



The Monthly

August 2019, Issue 14

A snapshot of the activities of the South Centre



Dr. Carlos Correa

Message from the Executive Director

The worldwide problem of the rise in antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a serious threat to global public health. The loss of efficacy of antibiotics and other antimicrobials affects everyone. Yet the threat is greater in developing countries, due to the higher incidence of infectious diseases. Developing countries will be unequivocally affected by AMR, deteriorating the health of the population, reducing economic growth and exacerbating poverty and inequalities. The blueprint for addressing AMR as a global problem is advanced. Countries are progressing in developing and implementing national action plans and overall the public awareness of AMR is increasing.

However, we are at the tip of the iceberg of response. AMR is not yet a key priority of most governments, and global coordination and resource mobilization to enable all countries to do their part are lagging. The Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) in the upcoming 74th UN General Assembly (UNGA) will be reporting on the implementation of the UN resolution on AMR of 2016, including the recommendations of the Interagency Coordination Group (IACG) on Antimicrobial Resistance. The UNGA will also host a High-Level Meeting to build support for advancing Universal Health Coverage (UHC), that is essential for AMR response. Expanding primary health care services, strengthening the health work force, improving infection prevention and control and measures to secure access to essential medicines and others to reduce health inequities can help contain AMR in developing countries. Developing countries need to be actively involved in shaping the global agenda on antimicrobial resistance, including the new global governance mechanisms that are being set up for AMR.

For the month of August, the South Centre released publications including on Hepatitis C antiviral drugs, the patent system and public health in Colombia; intellectual property and the investor-state dispute settlement system; and the US embargo on Cuba and its human rights impacts. In addition, news were published on, inter alia, an experts' meeting on climate finance needs of developing countries where South Centre staff participated; a workshop on tuberculosis and innovation supported by the Centre; an information session on AMR, agriculture and sustainable development goals and a regional conference on AMR in the context of UHC in Africa organized by the Centre; and sports, development and human rights.

This South Centre Monthly provides more information on these issues and activities; we will welcome your comments.

PUBLICATIONS

Research Papers

Documento De Investigación 96: Antivirales de acción directa para la Hepatitis C: evolución de los criterios de patentabilidad y su impacto en la salud pública en Colombia por Francisco A. Rossi B. y Claudia M. Vargas P.

Available at: <https://www.southcentre.int/documento-de-investigacion-96-agosto-2019/>

Patentes para sofosbuvir, Colombia

Producto	Solicitadas	Otorgadas	Rechazadas	Pendientes
Sofosbuvir	7	3	4	
Sofosbuvir + daclatasvir	11	6	5	
Sofosbuvir + ledipasvir	8	4	4	
Sofosbuvir + velpatasvir	8	4	4	
Sofosbuvir + velpatasvir + voxilaprevir	10	5	4	1
Totales	44	22	21	1

Table: Patent filings for Sofosbuvir in Colombia. 22 granted, 21 rejected, 1 pending.

Access to direct-acting antivirals (DAAs) for the treatment of infection with Hepatitis C can increase with price reductions stimulated by generic competition. This paper compiles information on patents for DDAs in Colombia. The trend observed is an increase in secondary patents and primary patents containing Markush claims.

Research Paper 97: Intellectual Property under the Scrutiny of Investor-State Tribunals: Legitimacy and New Challenges by Clara Ducimetière

Available at: <https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-97-august-2019/>

The fact that private arbitral tribunals are increasingly interpreting intellectual property provisions raises complex issues among the international community. The research paper written by Clara Ducimetière explores the question of whether investor-state tribunals are an appropriate forum for litigating intellectual property disputes and provides recommendations for reforming investor-state arbitration.

Policy Briefs

Policy Brief 66: Impacts of Unilateral Coercive Measures in Developing Countries: the need to end the US embargo on Cuba by Vicente Paolo Yu and Adriano José Timossi

Available at: <https://www.southcentre.int/policy-brief-66-august-2019/>

This policy brief highlights the impacts on the human rights of the people of Cuba of the continued imposition of an economic embargo by the United States against Cuba. The embargo has had adverse effects on the economic situation of Cuba, thereby adversely affecting the achievement of the right to development of Cuba and its people. The policy brief points out that through multiple annual resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly voted for by virtually all countries except the United States, the embargo has been consistently seen by the international community as being contrary to international law.

Informe Sobre Políticas 64: USMCA debe ser enmendado para asegurar el acceso a medicamentos en México por Maria Fabiana Jorge

Available at: <https://www.southcentre.int/informe-sobre-politicas-64-agosto-2019/>

The policy brief highlights the problem of granting TRIPS-plus clauses in regional trade agreements. The trade agreement between Mexico, the United States and Canada (USMCA) contains several mandatory intellectual property rights provisions that favor the originator pharmaceutical companies at the expense of consumers. It does not promote competition nor access to medicines. The policy brief proposes to renegotiate the intellectual property provisions of the USMCA to restore a balance between the need to promote innovation, competition and access to medicines.

