

## Strengthening One Health Action on AMR in Vietnam: Tracing the Impact of Three Years of National Symposia

*Since 2022, a series of annual multi-sectoral symposiums on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in Vietnam—convened in December 2022, December 2023, and January 2025—have become powerful platforms driving progress from policy dialogue to measurable actions. Supported by the Fleming Fund, the symposia have mobilized diverse stakeholders, catalyzed national strategies, and deepened Vietnam's commitment to a One Health approach to AMR.*

### From Commitments to Concrete Strategies

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a growing threat in Vietnam, driven by the natural evolution of microorganisms and the improper use of antibiotics in both human and animal health, which undermines the effectiveness of life-saving treatments and threatens health security and economics burden. Recognizing the urgency, Vietnam was one of the first countries in the Asia Pacific Region to adopt a National Action Plan on AMR in 2013, followed by a strong multi-sectoral commitment in 2016 as part of the global response. Over the past decade, the country has advanced AMR prevention and control through coordinated efforts by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment and Ministry of Industry and Trade, supported by international partners, regulatory reforms, public awareness campaigns.

In 2023, Viet Nam approved the new National Strategy on the Prevention of Antimicrobial Resistance for the period 2023-2030, with a vision to 2045. This strategy strengthens coordination applied One Health approach among the human health, agriculture and environment, industry and trade sectors including policymakers, health-care providers, industry, farmers and individuals.

The 2023 symposium disseminating the National Strategy to a wider audiences and also contributed as a forum for the development of the **Action AMR Action Plan in human health for period 2024–2025**, introducing measurable targets for provincial AMR plans, improved AMR awareness, expanded surveillance network, and training benchmarks for hospital laboratories and staffs.

In agriculture with the support from Fleming Fund, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (now known as Ministry of Agriculture and Environment – MAE) 's rollout of **AMR Action plan in agriculture for the period of 2021 – 2025 and next phase 2026 – 2030** as well as the national active AMR surveillance programs on foodborne pathogens

demonstrated how government-led plans are evolving with clear benchmarks and collaboration frameworks.

In the environmental sector, Phase II of the Fleming Fund supports the development and implementation of the Proposal for AMR surveillance in the environment for period 2025 - 2030, led by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (now known as MAE). This includes piloting AMR surveillance activities to establish baseline data, define priority areas, and build a foundation for a sustainable environmental AMR surveillance system.

In a strong call to action, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Dr. Phung Duc Tien emphasized the global scale of the challenge:

“AMR is a global challenge that demands strong commitment from all countries and stakeholders, from government agencies to veterinary practitioners and livestock producers. National authorities must demonstrate their leadership and responsibility in joining the international community’s efforts to curb antimicrobial resistance” he stated.



*National and international participants at the First symposium in 2022.*

## Elevating Surveillance and Data Integration

The 2025 symposium highlighted accomplishments and trends on AMR data sharing and system integration including the Veterinary Medicine Product System (VMPS) a digital veterinary medicine, including antibiotics, management system improving traceability and regulation.

The symposium also created the forum for introducing the international standards for AMR surveillance including **GLASS** (by WHO) and **InFARM** (by FAO). GLASS now includes 126 countries and provides a dashboard for visualizing AMR trends in human pathogens. InFARM supports AMR monitoring across food and agriculture sectors, aiming to release its first global baseline report in 2025.

Vietnam's growing participation in these platforms reflects a shift toward unified, standardized surveillance systems that play the essential roles to monitor, understand, and respond to the spread of antimicrobial resistance across the human, animal and environment sectors.



*All participants took picture at the Third Symposium, 2025. Credit: Son Nguyen*

## Shaping Governance and Inclusion

These symposia produced more than just technical outcomes—they also supported governance for AMR. It promoted and enhanced the decades of One Health coordination mechanisms in Vietnam, such as subcommittees, working groups, and inter-agency dialogues. Additionally, the events broadened the base of engagement on AMR, bringing academia, journalists, and local health officials into the national conversation.

## Leadership's Call to Action: From Policy to Practice

In his opening address, Dr. Nguyen Van Long, the Former Director General of the Department of Animal Health (DAH)\*, called for “A unified national effort to transform data into action.” He emphasized that *“Antimicrobial resistance is not just a public health issue, it is a challenge for agriculture, food security, and the environment. By applying the One Health approach, all sectors come together to share data, design policy, and take joint action.”*

Echoing this sentiment, Dr. Nguyen Trong Khoa, Deputy Director General of the Medical Services Administration (MSA), urged all sectors to “move beyond commitment and into implementation.” He stated, *“We cannot manage what we do not measure. Surveillance*

*systems and shared data are the foundation for informed policy and clinical decision-making. Our hospitals, laboratories, and health professionals, with support from the international partners, must work together to generate high-quality data that can guide our national strategy on AMR.”*

## **Data Gaps and Opportunities**

Despite notable progress, participants highlighted persistent challenges, including gaps in environmental surveillance, limited access to AMU/AMC data across sectors, and the need for standardized data-sharing protocols. Discussions also covered the importance of data interoperability, the role of genomic sequencing in outbreak detection, and the potential of digital tools like Power BI and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to streamline reporting. Several participants stressed the urgency of overcoming administrative and technical barriers to inter-sectoral collaboration. A key concern was the lack of real-time access to AMR datasets across ministries, academia, and the private sector.

*“Our collective success depends on breaking down data silos,” said Ms. Truong Le Van Ngoc from the Ministry of Health. “The only way to respond effectively is to ensure that all actors, from local hospitals to national policymakers, can access timely, actionable information.”*

## **What’s Next?**

As the Fleming Fund enters a more outcome-oriented Phase II, Vietnam’s symposia serve as a model for how convening power, technical support, and sustained partnerships can transform dialogue into impact. With surveillance platforms operational, private sector engagement growing, and national targets aligned across ministries, Vietnam is better positioned to monitor, act on, and ultimately reduce AMR risks.

*\* From March 1, 2025, the Department of Animal Health (DAH) merged with the Department of Livestock Production (DLP) to form the Department of Animal Health and Production (DAHP) under the new Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAE).*