

AMR: Address the need - raise access; defeat excess - stop the waste!

Thank you for giving me a chance to make a short intervention in this very important discussion. I would like to highlight a few issues as a consumer from a low income country and as a person who has been privileged to have seen both what lack access and an excess of use of antibiotic means. I would like to raise five points:

1. Let me talk of **access** first. Antimicrobial agents are life saving medicines whose effect can be seen in a few hours/days and whose lack can mean disability or death just as fast. The sight of a mother watching in despair as her child dies from pneumonia simply because she cannot afford the cost of a course of antibiotic must be unacceptable. Ensuring access for all who need these medicines is therefore a priority. However, when the incentive is to sell more antibiotics to earn more revenues or to sell these drugs at whatever prices the market will bear, access is compromised. No one would have an objection to rewarding effort and innovation when this also serves the humanity for whom it is developed in the first place. However when this makes the product serve only those who have and not those in need, humanity must look at ways to change this equation. It is my hope that this panel will therefore seriously consider enabling affordable pricing of these products by **delinking R&D costs from volume-based revenues (price x quantity)**. There are good models which have been proposed, what is needed is the commitment and the action to be put them into effect and the time is now.

2. The second issue is **excess** which has two prongs. One side is excessive use driven by the need for profit. This financial incentive leads to excessive promotion and subsequent overuse of a resource whose uncontrolled use can lead to loss of the very resource through resistance. One of the major areas of such misuse is in **agriculture**. The other side of excess arises when the medicines are used in situations where they are not appropriate either because of lack of knowledge or inability to determine what is appropriate-situations that easily occur in countries such as mine. Whilst we can never stop resistance, we can delay it by taking steps to curb the excessive use of antibiotics in every sphere. I would therefore call on this panel to explore all avenues to do this and promote many good proposals that have been offered. This must at same time emphasize the importance of increased attention to complementary affordable technologies that would enable **better diagnosis** and also support **innovations** such as vaccines that help to minimize the need to use antimicrobial agents.

3. The third point for me emphasizes the fact that there will be no access (which is my main cry) if there is no innovation. Therefore we must pay attention at **how we pay for research and development** so that even as we contain resistance, we assure ourselves that there are products in the pipeline. To avoid the danger of the price limiting access, we must find ways of sharing of resources, the risks and the rewards. There has been support of public private partnerships (PPP) for such purposes. These must provide benefits that reach everyone if they are not to simply be another form of "business as usual". A concerted effort of this kind will also ensure that robust clinical trials continue to be the standards to which all adhere.

4. Whereas not all of us can do upstream research at this time, we are all **accountable** for maintaining this resource. My fourth point is that both the rich and the poor are accountable. From asking those

where infections are still a major health burden on how they are addressing infection control to requiring those who are producing the antibiotics to ensure access and not excess.

5. Lastly we should recognize that even though antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a global problem, in addressing it, **local context** must be taken into consideration. Countries must be encouraged and supported as they consider the best ways they can implement any agreed policies or regulations.

Thank you. I wish the panel very successful discussions.

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