



# The current state of AMR research activities including Alternative to antimicrobials (ATA) and collaboration opportunities in Fiji

**DR. ASHNITA PRASAD**  
**SENIOR VETERINARY OFFICER , MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE FIJI**

## Current state of AMR research in Fiji

AMR is a growing concern in Fiji, with limited capacity to monitor and respond to resistance trends across human, animal, and environmental sectors. The Ministry of Agriculture has identified a pressing need to strengthen AMR surveillance, improve data collection, and implement targeted interventions to address this issue. Current efforts are focused on raising awareness and collaborating with local and international stakeholders to address gaps in resources and expertise.

### **Key stakeholders in AMR research:**

1. Government: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health , Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Fisheries
2. Partners: WHO, FAO, WOA, SPC and regional organizations in the Pacific.
3. Local institutions: Fiji National University, University of the South Pacific.

## ATA Research Focus

Fiji does not currently produce vaccines, antimicrobial peptides, or advanced alternatives to antimicrobials (ATA). Instead, the focus is on improving awareness, fostering training for veterinarians, and laying the groundwork for future research and development. The Ministry aims to build a foundation for ATA initiatives through partnerships and funding for pilot programs.

### **Barriers to ATA development in Fiji:**

- Lack of local capacity to develop and test alternative treatments.
- Limited resources for research and infrastructure.

## Challenges related to AMR/ATA research

1. **Data and Surveillance Gaps:** Fiji lacks a comprehensive AMR baseline or surveillance system across the human, animal, and environmental health sectors.
2. **Resource and Capacity Constraints:** Limited funding, infrastructure, and training opportunities hinder progress in AMR research and response.
3. **Policy and Regulation Needs:** There is a need for stronger legal frameworks to guide antimicrobial use and encourage the adoption of alternatives.

## Solutions

1. **Establishing a National AMR Surveillance System:** Collaborate with international organizations to develop a unified system for data collection and analysis across all sectors.
2. **Capacity Building and Training:** Strengthen veterinary education programs and train personnel in AMR monitoring, ATA development, and stewardship practices.
3. **Policy and Advocacy:** Develop and enforce regulatory frameworks to promote responsible antimicrobial use and establish guidelines for alternative therapies.
4. **Baseline Studies:** Conduct baseline studies to understand the current status of AMR in Fiji and guide future interventions.

## Collaboration opportunities

- Training and Capacity Building: Fiji seeks partnerships to train veterinarians and laboratory personnel on AMR surveillance, ATA development, and stewardship programs.
- Technical and Financial Support: Funding and technical assistance are required to establish AMR surveillance systems, conduct baseline studies, and strengthen laboratory infrastructure.
- Policy Development: Collaborations to support the development of legal frameworks and guidelines for antimicrobial use and alternatives.
- Research and Pilot Programs: Foster research on alternative treatments suitable for Fiji's agricultural and environmental