

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NETHERLANDS: DRAFT POLITICAL DECLARATION ON AMR

In May 2024, the Netherlands hosted a stakeholder meeting on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in preparation for the upcoming UN General Assembly (UNGA) meeting in September 2024. The primary objectives of the Netherlands included reaffirming existing agreements, ensuring more structural and increased funding, setting targets for reducing antibiotic use, banning antibiotics as growth promoters, and establishing an independent panel to provide evidence-based actions to combat AMR.

Health Action International (HAI) has a strong [track record on AMR](#), covering everything from diagnostics to policy analysis. We were therefore pleased to engage in constructive conversations with the Dutch government and other relevant stakeholders. Following the meeting and after reviewing the Political Declaration of the UNGA High-level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance, we make the following recommendations:

1. Set specific targets and indicators

In addition to setting targets for reducing antimicrobial use, the focus should also be on creating indicators. The aim should be to make these as specific as possible. For instance, specific metrics should be established, such as the “proportion of children treated with third-generation cephalosporin” with a target of <3% rather than general targets such as reducing the use of third-generation cephalosporins.

2. Emphasise infection prevention and control (IPC)

The Netherlands aims to enhance the 2016 Political Declaration, which includes IPC as a key component. However, a more focused approach on IPC is necessary, as effective prevention is crucial for tackling AMR. By prioritising IPC systems, we can significantly reduce the overall need for antimicrobials, thereby addressing the root causes of resistance.

3. Create a quality certification and accreditation for AMR best practices

Establish a programme to certify and accredit hospitals and health centres that excel in reducing antimicrobial use, implementing effective IPC measures, and promoting antimicrobial stewardship. This programme could also be extended to other sectors.

4. Raise awareness and utilise public campaigns

In addition to IPC, public initiatives and increased awareness are crucial. For instance, in health centres and hospitals, physicians should inform patients when they are infected with resistant microorganisms and explain the need for different treatments. Patients with resistant infections are frequently treated without being aware of their circumstances. It is also critical that the general public understands the distinction between bacteria and viruses, as well as what resistance means.

5. Foster international cooperation and alignment

There is a critical need for improved cooperation and alignment between states to effectively combat AMR. International collaboration can facilitate the sharing of best practices, resources, and data, enabling a more unified and effective global response. Aligning national policies and strategies with international standards and commitments can ensure a coordinated approach to reducing antimicrobial resistance.