

WEBINAR REPORT

Elevating South Voices in the Global AMR Response

Hosted by the South Centre | 5 March 2026 | Virtual (Zoom)

Background

On 5 March 2026, the South Centre convened a virtual webinar to mark the conclusion of its seven-year antimicrobial resistance (AMR) programme, supported by the Fleming Fund, Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), United Kingdom (UK) since 2018. The main objective of the webinar was to present the findings of an Impact Assessment of the programme and to gather reflections from key partners on lessons learned and the way forward. The South Centre emphasised that the end of the Fleming Fund grant marks a transition, not a closure as the organisation remains committed to AMR as a core area of work and is actively seeking new partnerships.

The webinar was opened by Prof. Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre, and moderated throughout by Dr Viviana Munoz Tellez, Head of the Health, Intellectual Property and Biodiversity programme of the South Centre. Eleven speakers from multilateral institutions, the UK Fleming Fund, government delegations, academics, civil society, and the media shared perspectives and calls to action.

Opening Remarks

Prof. Carlos Correa - Executive Director, South Centre

Prof. Correa situated AMR alongside climate change as one of the defining global challenges requiring collective action. He cited significant international milestones - the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat, the Global Leaders Group on AMR, two UN Political Declarations (2016 and 2024), and the updated Global Action Plan - as evidence of real progress. Yet he stressed that developing countries face structural disadvantages: weak infrastructure, limited WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) provision, inadequate surveillance capacity, and chronically underfunded National Action Plans (NAPs).

He described the South Centre programme as pursuing two interlocking objectives:

- Increasing AMR awareness and capacity in developing countries.
- Elevating the Global South voice in global AMR governance.

He highlighted that the Impact Assessment shows over 80% of partner organisations rated South Centre activities as having high impact, and that the organisation is widely perceived as a trusted policy intermediary. Prof. Correa extended special thanks to the Fleming Fund and to Dr Muñoz Téllez for her seven years of leadership.

South Centre Programme Overview

Dr Viviana Munoz Tellez – Programme Coordinator, Health, IP & Biodiversity, South Centre

Dr Munoz Tellez provided a concise overview of the AMR challenge and the South Centre's strategic response. She noted that AMR's burden falls disproportionately on low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) - which face weaker health systems, limited diagnostics, inadequate WASH infrastructure, and constrained surveillance and stewardship capacity.

The South Centre's approach centred on two tracks:

- Policymakers - using the South Centre's intergovernmental mandate to work with developing-country delegations in Geneva, New York, and at country and regional level.
- Civil society and communities - providing catalytic grants and platforms, recognising these actors as essential drivers of lasting change.

Key achievements highlighted included:

- Increased developing country political commitment on AMR, including through the 2016 and 2024 UN Political Declarations.
- Stronger country level AMR action, supported through technical outputs and connected national focal point networks.
- Stronger civil society voices, including through small grants supporting advocacy campaigns.
- A more inclusive global AMR governance architecture, including early support for the establishment of the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat.
- Bridging global commitments with LMICs realities, particularly on the financing gap for the implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs).

Impact Assessment Report - Key Findings

Dr Sherin Paul - Consultant, South Centre

Dr Sherin Paul presented the independent Impact Assessment Report, "*Elevating Global South Voices in the Fight Against Antimicrobial Resistance: The South Centre's Impact and Lessons Learned*". The assessment applied OECD DAC criteria (relevance, effectiveness, coherence) and used a mixed-methods approach: surveys of 48 civil society grant recipients, 12 key

informant interviews with opinion leaders and partners, and a desk review of South Centre publications.

