



Partnering for Change: Link Research to Societal Challenges

Video Transcript

Antimicrobial resistance: from a research project to work for the United Nations

[Dr. Didier Wernli] Over the past three years I've been working on the 'anatomy' of the current regime complex on antimicrobial resistance. In my work, I aimed at identifying the relevant elements and their interlinkages in the global governance of antimicrobial resistance. Regarding the global cooperation in this issue, the following developments could be observed in recent years.

In 2015, the World Health Organization has adopted a global action plan on antimicrobial resistance. In 2016, the World Organisation for Animal Health, in short OIE, and the Food and Agriculture Organization, in short FAO, also adopted their own Global Action Plan. In September of 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a political declaration that recognised the importance of antimicrobial resistance at the level of heads of states.

Following this non-binding document, the UN created the Interagency Cooperation Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, in short IACG-AMR. This group was composed of country officials, as well as experts from several countries. It received a mandate to reflect on the future of the global governance of antimicrobial resistance.

In December 2017, the Wellcome Trust, a big funder of health research, posted a tender on a project about the role and responsibilities of international organisations in addressing antimicrobial resistance. The project came from a subgroup of the IACG and was framed as a consultancy. This was very much aligned with what I was doing for my PhD thesis and related research projects.

For this reason, we decided to come up with a project proposal responding to the IACG tender. I think our work is a very good example of a global transdisciplinary approach to a wicked challenge such as antimicrobial resistance. For this reason, I would like to tell you more about our team, our collaboration with the different stakeholders, and about how we proceeded.

At that time, I had the chance to be part of an interdisciplinary and international collaboration between the universities of Geneva and Hong Kong. Our team included professors from both universities, all of them with experience and a network in global governance and/or antimicrobial resistance. Following our application, we were selected to collaborate with the United Nations Foundation based in New York City, which also applied for the tender. The UN Foundation works a lot with the UN system. There was a strong interdisciplinary dimension in this research project.



**University
of Basel**

On one hand, a background in medicine and public health were critical to understand the nature of the problem. On the other hand, the study of the governance system relied on insights from the field of international relations and law. My background in medicine and international relations was ideal to combine these two perspectives. For me, the goal of this interdisciplinary research project was to combine the strengths and experience of the whole team to provide an academic contribution to the topic of global governance of antimicrobial resistance.