

International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA)

Agenda 8.3- Aligning regional policy actions with global commitments: Accelerating the fight against AMR in the WHO South-East Asia Region

IFMSA welcomes the ongoing commitment of WHO and Member States to addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR), one of the most pressing threats to global and regional health security. In 2019, AMR was associated with 4.95 million deaths, and if left unchecked, it could cause up to 10 million deaths annually by 2050, with devastating health and economic consequences.

AMR undermines decades of progress in infectious disease control, compromises patient safety, and disproportionately impacts vulnerable populations in the South-East Asia Region. Despite global and regional action plans, significant challenges persist: inappropriate prescribing, over-the-counter misuse, weak regulatory frameworks, and insufficient public awareness continue to drive resistance.

We urge WHO and Member States to:

Fully implement and monitor National Action Plans on AMR, aligned with the Global Action Plan.

Integrate AMR education into health professional curricula, equipping future doctors and health workers with competencies in rational prescribing, infection prevention, and stewardship.

Expand awareness campaigns targeting healthcare professionals and the public on responsible antibiotic use.

Invest in vaccination and WASH, as vaccines could avert over 500,000 AMR-related deaths annually, while improved water, sanitation, and hygiene reduce antibiotic-treated infections.

Meaningfully engage youth and healthcare students in research, advocacy, policy development, and community initiatives to ensure sustainable progress.

AMR is not just a health challenge, it is a global crisis that demands urgent, coordinated, and sustained action. Empowering the next generation of health professionals and strengthening governance will be essential to preserve the effectiveness of life-saving antibiotics and safeguard the health of future generations.