Small grants for CSOs

48 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) received grants across the programme period to support their campaigns on raising awareness on AMR during the annual World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW). Key findings:

- The majority reported South Centre support significantly increased their visibility, credibility, and capacity to position themselves as trusted AMR stakeholders.
- Catalytic effect on resource mobilisation - support opened doors to new funding streams for recipients.
- Several organisations doubled their direct beneficiaries; many programme interventions were ultimately institutionalised.
- Challenges included small grant sizes, fund transfer difficulties, short implementation windows, and logistical constraints in rural settings.
- CSO partners called for longer-term funding models, mechanisms to formally recognise CSO contributions (including an AMR Awards scheme), and support for participation in international policy forums.

React Africa-South Centre Annual Conference

The co-organised annual conference grew substantially.

	2018	2025
Countries participating	22	43
Participants	<40	>150

Conference themes evolved from awareness-raising and NAP implementation to financing, accountability, and pandemic preparedness - consistently aligned with the live global AMR policy agenda. The forum became a two-way engagement platform linking African and LMIC lived experiences with processes up to United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) level.

Policy Advocacy and Global Governance

South Centre made substantive contributions to shaping global AMR governance, including:

- Global AMR governance reforms: working with the Antibiotic Resistance Coalition (ARC) to remove pharma-aligned opt-out endorsement approaches in the context of the Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Platform (MSPP).
- UNGA 2024: co-convening with the Group of 77+China Presidency to link LMIC concerns to global negotiations.
- World Health Assembly: Consistent statements advocating for AMR as a cross-cutting WHO priority and for an updated Global Action Plan.

- Independent Panel on Evidence for Action Against AMR (IPEA): Substantive inputs to its development.
- FAO Dialogue: Leading discussions on industry accountability and AMR challenges in the agri-food sector.

As mentioned in the Impact Assessment report by Lebogang Lebo, Minister (Health) Permanent Mission of South Africa – “The South Centre managed to translate a highly complex issue into accessible, policy-relevant evidence, especially useful for ambassadors and diplomats without a health background.”

Publications and Knowledge Products

Over 60 publications were produced, spanning six thematic areas: NAP implementation and financing; civil society leadership in AMR; surveillance; One Health; pandemic lessons; and access, innovation and equitable R&D. These publications served a dual function: linking global AMR policy with LMIC realities and informing negotiators and diplomats without a public health background.

Overall Assessment

Relevance	Majority of CSOs confirmed very high relevance in addressing LMIC binding constraints - underfunded NAPs, weak surveillance, and limited One Health coordination.
Effectiveness	Outcomes were often direct and catalytic rather than immediately measurable. South Centre strengthened the visibility and legitimacy of Global South concerns around equity, financing, access, and implementation feasibility.
Coherence	Complemented Quadripartite activities. Publications and dialogues consistently reinforced One Health principles. Rather than duplicating effort, South Centre worked within existing structures to increase inclusivity and accountability.

Strategic Way Forward

Six strategic priorities for the South Centre's next phase:

- Strategic consolidation - sharpen value proposition and leverage comparative advantage.
- Long-term, phased funding models with accompanying technical support.
- Deepened regional presence.
- Resource mobilisation and donor diversification - critical given the Fleming Fund closure.

- Priority thematic focus areas: policy analysis and LMIC advocacy; civil society participation; NAP financing and implementation; South-South knowledge exchange; surveillance-to-action pathways; AMR as a global development issue.

Panel Discussion - Partner and Stakeholder Perspectives

Ms Holly Rhyner Jones - Head of Fleming Fund, UK Department of Health and Social Care

Ms Rhyner Jones described the Fleming Fund as the world's largest official development assistance programme for AMR surveillance strengthening in LMICs. Since 2016, the Fund's achievements include:

- 5.1 million human health samples processed at supported sites.
- Over 200,000 animal health samples processed.
- More than 5,500 AMR professionals trained.
- Over 100 countries supported in developing or implementing AMR NAPs.
- Increased country submissions to global surveillance systems such as GLASS

She recognised the South Centre as instrumental in elevating Global South perspectives through its governance and policy lens. Acknowledging the challenging global donor landscape, she pointed to the Global Fund, Grant Cycle 8, as a near-term opportunity for countries to sustain and integrate AMR surveillance and laboratory strengthening into existing funding bids, citing WHO guidance already shared in the webinar chat.

