

## Press Brief

# The South Centre successful in elevating Global South voices in the fight against antimicrobial resistance, with support from United Kingdom's Fleming Fund

Geneva | 5 March 2026

As the world intensifies efforts to confront antimicrobial resistance (AMR), one of the gravest global health and development threats of our time, the South Centre has supported low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to strengthen their positions in global governance and policy processes.

A newly released impact report documents how the South Centre, with support from the United Kingdom's Fleming Fund, has played a catalytic role between 2018 and 2025 in systematically improving Global South engagement in AMR governance, policy discourse, and civil society - led action.

### Addressing a Global Challenge with Unequal Burden

AMR disproportionately affects LMICs, where weak health and agrifood systems, underfunded National Action Plans (NAPs), limited surveillance-to-action pathways, and inequitable access to quality-assured antimicrobials compound already high burdens of infectious diseases. The special needs of LMICs have often been overlooked and need to be addressed in a sustainable manner, including financial support, to be able to effectively address the global impact of AMR.

Recognizing the existing imbalances in the action against AMR, the South Centre has positioned AMR before its Member States and other LMICs not only as a technical challenge, but as a governance, equity, and development issue, shaped by financing gaps, power asymmetries, and structural constraints facing LMICs.

### A Trusted Intermediary for the Global South

The impact report finds that the South Centre's unique intergovernmental mandate enabled it to act as a trusted policy intermediary, bridging LMICs policymakers, civil society organizations (CSOs), and multilateral processes such as the UN General Assembly, the governing bodies of the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Environmental Programme, the World Organization for Animal Health as well as emerging AMR governance platforms.

The South Centre complemented global efforts by:

- Elevating LMICs priorities related to equity, access and financing, which are not generally covered by traditional actors
- Translating country-level realities into policy-relevant inputs for global AMR debates
- Strengthening inclusivity and accountability in global governance structures, such as the multi-stakeholder partnership platform

The South Centre was widely recognized as a consistent and credible Global South-oriented actor in AMR governance and policy spaces.

"When LMICs are empowered with knowledge and afforded the appropriate platforms and partnerships, global AMR governance becomes stronger and better for everyone. Partners such as the South Centre play a vital role of strengthening informed participation and adding important contextual perspectives and political economy insights, thereby ensuring that global frameworks are grounded in country realities, particularly those in the Global South. This is not a duplication, but rather a strategic reinforcement - a force multiplier." Kefas Samson, Lead, Multisectoral Coordination and Collaboration - Quadripartite Joint Secretariat on AMR. From Webinar - Elevating South Voices in Global AMR Response, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026

### **Catalysing Civil Society and Country-Led Action**

At the national and community levels, the South Centre provided flexible, trust-based catalytic support to CSOs across Africa, Asia, and Latin America- particularly through small grants linked to World AMR Awareness Week (WAAW). A total of 77 grants were provided to CSOs and networks over a 6 year period.

According to the evaluation:

- Over 96% of supported CSOs reported significantly strengthened capacity for AMR advocacy
- 83% reported high impact in increasing AMR awareness and engagement in their communities
- Youth leadership, One Health approaches, and culturally grounded communication emerged as strong drivers of sustainability

Many organizations reported increased visibility, credibility, and participation in national AMR coordination mechanisms, with some leveraging South Centre support to mobilize additional resources and scale their work.

### **Convening to Catalyze Action**

The ReAct Africa-South Centre Annual AMR Regional Conferences demonstrates how convenings can be leveraged as sustained policy advocacy platforms rather than one-off events. The Conferences' themes have closely tracked global policy trajectories, including National Action Plans implementation, One Health coordination, financing, accountability and access, aligning deliberations with processes such as those at the World Health Assembly and UN General Assembly.

The evaluation shows that participation expanded from fewer than 40 attendees in early editions to over 200 participants per conference, with growing representation from policymakers, intergovernmental organizations, youth leaders, and LMICs-based CSOs. Since the South Centre's strategic engagement, the conference has evolved from a regional civil society meeting into a recognized policy-facing forum that connects African and other LMICs realities with global AMR debates.

