

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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Uniting against antimicrobial resistance: opportunities for low- and middle-income countries at the London summit

Bashar Haruna Gulumbe^{1*}  and Abdulrakib Abdulrahim¹

Dear Editor,

In an era where antimicrobial resistance (AMR) poses a daunting challenge to global health, the London Summit, scheduled for February 28th, 2024, emerges as a critical convening point for the international community (Salam et al. 1946; Brown 2024). As AMR threatens to reverse decades of medical progress, jeopardizing millions of lives and the very fabric of global health security, the urgency for a unified, comprehensive approach to this crisis has reached its zenith (Mendelson et al. 2024). This summit is not merely a meeting but a pivotal opportunity to galvanize global efforts, particularly emphasizing the role and challenges faced by low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) (Brown 2024). These nations, often at the frontline of the AMR battle, face unique hurdles that compound their struggle against drug-resistant infections, underscoring the need for a collaborative, inclusive strategy to address this menace (Mendelson et al. 2024).

At the heart of the summit's agenda is the recognition of AMR as a complex, multi-faceted issue that demands a coordinated response across various sectors (Brown 2024). This encompasses strengthening healthcare systems, enhancing surveillance and data sharing, promoting judicious antimicrobial use, and fostering the development of new treatments and diagnostics.

The summit aims to spotlight the essential role of LMICs in this global endeavor, advocating for significant investments in healthcare infrastructure, workforce training, and public health initiatives tailored to their specific contexts. Such capacity-building efforts are crucial for LMICs to not only tackle AMR effectively but also to ensure their health systems can withstand future challenges (Brown 2024).

However, the path forward is fraught with significant obstacles. A notable challenge is the stark disparity in antibiotic use and the quality of AMR data between high-income countries and LMICs. Most data on antibiotic use and resistance come from well-resourced settings, leaving a critical gap in understanding the AMR landscape in LMICs (Mendelson et al. 2024). This gap underscores an urgent need for a more inclusive approach to data collection and analysis, ensuring strategies are informed by the realities faced by these countries. Furthermore, LMICs grapple with constrained resources, which hinder the implementation of effective AMR strategies (Mendelson et al. 2024). The dilemma of ensuring access to essential medicines while preventing their overuse exemplifies the complex balancing act required to manage AMR (Gulumbe et al. 2022).

The London Summit stands a momentous occasion, offering a platform for LMICs to voice their challenges and contributions towards forging a united front against AMR. It's a call to action for equitable solutions and partnerships that are crucial in the global fight against antimicrobial resistance. With a focus on empowering LMICs and ensuring a collective approach to this global health threat, the summit aims to catalyze action, foster innovation, and build resilient healthcare systems capable

*Correspondence:

Bashar Haruna Gulumbe
bashar.haruna@fubk.edu.ng

¹ Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Science, Federal University Birnin-Kebbi, Birnin-Kebbi, Kebbi State, Nigeria



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of addressing AMR and beyond. As the international community gathers in London, the message is clear: only through unity, collaboration, and a commitment to equity can the world hope to turn the tide against antimicrobial resistance, safeguarding the health and well-being of future generations.

Abbreviations

LMICs Low- and middle-income countries
AMR Antimicrobial resistance

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