

The importance of WASH in preventing AMR and improving health outcomes

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**Clean water.
Decent toilets.
Good hygiene.**

- WaterAid is a global non-profit organization determined to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation.
- We believe WASH is essential to help communities to unlock their potential, break free from poverty, and change their lives for good.
- We are active in 34 countries, and work with local partners and decision-makers to maximize our impact.



Primary infection prevention, including WASH, needs to be prioritized if we are to make lasting headway in preventing AMR



WASH and AMR



Although AMR is driven by a multitude of factors, **preventing infections from occurring in the first place** reduces the pressures that drive resistance.

WASH is essential to preventing AMR because:

- 1) Adequate WASH is critical to infection prevention and control (IPC) in health care settings
- 2) Poor WASH contributes to the burden of infectious diseases, and widespread use of antibiotics.

WASH in Health Care Settings



In low- and middle-income countries:

- Half of healthcare facilities lack access to piped water
- 33% are without access to improved toilets
- 39% do not have facilities for washing hands with soap

Up to 90% of health workers do not adhere to recommended hand hygiene practices

Healthcare-associated infections are the third major driver of AMR globally. 15% of patients in developing countries acquire at least one infection during a hospital stay.

WASH access and health



Poor WASH contributes to a cycle of common infections, and overreliance and misuse of antibiotics.

Diarrhea: Millions of cases treated with antibiotics every year, including for non-bacterial causes such as viral diarrhea, for which antibiotics are redundant.

Cholera: Recent reports have documented some tetracycline- and fluoroquinolone-resistant *V. cholerae* strains, and increasing multidrug resistance.

Antibiotic residues enter the environment through sewage systems, manure use, and manufacturing waste. Without proper management of these wastes, we are needlessly encouraging the spread of AMR.

AMR efforts & processes

GLOBAL ACTION PLAN
ON ANTIMICROBIAL
RESISTANCE



IACG | Interagency Coordination Group on
Antimicrobial Resistance



Global Health Security Agenda



**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
(WASH) in Health Care Facilities
Global Action Plan**



Suggestions for further action



- Prioritize the prevention of infectious diseases through improvements in WASH within AMR plans and strategies at global, national and local levels.
- Align global plans, strategies and efforts on AMR to support common priorities and targets, and provide a pathway to action for policymakers.
- Support national governments to build all elements of AMR into existing national health plans and health systems strengthening strategies, ensuring these strategies integrate WASH and support multi-sector collaboration.

Suggestions for further action



- Engage the health sector as partners in achieving universal access to and use of adequate toilets, safe drinking water supplies, and consistent hygiene behaviors in communities to reduce unnecessary antibiotic use and hospital admissions (SDG6)
- Increase awareness of and investment in the containment and elimination of animal and human fecal waste from the environment. This includes targeted plans, policies and budgets for fecal sludge management.



Thank you!

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