## From Evidence to Global Discourse

Beyond funding and convening, the South Centre produced a substantial body of policy analysis and publications that linked global AMR commitments to LMIC implementation realities. These outputs consistently highlighted:

- Persistent financing and governance gaps in NAPs implementation
- The need to move from surveillance to action
- AMR in food systems, livestock, and aquaculture as development challenges
- The dual challenge of antimicrobial stewardship and access to antimicrobials

"A lot of the time we rely on policy analysis and briefing from people like the South Centre, who has been very, very helpful throughout our multilateral negotiations — not only on AMR issues, but on many others as well. The simplified version of briefing and information documents has been really invaluable in trying to understand and forward our positions, bridging the gap between the scientific world and how we can negotiate practically." Sukpuck Barnett, Counsellor (Health, Environment, Protocol and Legal Affairs) Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations, Geneva, From Webinar - Elevating South Voices in Global AMR Response, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The impact report shows that recent publications situate AMR governance within broader debates on global public goods and equitable multilateralism, emphasizing the need for inclusive participation, coherence across sectors, and governance arrangements that match ambition with resources. Collectively, this body of work underscores the South Centre's role in linking global AMR governance frameworks to country-level realities and equity considerations.

### Looking Ahead

As countries move to operationalize the 2024 UN General Assembly Political Declaration on AMR, the report underscores a continued need for institutions that can bridge global ambition with national capacity. The findings point to the importance of sustaining Global South-led advocacy, policy engagement, and civil society participation, particularly in a context of shrinking global health financing and weakening multilateralism.

### Dissemination Webinar

A webinar was organized on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026, titled 'Elevating South Voices in Global AMR response' during which speakers highlighted the importance of strengthening the voice and participation of low- and middle-income countries in global antimicrobial resistance (AMR) governance. The discussion underscored how the South Centre's AMR programme has supported policy engagement, partnerships, and capacity building for LMIC stakeholders. Participants also emphasized the need to sustain these efforts to ensure more equitable and inclusive global AMR responses.

“I want to just applaud the South Centre for its steadfast leadership in addressing AMR and elevating Global South voices in the fight against this deadly threat. I urge all partners, governments, donors, multilateral bodies to continue the fight and step up with renewed commitment wherever that might be possible. Together we can turn evidence into action and secure a healthier, fairer future for all.” Holly Rhyner-Jones, Head of the Fleming Fund, UK Department of Health and Social Care, From Webinar - Elevating South Voices in Global AMR Response, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

**Notes to editors:**

- 1- For more information on the work of the South Centre or to schedule an interview, please contact the media coordinator by sending an email to [south@southcentre.int](mailto:south@southcentre.int)
- 2- To access the report titled ‘Elevating Global South Voices in the fight against Antimicrobial Resistance: The South Centre’s Impact and Lessons Learned (2020 – 2025)’, visit the webpage: <https://www.southcentre.int/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/South-Centre-Report-2026-Final.pdf>
- 3- The South Centre is the intergovernmental think tank of the Global South, helping developing countries to combine their efforts and expertise to promote their common interests in the international arena. The South Centre was established by an Intergovernmental Agreement which came into force on 31 July 1995. Its headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Background:**

- 1- Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites no longer respond to antimicrobial medicines. As a result of AMR, antibiotics and other antimicrobial medicines become ineffective and infections become difficult or impossible to treat, increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness, disability and death. AMR is a natural process that happens over time through genetic changes in pathogens. Its emergence and spread are accelerated by human activity, mainly the misuse and overuse of antimicrobials to treat, prevent or control infections in humans, animals and plants.
- 2- Read the UN General Assembly Political Declaration on AMR in the following link: <https://www.un.org/pga/wp-content/uploads/sites/108/2024/09/FINAL-Text-AMR-to-PGA.pdf>