

CONCEPT NOTE

Continental Stakeholders Meeting on Access to Antimicrobials, Diagnostics and Vaccines as Countermeasures to Antimicrobial Resistance.

1. Background and Rationale

Ranking among the top ten global threats, Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is no longer a silent pandemic. It is estimated that by 2050 in the absence of interventions, AMR will claim 10 million lives annually. Africa as a continent is projected to contribute to 4.1% of the global AMR deaths surpassing malaria, TB and HIV fatalities. In 2019, 4.95 million deaths were associated with drug-resistant bacterial infections, including 1.27 million deaths directly attributable to bacterial AMR, 20% being children below 5 years. Without a stronger response there will be an estimated average loss of life expectancy of 1.8 years globally by 2035. Africa's burden of AMR is exacerbated due to limited access to quality-assured, effective, affordable and life-saving antimicrobials, diagnostics, and vaccines.

In joining global efforts to fight AMR, the African Union (AU) adopted the Global Action Plan on AMR and contextualized it to the AU Framework for AMR Control 2020-2025 to align with continental needs and priorities. Access to antimicrobials, vaccines, and diagnostics contribute significantly to AMR Framework strategic goals by preventing infections, delaying emergence of resistance and generation of quality-assured bacteriological data to guide therapy, program and policy decisions. Alongside the UN General Assembly 2024, Africa CDC and partners launched the [African Union's AMR Landmark Report; Voicing African Priorities on the Active Pandemic](#) calling for urgent continental action to ensure equitable access to quality-assured antimicrobials, vaccines, diagnostics, and supportive technologies.

The Landmark report, resonates with concern with the continental generated evidence that a mere 1.3% of laboratories across 14 Member States were equipped to perform bacteriological identification and antibiotic susceptibility testing for priority AMR pathogens, while 67% of antibiotics used in healthcare settings are skewed towards just four drugs, highlighting the limited options available. Despite the fact that vaccination is considered as one of the most cost-effective public health interventions in human history, as of November 29, 2023, only 32.8% of people living in low-income countries were reported to be vaccinated with at least one dose of vaccine compared to 79.9% in high-income countries. The report underscores the urgent need for improved supply chains, healthcare infrastructure investment, and international support to ensure that essential antimicrobials and diagnostics are accessible to all healthcare facilities across the continent.

As an organization mandated to safeguard continental health, Africa CDC together with implementing partners has made significant strides towards bridging the access gaps by championing flagship programs including capacity building programs for bacteriology

testing and AMR detection (QWArS), quality-assured bacteriological testing results (EQuAFRICA) and strengthening of laboratory systems and network. The importation of over 90% of pharmaceutical needs results in frequent shortages and chronic out-of-stocks. The African Union through African Medical Agency and Africa CDC is championing initiatives towards sustainable local manufacturing of health commodities and pooled procurement to improve supply chain management, reduce over-reliance and promote access and affordability.

Despite the significant progress made, Africa urgently requires a comprehensive, coordinated, multi-sectoral approach to align priorities across sectors and disciplines, share knowledge and best practices, identify barriers and come up with innovative solutions to sustainable access to antimicrobials, diagnostics and vaccines. It is crucial to address access as a vital pillar to AMR countermeasures since lack thereof leads to increased morbidity and mortality than AMR itself.

The continental stakeholders meeting will provide a platform to foster dialogues, catalyze partnership and draw concrete actions to ensure equitable access to quality-assured antimicrobials, diagnostics, vaccines, and supportive technologies. Africa CDC will host a one and a half day continental stakeholders meeting using a participatory and consultative approach. The meeting will bring together Africa CDC AMR stakeholders including AU agencies and external partners working across key sectors and multi-disciplines in improving access to antimicrobials, diagnostics and vaccines.

2. Objectives

2.1 General Objectives

To strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination on AMR access priorities with a specific focus on ensuring availability, affordability, quality, and appropriate use of antimicrobials, diagnostics and vaccines.

2.2 Specific objectives

- Review and prioritize actions from the [AU AMR Landmark Report](#) related to access, aligned with the AU AMR Policy Framework and the Partnership Platform on AMR.
- Promote collaboration in resource mobilization for the AMR Access Investment Case for Africa.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen regulatory, procurement, and local manufacturing capacity for AMR-relevant health technologies.
- Engage with global partners, funders, and private sector actors to elevate African perspectives and share best practices on sustainable access models.

3. Expected Outcomes

- Prioritized access-related actions from [AU AMR Landmark Report](#).
- Identified funding opportunities and technical assistance.
- Policy recommendations and programmatic actions on regulation, procurement and local production of antimicrobials, diagnostics and vaccines

4. Target Audience

The continental stakeholders meeting will bring together Africa CDC AMR stakeholders including AU agencies and external partners working across key sectors and multi-disciplines in improving access to antimicrobials, diagnostics and vaccines.

- Africa CDC: convening power
- AU Agencies: AU-IBAR, AUC
- Member States: AMRCC Representatives
- Regional Institutions: ECSA-HC, ReAct Africa
- Global Organizations: WHO, WOA, FAO, UNEP, Global Fund
- Private sector: R&D Pharma, Generics and Diagnostics
- Non-state actors: CSOs, NGOs, Youth Organizations, Parliamentarians Alliances
- Donors and Development Partners

5. Date and Venue

The meeting will take place at the Africa CDC Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 30th to 31st October 2025.

References

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4. Africa CDC: African Union Framework for Antimicrobial Resistance Control 2020–2025.
5. Ondo P, Kapoor G, Alimi Y, Shumba E, Osen G, Maina M, et al. Bacteriology testing and antimicrobial resistance detection capacity of national tiered laboratory networks in sub-Saharan Africa: an analysis from 14 countries. Lancet Microbe (2025)
6. United Nations Development Programme. Inequality in Access to Essential Health and Medicine: COVID-19 Vaccines. United Nations; 2023
7. Analysis of the current state of development of the local pharmaceutical manufacturing and regulatory capabilities in the African Union (AU) recognized Regional Economic Communities (RECs) | African Union.