E Dr Jean Kaseya</i>  H. E Amb Minata Cessouma Samaté	
3:30-3:50PM 20 mins	Keynote speeches: A collective vision for continental action: AU road to UNGA and beyond  <i>Speakers:</i>  <i>*H.E President Cyril Ramphosa</i> <i>H.E President Ruto</i>	
3:50- 4:00 10 min	Global Leaders Group on AMR <i>Prime Minister Barbados</i>	
4:00- 4:40 40 mins	African Voices on AMR (TBD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Kenya Minister of Health</i></li> <li>• <i>Egypt Minister of Health</i></li> <li>• <i>Nigeria Minister of Health</i></li> </ul>	<i>Moderators Co chairs od expert group working group on AMR</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>DRC Minister of Health</i></li> <li>• <i>Uganda Minister of Environment</i></li> <li>• <i>Ethiopia Minister of Health</i></li> <li>• <i>Malawi</i></li> </ul>	
4:40-5:00	<p>Call to Action- <b><i>Financing African Priorities</i></b></p> <p><i>IGAD Executive Secretary</i> <i>WHO RD (Regional Quadripartite)</i></p> <p>South Africa Minister of Agriculture</p>	
	Group picture and tea break	