Dr Samson Kefas - Lead, Multisectoral Coordination, Quadripartite Joint Secretariat on AMR (WHO)

Mr Kefas congratulated the South Centre on a timely and highly relevant Impact Assessment Report, noting its particular value in the context of implementing the 2024 UN Political Declaration on AMR. He identified key structural gaps in LMIC engagement in global AMR governance:

- Inadequate multi-sectoral coordination.
- Lack of context-specific AMR data, limiting the articulation of clear national positions in international fora.
- Limited technical capacity to navigate complex multilateral processes.
- Financial constraints hampering effective participation in global policy dialogues.

He endorsed South Centre's work noting that "*This is not a duplication, but rather a strategic reinforcement - a force multiplier. LMIC participation in AMR governance is not just a matter of equity; it is essential for achieving any meaningful global progress.*" He called for the South Centre's work to be sustained and scaled up, aligned with the 2024 Political Declaration and the updated Global Action Plan - and closed with the message that "when LMICs are

empowered with knowledge, afforded appropriate platforms and partnerships, global AMR governance becomes stronger and better for everyone."

Prof. Anthony So - Founding Director, IDEA Initiative, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; Head, Antibiotic Resistance Coalition (ARC)

Prof. So traced the partnership with the South Centre to the founding of the Antibiotic Resistance Coalition (ARC) at a South Centre-hosted meeting in April 2014 - born of the conviction that *"civil society and the Global South needed to be architects of the global AMR response, not an afterthought."* He described the South Centre as occupying *"a genuinely rare space: an intergovernmental institution of the Global South, with the analytical independence of a think tank and the convening legitimacy of a trusted neutral broker."*

Concrete collaborative outputs included:

- Staging WHO-Civil Society dialogues and strategic retreats to plan civil society's roadmap on AMR.
- Co-authoring the South Centre research paper on catalysing global AMR governance for the South Centre - G77 convening of the 2024 UNGA high-level meeting.
- Reforming MSPP rules to require opt-in (not opt-out) endorsement of joint position statements.
- Distributing South Centre policy analyses through the ARC monthly newsletter to civil society, governments, and institutions worldwide.

Noting that while nearly all countries now have NAPs, only 11% have dedicated financing to implement them and only 1 in 4 has even costed their plan, he concluded: *"The work being disseminated today is evidence of what becomes possible when Global South institutions lead - not as beneficiaries, but as architects."*

Ms. Sukpuck Barnett - Counsellor (Health), Permanent Mission of Thailand, Geneva

Ms. Barnett highlighted the essential role of multi-sectoral One Health approaches. She offered a frank account of the challenge facing smaller Missions: *"Sometimes there is only one person managing the entire health portfolio - we simply do not have the capacity to review many complex documents."*

She shared specific examples of the South Centre's tangible value to Thailand:

- Prince Mahidol Award Conference - a longstanding partnership with the South Centre for structuring AMR dialogues on financing, R&D, and responsible use.
- Simplified, accessible policy briefings described as "invaluable" to diplomats and lawyers navigating complex scientific negotiations.
- AMR Dialogue - a community-level initiative by Mahidol University, supported by South Centre in designing participatory engagement approaches.

- Thailand's national antibiotic consumption surveillance system - built with seed funding using a co-financing model designed from the outset for domestic ownership and sustainability.

Dr Afreenish Amir - AMR Expert; Member, WHO Advisory Group on Bacterial Priority Pathogens; Fleming Fund Technical Advisory Group

Dr Amir affirmed that the South Centre's AMR programme is "*totally aligned with the global response*" and praised its capacity to bridge health, development, and legal perspectives - framing AMR not only as a clinical issue but as a development challenge linked to agriculture, environmental management and health systems.

