

One Health approach for tackling antimicrobial resistance and pandemics

The One Health concept evolved in Bangladesh in 2008 and is now widely recognized as an integrated approach to prevent and control the emerging and reemerging infectious diseases and conditions at human, animal and ecosystems interface. One Health has been institutionalized as part of the whole of the government approach and the wider community has now been engaged in One Health initiatives demonstrating the commitment of Bangladesh in the whole of community approach to realize the vision of One Health. One Health, Bangladesh has thus far organized ten conferences attended by a wide array of One Health practitioners.

Majority of global, regional and national health crises of the recent past and now originated from animals. Nipah, Avian Influenza, H1N1 influenza, Ebola, Lassa fever, Marburg, middle east are few examples of animal origin outbreaks and the ongoing COVID -19 pandemic thought to have originated from bats. Beyond the pathogens of pandemic potentials, many classical zoonoses cause deaths and widespread social disruptions particularly affecting the poor population of economically disadvantaged countries.

Abuse of antibiotics which was considered as a breakthrough invention saving millions of lives pushing humanity to the post antibiotic era where people might succumb to death even with simple infections. Antimicrobial resistance (AMR), which is considered by many as the “Slow Motion Pandemics” or “Medical Climate Crisis” resonates with the gravity of the crisis. More recently, the honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina has been nominated as the Co-Chair of One Health Global Leaders Group to acknowledge and lead the global efforts. This has demonstrated the recognition of her commitment and steadfastness in combating health crises including AMR by the world community. The AMR per se is an important One Health crisis and needs strong community and multisectoral engagement with ownership and commitment. We have to act immediately to reverse the tide of AMR and this is particularly true during the difficult time of pandemic we are going through.

Despite tremendous achievement in food production and nutrition, the gap remains as we observe a high rate of malnutrition across all the segments of Bangladeshi population. However, women and children of the low income group are the worst sufferers as they rarely afford meals with dietary diversity. Achieving food and nutrition safety and security for the people requires a robust and holistic approach engaging different disciplines and sectors.

Disease emergence, food and nutrition security, a good number of non communicable diseases are linked with degrading environment and ecosystems and restoration of the ecosystem is fundamental for humanity and the planet. Onboarding people of different sectors and disciplines is critical to adopt climate smart technologies and reverse ongoing environmental degradation and climate change.

The COVID-19 has demonstrated consequences of inaction of harnessing the strength of One Health to avert the chance of emergence of pandemics. The lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic should be translated into future planning, financing, and reassembling our

health systems for building a livable world. One health approach at national, regional, and global scale are critical to predict, prepare and respond to future health crises and to ensure a healthy and sustainable future for our planet

Thus, One Health Bangladesh and One Health Secretariat have chosen the theme of upcoming 11th One Health Conference 2021 as **One Health approach for tackling antimicrobial resistance and pandemics.**