

AMR Hub Collaborators Meet & Greet: Asia Meeting Report

Online (Zoom), Thursday 28th September 2023, 9:00-10:30 am BST

The ‘AMR Collaborators Meet & Greet Event: Asia’ held on September 28th, 2023, brought together TGHN Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) collaborators from diverse backgrounds and regions across Asia. The meeting was designed to foster networking, knowledge sharing, and collaborative discussions with a focus on addressing the challenges posed by AMR in Asia. All Asia-based members of the TGHN AMR Hub [‘Collaborator Map’](#) were invited to participate.

Participants

A total of 12 collaborators participated in the event. Countries represented by participants included India and Nepal. Collaborators with a broad range of professional backgrounds and expertise contributed to the open discussion, including academics, researchers, laboratory professionals, clinicians, surgeons and veterinarians. Research areas represented included microbiology, clinical research, epidemiology, diagnostics, genomics, infectious diseases, environmental health, animal health, antimicrobial stewardship, One Health, surveillance, education and public health.

Agenda Overview

The meeting began with introductions from Dr Salvia Zeeshan, TGHN Asia Regional Manager and Dr Ryan Walker, TGHN AMR Hub Coordinator (Background to the TGHN AMR Hub and aims of the meeting). Then followed an open discussion, in which participants were invited to introduce themselves, share their current work and unique perspectives regarding AMR research in Asia, and highlight further research they thought necessary to address the threat posed by AMR in the region. Additionally, participants were encouraged to share the challenges they have faced conducting AMR research, resources and actions that would support them in addressing these challenges, and propose collaborative solutions to addressing the research gaps.

Additionally, the meeting aimed to build upon discussions, held in the previous ‘AMR Collaborators Meet & Greet Event: Africa’ meeting. Topics raised in the Africa meeting were shared with the Asia meeting participants, to allow discussion of shared challenges/goals and regional variations in AMR research needs.

Discussion Outcomes

The discussion outcomes from this meeting revolved around key themes and challenges related to AMR:

Collaboration and Networking	The meeting emphasized a need for greater local and international collaboration to tackle AMR effectively. Participants recognized the value of sharing knowledge, expertise, data and resources across different regions. The creation of international working groups (see below) was seen as an effective strategy to pool expertise and tackle shared problems.
Antimicrobial Stewardship	Strengthening antimicrobial stewardship in the region, with a particular focus on stewardship in the community (outside of hospital settings, with community pharmacists identified as key stakeholders), addressing inappropriate prescribing, and greater research and education targeting stewardship, were recognized as vital steps.

<p>One Health</p>	<p>The meeting emphasized adopting a One Health approach, recognizing the interconnectedness of human health, animal health, and the environment. This holistic approach was seen as crucial for the successful implementation of AMR-targeted initiatives.</p>
<p>Youth Engagement</p>	<p>Educating and engaging younger individuals (early researchers, healthcare students, etc) in AMR was identified as a key approach to tackling AMR in Asia. Particular areas of focus included the development of (or incorporation into existing) AMR-focused curricula in healthcare education.</p>
<p>Training and Education</p>	<p>Participants discussed the need for greater training opportunities in AMR research. This included particular focus on students, community pharmacists, and antimicrobial stewardship.</p>
<p>Genomic Studies and Molecular Biology</p>	<p>Genome sequencing was identified as a shared area of research interest amongst participants, with challenges in this field including human resource constraints (lack of trained staff, lack of technical skills), limited access to technology, lack of participant diversity and limited access to samples (with stronger collaboration identified as an enabler of to sample sharing).</p>
<p>AMR Surveillance</p>	<p>Increasing AMR surveillance and conducting prevalence studies (In both human and animal populations, and the environment) was identified as a shared area of interest.</p>
<p>Systematic Reviews and Collaborations</p>	<p>The value of systematic reviews and collaboration with external groups, such as the Cochrane Collaboration, was acknowledged.</p>

Next Steps

To effectively address the diverse components of AMR research identified during the meeting, it was proposed that multiple, cross-cutting **working groups** be established to address these concerns in a targeted manner. The precise focus and geographic scope of these working groups will be determined following the upcoming Latin American and Caribbean Meet and Greet event (scheduled September and October respectively), in order to assess the shared challenges and areas of interest across all regions. These groups will be launched in a joint initiative during **World AMR Awareness Week (WAAW)**, November 2023.

Attendees were encouraged to **volunteer for leadership roles** within the working groups, promoting leadership from within the Asia AMR Collaborators network and fostering collaborative research and knowledge sharing. The meeting concluded with a commitment to continue strengthening the Asia AMR Collaborators network, pursuing funding opportunities, and developing specific interventions and strategies to address the AMR challenges identified during the event.