Looking ahead, she recommended that the South Centre:

- Continue and deepen South-South knowledge exchange, grounded in surveillance data, stewardship models, and regulatory approaches.
- Support evidence generation from the Global South on antimicrobial use, economic impacts, and social dimensions.
- Address emerging priorities: antimicrobial waste management, environmental drivers of resistance, and equitable access to new antimicrobials and diagnostics.
- Strengthen alignment of national policies with international AMR declarations from the UN and WHO.

Civil Society Perspective

Ms Tracie Muraya - Deputy Director, Policy and Strategy, React Africa

Ms Muraya described the React Africa - South Centre partnership - formalised in 2018 - as "*grounded in mutual trust, respect, and responsibility.*" She characterised South Centre's support as "*flexible, void of stringent performance indicators, but anchored in accountability*", and credited it directly with the exponential growth of the annual AMR conference: from 50 -80 participants from fewer than 15 countries to over 150 participants from more than 35 countries by 2025, with AMR Champion Awards introduced over the last three years.

Concrete impacts included:

- National AMR focal points birthed from the conferences now form the backbone of country-level AMR action.
- LMICs increasingly engaging with GLASS, TRACKS, and developing and revising their NAPs.
- Youth leadership amplified: many participants have since been integrated into national AMR technical working groups and the Quadripartite Working Group on Youth Engagement, and some have established their own AMR organisations.

- South Centre support elevated ReAct Africa's standing to contribute to global processes including GAP consultations and IPEA submissions.

Dr Ezéchiél Prosper Noali - Co-Founder, Youth Action Against AMR (AJRAM), Burkina Faso

Dr Noali described how South Centre WAAW grants enabled AJRAM to run AMR awareness campaigns during World AMR Awareness Week that reached people across Burkina Faso. He outlined further impacts including establishing AMR school clubs, running a youth leadership programme, and actively participating in the development and implementation of Burkina Faso's national AMR action plan. He emphasised the importance of the grant saying, *"By supporting youth today, we are strengthening the future response to antimicrobial resistance. The fight against AMR is a long-term commitment."*

Ms Estelle Mbadiwe - Founder, Ducit Blue Solutions & Ducit Blue Foundation, Nigeria

Ms Mbadiwe, supported by South Centre across three years (2021, 2022, 2025), focused on sustainability as a design principle - arguing for embedding exit strategies, accountability mechanisms, and resource mobilisation pathways from project inception rather than treating them as afterthoughts.

She highlighted the role of creating an innovative sustainability marketplace model, engaging multiple stakeholders as a solution for providers to co-map resource mobilisation and unlock new funding pathways. She called on donors and programme designers to shift from short-term grants to ecosystem frameworks that enable layered, sustained engagement, and closed by saying *"We need to elevate the voices, move AMR from a silent pandemic narrative, and ensure we diversify who is at the table."*

Media Perspective

Ms Shobha Shukla - Chairperson, Global AMR Media Alliance (GAMA); Founder & Executive Director, CNS

Ms Shukla argued that in a volatile world of geopolitical tensions and competing crises, media leverage is indispensable - the force that keeps AMR visible when headlines are dominated by trade wars, elections, and conflicts. She presented a five-point strategy:

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| 1 | Connect AMR to current headlines - frame it as an economic and security issue, linking it to conflicts, climate migration, food security, and rising healthcare costs. |
| 2 | Humanise AMR - move beyond statistics to personal stories: the child whose pneumonia no longer responds to antibiotics; the farmer who loses livestock to resistant disease. |

3	Diversify the media ecosystem - use social media, podcasts, and digital platforms; build alliances with investigative journalists, economists, and community influencers; communicate in local languages.
4	Time messages strategically around G7/G20 summits, UNGA sessions, financing negotiations, and key World Days to maximise policy pressure.
5	Safeguard credibility - counter misinformation and false claims with clear, consistent, evidence-based, people-centric messaging.

