

# WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

## Support to NEPAD

### Period of Report: July 2008 to June 2009

WHO Africa Regional Office (AFRO) has reiterated its commitment to the MDGs, as well as the other internationally agreed development goals on health, as the basis for planning, monitoring and evaluating projects and programmes in the region, in line with the NEPAD orientation.

Therefore, AFRO has continued making efforts towards achieving the highest possible level of health in Africa, and therefore keeping in line with the NEPAD health strategic objectives, and those of the MDGs. In this regard and during the period under review,

- The Africa Regional Office has strengthened child and adolescent health through partnerships with the African Union, UNICEF, World Bank, DFID, USAID, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Ford Foundation.
- Annual meetings are convened jointly with UNAIDS and AU to monitor the implementation of the Abuja Heads of State call for universal access to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria services. The WHO Regional Office provides support to the AU to compile the progress reports. To date reports have been compiled for 2007 and 2008. Work is underway to convene the meeting and compile the report for this year.
- The Regional Office staff also organized or attended a number of partnership meetings. In this regard, and with a view to catalyzing the linkages between health and environment, WHO and UNEP in partnership with the Government of Gabon organized the first-ever **Inter-ministerial Conference for Health and Environment in Africa** in Libreville, Gabon, from 26-29 August 2008. The Conference, which was about unleashing the power of synergy between the health and environment sectors addressed issues shared by the two sectors, from the perspective of their concrete contribution to national development goals as defined by the African the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Ministerial Conference on Environment, the country poverty-reduction strategies, WHO Resolutions and other processes, and translated from the global MDGs. The NEPAD representative attended the 58<sup>th</sup> Regional Committee of AFRO, held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, 1-5 September 2008.
- The Regional Office has strengthened relations with the regional and international media, ensuring visibility and publicity for activities, meetings, conferences, workshops and events organized with WHO, and therefore enhancing advocacy for African health and development.

- The Regional Office continued collaborating with NEPAD in the High level Intersectoral (health, finance, education, public service) policy consultation on the health workforce agenda; representation at the Global Health Workforce Alliance (GHWA) Board for Africa; chairing the Africa health workforce Platform steering committee by NEPAD of which AFRO is the secretariat; advocacy with partners for the HRH agenda including HW Observatory; advocating for the inclusion of the HRH component in the AU health strategy.
- The Regional Office has contributed to the strengthening of the health systems for delivery of immunization services and any other health services that can be integrated in collaboration with partners such as UNICEF, Rotary International, CDC Atlanta and USAID through provision of technical assistance, building capacity of human resource base in countries; contribution to the infrastructure including immunization materials, supplies and transportation; generation, collection, collation and analysis of service provision and disease incidence data for programme guidance and decision making. (In addition, through its disease surveillance system the Regional Office has also contributed significantly to the reduction of disease burden especially diseases affecting the children, women, the poor and marginalized.)

Because disease surveillance is part of health information system and programme monitoring and evaluation, Communicable Disease Surveillance (CDS) programme which is in charge of epidemiological surveillance in AFRO is a full time contributor to the implementation of the NEPAD programme. The goal of NEPAD is *to reduce dramatically the burden of disease, especially among the poorest* in Africa and its strategy towards the achievement of this goal emphasizes monitoring and evaluation, evidence on which to base public health practice, supporting countries to set up and enhance *centers of excellence*. The NEPAD also emphasizes that *“Efforts should be concentrated on the improvement of vital statistics registration, epidemiological surveillance ...”*.

Through the implementation of disease surveillance functions, CDS is generating disease trends that can be used to monitor and evaluate the impact of public health interventions for health and against disease. CDS is also providing evidence on which to base public health policy and decision making. Through the implementation of the integrated disease surveillance strategy (IDS), CDS programme is strengthening the epidemiological surveillance capacity in all WHO Member States of the African Region. Indeed, CDS programme is contributing to enhance the role of WHO as an implementation partner of the NEPAD.