SouthViews, SouthNews and South Centre News on AMR

SOUTHVIEWS No. 185, 27 August 2019: 'Playing' it right: A path ahead

by A.L.A. Azeez

Available at: <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=fa9cf38799136b5660f367ba6&id=7386587457>



Photo credit: ICFKR

The Olympic ideal and inclusive sports and their contribution to the promotion of human rights, peace and development were extensively deliberated on at the United Nations Human Rights Council Social Forum 2018. The outcome of the forum could contribute to strengthening inclusion and solidarity through a human rights- and Sustainable Development Goals-based approach to major sporting events, in particular the 2024 Paris Olympics.

SOUTHNEWS No. 272, 6 August 2019: Delegates, civil society and academia discuss and demand further commitments towards innovation in tuberculosis

by Vitor Ido

Available at: <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=fa9cf38799136b5660f367ba6&id=2e9e7fcf29>



Speakers of the workshop “Creating an Enabling Environment for TB Research and Innovation that Ensures Equitable Access”

Tuberculosis (TB) remains one of the most lethal diseases, and number one for people living with HIV, placing it as a major disease burden, particularly for developing countries. Nonetheless, research and innovation are insufficient; the existing health products mostly have barriers of affordability and availability. Almost a year after the adoption of the historic Political Declaration at the United Nations High-Level Meeting on Ending TB, an event to discuss the way forward for TB innovation and research was organized by the Permanent Mission of South Africa and supported by the South Centre, The Union, Medicines Patent Pool – MPP, Médecins sans Frontières – MSF Access Campaign, Stop TB Partnership and Treatment Action Group – TAG. It was held in Geneva on 13 June 2019.

SOUTH CENTRE NEWS ON AMR No. 30, 8 August 2019: Antimicrobial Resistance, Agriculture and the Sustainable Development Goals by Mirza Alas

Available at: <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=fa9cf38799136b5660f367ba6&id=6d1e831f11>



Sharing practices to reduce and mitigate the impact of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) on agricultural systems links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The South Centre and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Permanent Missions of Ghana and Norway held an information session on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), Agriculture and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event explored good policy practices to reduce and mitigate the impact of AMR on agricultural systems, identified the links and synergies in AMR work and the SDGs, stressed the importance of the One-Health approach and increased understanding of the impact of AMR.

SOUTHNEWS No. 274, 14 August 2019: UNFCCC experts meeting to assess the climate finance needs of developing countries held in Manila

by Mariama Williams

Available at: <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=fa9cf38799136b5660f367ba6&id=a6009d0843>

It is well recognised that in order to meet the Paris Agreement's goals of limiting global warming to 1.5-2 °C above pre-industrial levels, increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate resilient and low greenhouse gas emissions pathway (in a manner that does not threaten food production and consistent with sustainable development), vulnerable countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean will require an acceleration of climate finance. To this end, the Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, called for 'making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development' as well as for assessing the needs of developing countries for climate finance. In an experts' meeting convened by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), hosted by the governments of the Philippines and the Republic of Korea and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), held on July 10-11, 2019 in Manila, Philippines, at the headquarters of the ADB, climate finance experts (including a staff of the South Centre) wrestled with the challenging question of how to assess the needs of developing countries for climate finance.

SOUTHNEWS No. 275, 16 August 2019: South Africa promotes discussion at UNCTAD on competition in healthcare markets and pricing of medicines

by Vitor Ido

Available at: <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=fa9cf38799136b5660f367ba6&id=49107585f4>

Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy

18th SESSION

10-12 July 2019

Room XVII, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Friday, 12 July 2019

Discussion on

**"Competition in Healthcare Markets:
Access and Affordability"**

Competition Commission of South Africa

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South Africa recalls the ample space countries have to enact competition law policies that enhance access to medical products.

The Competition Commission of South Africa participated in an expert discussion at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on competition in health care markets. It highlighted the central role of competition authorities in addressing market inefficiencies and rising prices in healthcare markets, which includes addressing abusive exercise of intellectual property rights in the pharmaceutical sector. Competition authorities can work not only to promote more efficient markets, but also to achieve other societal goals, including the right to health.

