

## UK GOVERNMENT COLLABORATES WITH FIND TO BOOST DIAGNOSTIC CONNECTIVITY TO HELP COMBAT THE GLOBAL THREAT OF ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a 3-year project focusing on connecting vital data from patients' diagnostic test results to national antimicrobial resistance surveillance programmes in low- and middle-income countries to help combat the growing threat of drug-resistant infections**
- **Announcement to be made at a side event on 22 May 2018, during the 71<sup>st</sup> World Health Assembly, being held in Geneva, Switzerland**
- **This MOU between FIND and the UK Department of Health and Social Care expands the ongoing relationship between FIND and the UK Government**

*London, UK & Geneva, Switzerland – 22 May 2018* – The UK Government's Global Antimicrobial Resistance Innovation Fund (GAMRIF), part of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), and the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) will announce today that they have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a 3-year project focussing on connectivity for diagnostics that can combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR). To improve worldwide surveillance AMR, FIND and its partners will develop tools and solutions to connect vital information from AMR-related diagnostic testing of patients and ensure it reaches national surveillance programmes in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), extending their scope to include routine hospital and community data. The announcement will be made during the 71<sup>st</sup> World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

It is estimated that 700,000 deaths each year are caused by drug-resistant pathogens worldwide. By 2050, if no actions are taken to contain AMR, that figure is predicted to rise to 10 million deaths per year. The economic and human cost of this global health threat will fall disproportionately on LMICs.<sup>1</sup> Lord Jim O'Neill's independent *Review on AMR* in 2016 underlined the importance of a coordinated global effort to tackle the AMR threat. The Review described it as "shocking" that the way in which we make prescribing decisions today hasn't fundamentally changed since the 1950s – owing to a lack of suitable diagnostic tools and technologies.<sup>2</sup>

Diagnostics play a key role in containing the proliferation of drug-resistant bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi. Widespread, consistent use of diagnostic tests to identify disease-causing pathogens and determine the presence of drug resistance enables healthcare professionals to provide patients with the most appropriate treatment regimens. Data from connected diagnostics enable surveillance of drug resistance at national, regional and international levels and inform precision global health interventions.

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<sup>1</sup> Adeyi, O et al. Drug-resistant infections: a threat to our economic future (Vol. 2). Final report (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group, 2017. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/323311493396993758/final-report>

<sup>2</sup> O'Neill J (Chair). Tackling Drug-Resistant Infections Globally: final report and recommendations, 2016. [https://amr-review.org/sites/default/files/160525\\_Final%20paper\\_with%20cover.pdf](https://amr-review.org/sites/default/files/160525_Final%20paper_with%20cover.pdf)

This project will further GAMRIF's goal of fostering innovations to tackle AMR for the benefit of people in LMICs. Three workstreams will be delivered: end-to-end data transfer and reporting from point-of-care testing for AMR surveillance; a mobile phone app to enable the transfer of a range of rapid diagnostic test results for surveillance; and clinical decision aids via mobile phones, also linked to AMR surveillance systems.

"Diagnostics are critical to tracking and monitoring diseases and the spread of drug resistance," said Catharina Boehme, CEO of FIND. "Connecting diagnostics to surveillance systems at various levels from local to global will allow surveillance to be strengthened in LMICs – where the burden of infectious diseases is highest but data are currently limited."

"This partnership with FIND is part of the UK Government's continued commitment to fight drug-resistant infections," said UK Health Minister, Steve Brine MP. "Supporting work on diagnostic technologies is an essential part of this, and will have a key role to play in mitigating the impact of superbugs on the health and economic prosperity of the world's poorest. This partnership will contribute to saving lives in areas of the world that are disproportionately affected by this threat."

"Diagnostic technologies play a key role in tackling AMR," said Professor Dame Sally Davies, England's Chief Medical Officer. "I welcome the Global AMR Innovation Fund's collaboration with FIND, which aims to connect diagnostics to national and global surveillance systems. Collecting this valuable information will improve surveillance, which is crucial to monitoring trends of infection, linking data on antibiotic use in different sectors and allowing assessment of interventions to reduce AMR."

Over the past decade, the UK Government, through the Department for International Development (DFID), has been a major donor to FIND, supporting the initiation of the development of critical diagnostic assays for prioritized target product profiles using innovative technology platforms and business models. This MOU extends the ongoing relationship between FIND and the UK Government, specifically to support diagnostic connectivity for AMR as part of the Global AMR Innovation Fund.

*This initiative is supported by UK aid from the UK government.*

#### **About DHSC**

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) is the UK government department which is responsible for helping people to live more independent, healthier lives for longer.

The partnership with FIND is part of DHSC's Global Antimicrobial Innovation Fund (GAMRIF). GAMRIF was established to provide seed funding for innovative research and development, specifically in neglected and underinvested areas, to address the threat of AMR. GAMRIF is a £50m UK aid investment, which means all projects funded must support research primarily and directly for the benefit of people in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The Fund takes a 'One Health' approach, seeking to invest in potential solutions to reduce the threat of AMR in humans, animals, fish and the environment. The Fund seeks to leverage additional global funding through interaction with international government bodies, public-private partnerships, product development partnerships, global funding mechanisms and global fora.

#### **About FIND**

FIND was established in 2003 as a global non-profit dedicated to accelerating the development, evaluation and delivery of high-quality, affordable diagnostic tests for poverty-related diseases, now including malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, sleeping sickness, hepatitis C, leishmaniasis, Chagas disease, Buruli ulcer, non-malarial fever and diseases with outbreak potential, such as Ebola. FIND has partnered in the delivery of 20 new diagnostic tools and created an enabling environment for numerous others through the provision of specimen banks, reagent development and better market visibility. FIND also supports better access to new diagnostics through implementation, quality assurance and lab strengthening work. FIND has nearly 200 partners globally, including research institutes and laboratories, health ministries and national disease control programmes, commercial partners, bilateral and multilateral organizations, especially WHO, and clinical trial sites. For further information, please visit [www.finddx.org](http://www.finddx.org)

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