"Keep AMR in the headlines when the world wants to look away. In this fight, silence is the real enemy." - Shobha Shukla

Closing Remarks and Synthesis

In her closing synthesis, **Dr Viviana Munoz Tellez** distilled the following cross-cutting themes from the discussion:

- AMR's burden is global but disproportionate - contextualising responses in LMIC realities is essential.
- Fairness, equity, and justice must be embedded in both the AMR response and its governance architecture.
- No single actor can address AMR alone - leveraging diverse partner capabilities and aligning efforts is critical.
- Media must tell human stories, not just present data - sustained, localised coverage is needed to maintain political will.
- CSOs and community voices are fundamental to translating global commitments into national action and accountability.
- Building multi-sectoral approaches at country level and mobilising adequate, sustainable resources remain persistent challenges.
- Catalytic small grants - even modest in size - can generate outsized impact when directed at committed stakeholders.
- South-South knowledge exchange and amplification of LMIC innovations must be sustained and expanded.

Dr Munoz Tellez thanked all South Centre staff and consultants involved in the programme - including Dr Mirza Alas, Dr Rasha Abdel Salam, Dr Afreenish Amir, Dr Francesca Chiara, Dr Prateek Sharma, and Dr Sherin Paul for the Impact Assessment, as well as Prof. Carlos Correa and Dr German Velasquez. She invited expressions of interest in new partnerships and called on others to step forward to support AMR leaders and champions in the Global South.

Next Steps

- The Impact Assessment Report is available for download on the South Centre website <https://www.southcentre.int/sc-amr-impact-report-march-2026/>
- The press release is available at <https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-press-brief-5-march-2026/>
- The recording of the webinar is available at <https://www.southcentre.int/sc-webinar-elevating-south-voices-in-the-global-amr-response-5-march-2026/>
- The South Centre invites expressions of interest in new partnerships to support future AMR work.

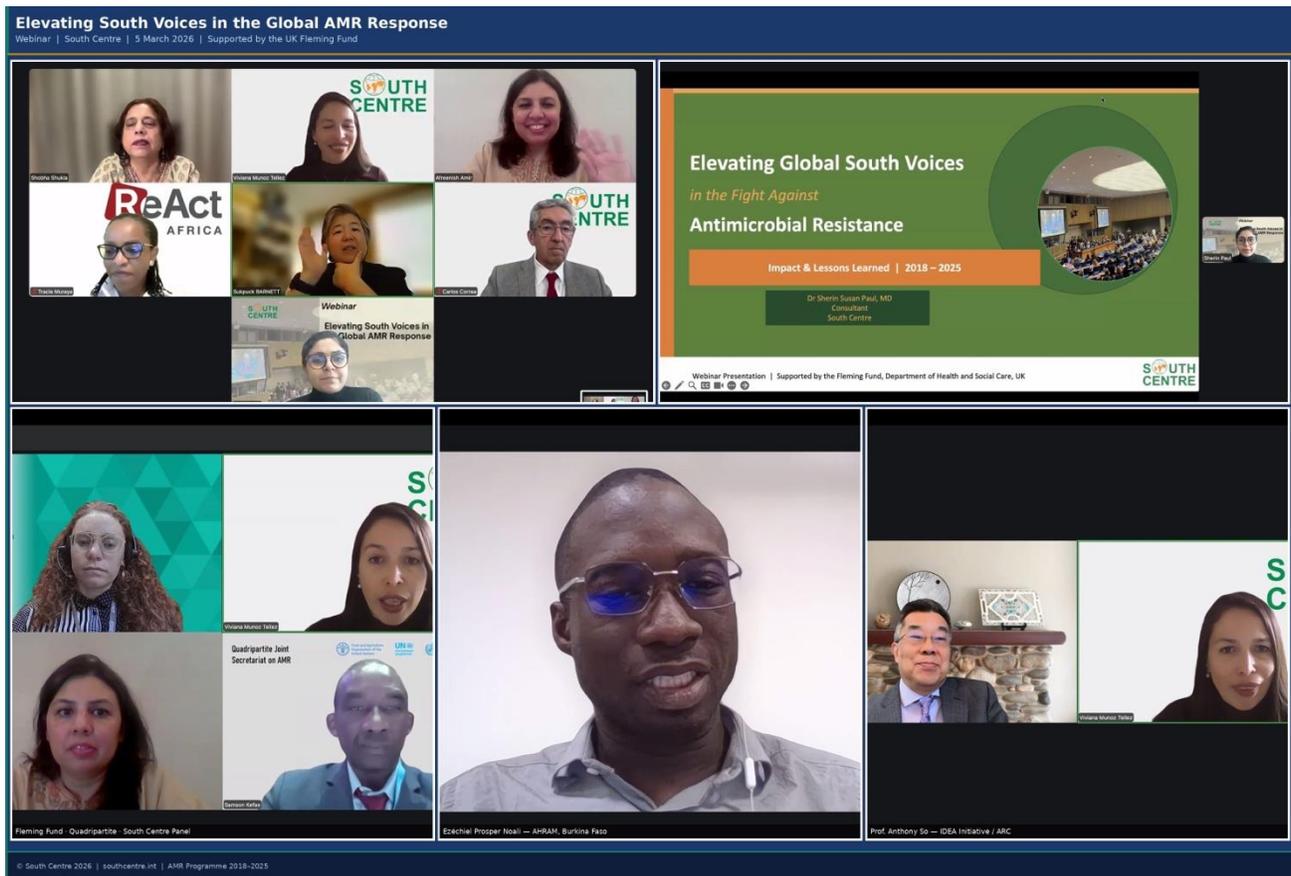
For further information or to explore partnership opportunities: www.southcentre.int