SOUTH CENTRE NEWS ON AMR No. 31, 21 August 2019: African countries discuss how to address Antimicrobial Resistance in the context of Universal Health Coverage by Mirza Alas

Available at: <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=fa9cf38799136b5660f367ba6&id=6a6a96b777>

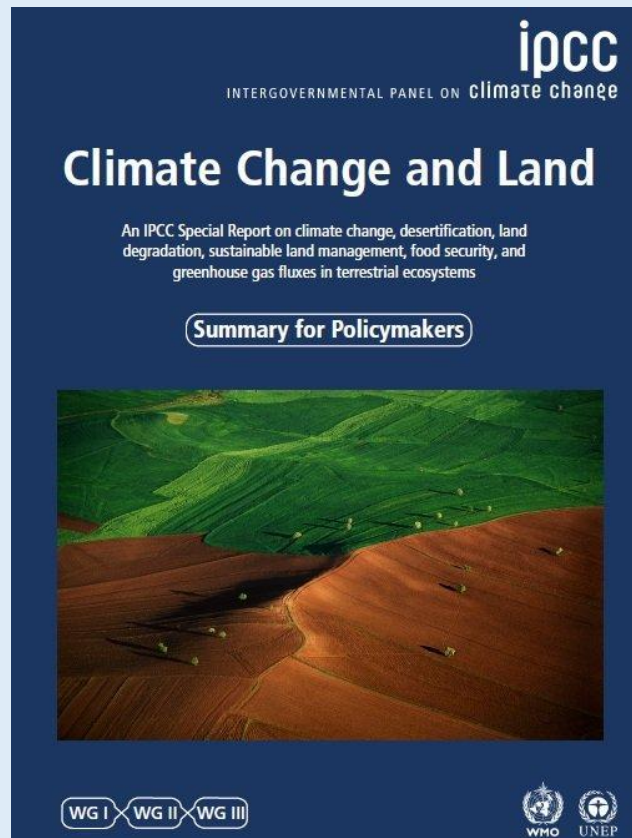


African countries discussed how achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) supports tackling Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and exchanged experiences on the implementation and progress of AMR national action plans under a One Health approach.

The South Centre together with ReAct Africa organized the conference “Achieving Universal Health Coverage while addressing Antimicrobial Resistance” in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting brought together policymakers from the health and agricultural sectors as well as Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) experts and civil society representatives with over 120 participants and 27 African countries. The conference promoted new understanding of the link between Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and AMR and discussed progress in advancing both UHC and responses to AMR in Africa. The participants discussed how achieving UHC – strengthening health systems, investing in primary health care, access for all - supports tackling AMR, and exchanged and learnt from country experiences on the implementation and progress of AMR national action plans under a One Health approach. Increased support for African countries is needed to help maintain momentum for UHC and AMR response.

SOUTHNEWS No. 277, 29 August 2019: Summary for Policy Makers of the IPCC's Landmark Special Report on Climate Change and Land adopted at the WMO in Geneva by Mariama Williams, Rajesh Eralil and Diany LI

Available at: <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=fa9cf38799136b5660f367ba6&id=f574bf3ad1>



The approval of the highly awaited Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of Climate Change and Land: An IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems was conducted in Geneva, on August 2-7, 2019. This led to the final adoption and presentation of the report to the general public at the office of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) on August 8. The report shows how managing land resources sustainably can help address climate change. The land report will provide a valuable input into the Climate Action Summit to be hosted by United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres in New York on 23 September later this year as well as will be a key scientific input into upcoming climate negotiations such as the Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference (COP25) in Santiago, Chile, in December 2019.

In addition to the meetings described in SouthNews above, the South Centre also organized and/or participated in the following meetings:

19-30 August 2019, New York - Support for developing countries in the negotiations at the Third Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ).

Twitter Highlights

AUG 2019 SUMMARY	
Tweets	Tweet impressions
26	50.9K
Profile visits	Mentions
629	56
New followers	
49	

Top Tweet earned 4,911 impressions

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT: Program Coordinator, **#SustainableDevelopment** and **#ClimateChange** (SDCC), Duty Station: **#Geneva** Switzerland.

@South_Centre is an intergovernmental policy research organization/think-tank of **#developingcountries** For more info southcentre.int/vacancy-announ...

@UNjobs

[illegible]

Top mention earned 199 engagements

 **IFMSA**
@IFMSA · Aug 12

One more month to join [@Innovate4AMR](#), supported by IFMSA, together with [@reactgroup](#) [@WHO](#) [@South_Centre](#). Send your ideas and win a training in Geneva [#Switzerland](#) CH. It is time for youth to address [#AntibioticResistance](#)! Thank you [@Marcsprenger4PH](#) for your support!
pic.twitter.com/mfcdNtB6C9



"The **Innovate4AMR** enlisting you, as the new leaders, to help us find new approaches to antimicrobial

- Dr. Marc Sprenger, Director of the Surveillance Department, Antimicrobial Resistance Division,

Top Facebook Engagements



Most downloaded publication for the month

Policy Brief 66: “Impacts of Unilateral Coercive Measures in Developing Countries: the need to end the US embargo on Cuba”

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