

Our response to the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance Zero Draft.

Action for Animal Health congratulates United Nations member states on a robust and ambitious AMR political declaration [zero draft](#).

We are pleased to see that the draft includes both recommendations and clear actions to prevent antimicrobial resistance. We welcome the following and ask member states retain these points:

- Acknowledgement of disparities between higher income and lower income countries
- Recognition of the need for a multisectoral approach, but also the need to strengthen individual sectors
- Inclusion of targets to reduce antimicrobial use in the animal health sector
- Recognition of the need to strengthen agricultural and animal health systems; building antimicrobial stewardship into animal health practitioner training, create lists of essential veterinary medicines, and strong commitments to fill sector-specific surveillance gaps.

However, we wish to see stronger commitments throughout the declaration to transform agri-food systems and optimise the health and welfare of animals to reduce antimicrobial use, consistent with Key Recommendation 7 from the Quadripartite's '[Call for actionable steps in response to the rising threat of antimicrobial resistance](#)'. We recommend two amendments:

1. **Expanding the content of paragraph 33. Essential veterinary medicines lists have the potential to do more than just improve access to essential antimicrobials.** Some animal health practitioners have major challenges accessing safe and effective veterinary medicines such as pain killers. Yet antimicrobials are readily available, and may be used in place of the appropriate medicine. EVMLs will improve access to efficacious, safe and cost-effective medicines for priority conditions, and prevent blanket use of antimicrobials.
2. **Include commitments to strengthen and improve access to animal health services in points 30-35 and 56-58.** It is vital that parties commit to investing in improving access to and quality of animal health services, especially in lower- and middle-income settings. This should include the training and regulation of all levels of animal health practitioners. Investing in these services means farmers and other animal-keepers can access competent practitioners who are qualified to distribute antimicrobials, vaccines and medicines – as well as allowing access to accurate information that support keepers to provide good animal care. Decent animal health services also contribute to surveillance, and prevent keepers from self-administering antimicrobials.

Finally, we end with a plea to donor countries to pledge to financing mechanisms that cover animal health systems strengthening, such as the World Bank Pandemic Fund, so that lower income countries receive support to implement the commitments outlined in the final declaration.

Action for Animal Health and its members stand ready to support the implementation of the final declaration after September 2024.

www.actionforanimalhealth.org

ellie.parravani@thebrooke.org