Speakers and Panellists

Name	Role & Organisation	Key Contribution
Dr Viviana Munoz Tellez	Head, Health, IP & Biodiversity South Centre (Moderator)	Programme overview; opened, moderated, and closed the webinar.
Prof. Carlos Correa	Executive Director South Centre	Opening remarks; framed AMR's global challenge and South Centre objectives.
Dr Sherin Paul	Consultant, South Centre	Presented Impact Assessment Report findings.
Ms Holly Rhyner Jones	Head, Fleming Fund UK Dept. of Health & Social Care	Fleming Fund overview and South Centre role; Global Fund opportunity.
Dr Samson Kefas	Lead, Multisectoral Coordination Quadripartite Joint Secretariat (WHO)	Quadripartite perspective on LMIC gaps and South Centre's complementary role.
Prof. Anthony So	Founding Director, IDEA Initiative Johns Hopkins / Antibiotic Resistance Coalition	Decade long ARC - South Centre partnership; call for LMIC led architecture.
Ms Sukpuck Barnett	Counsellor (Health) Permanent Mission of Thailand, Geneva	Thailand's experience; value of accessible policy briefs for diplomats.
Dr Afreenish Amir	AMR Expert Pakistan / WHO / Fleming Fund TAG	South Centre's equity focus; recommendations for the next phase.

Ms Tracie Muraya	Deputy Director, Policy & Strategy React Africa	Conference partnership growth; youth AMR leadership outcomes.
Mr Ezechiel Prosper Noali	Co-Founder AJRAM, Burkina Faso	WAAW grant impact on youth AMR campaigns and national policy engagement.
Ms Estelle Mbadiwe	Founder Ducit Blue Solutions & Foundation, Nigeria	Sustainability by design approach
Ms Shobha Shukla	Chairperson, GAMA & CNS Founder Global AMR Media Alliance	Five-point media strategy to keep AMR on the global agenda.

Photos from the event



Report prepared by Dr Sherin Paul based on the webinar recording of 5 March 2026.