



NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON MIGRATION HEALTH, KENYA

BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration and the World Health Organization, hosted a *National Consultation on Migration Health* to reach a common consensus on securing quality and equitable health services for migrants and mobile populations in Kenya. The National Consultation, held in Mombasa from 4 - 6 May 2011, was attended by various ministries, including Immigration and Registration of Persons, Foreign Affairs, Special Programmes and the National AIDS Control Council. Attendees also included non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, migrant representatives and embassies.

Migrants and mobile populations face many obstacles in accessing essential health care services. This is due to a number of factors including irregular immigration status, language barriers, a lack of migrant-inclusive health policies, and inaccessibility of services due to inopportune opening times. Such disparities are impacting upon the well-being of migrants, mobile populations, and Kenya as a whole. The *National Consultation on Migration Health* challenged current inequities to draw a common action plan for providing accessible, affordable, and non-discriminatory health care.

The National Consultation on Migration Health also acted as a platform to materialize the [World Health Assembly Resolution 61.17 Health of Migrants](#), a resolution passed in 2008 by the 61st World Health Assembly which calls upon Member States to promote migrant-sensitive health policies, ensure equitable access to health promotion and to urge information sharing and best practices for meeting the health needs of migrants.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Share** reports and studies on migration health in Kenya, conducted by a variety of stakeholders, with a focus on identification of policy, strategy, and programmatic gaps;
2. **Share** government-driven models of good practice in responding to the policy and programmatic challenges of migration health, in light of achieving national and international health goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and Kenya's "Vision 2030";
3. **Promote** dialogue which will facilitate the Government of Kenya and development partners to mainstream migration health into national policies and strategies.

"Migrants and mobile populations deserve to live healthy lives among us. We must accommodate them in our laws, policies, and health care systems. It is our duty to show strong leadership in the area of migration health."

Hon Beth Mugo EGH, MP,
Minister for Public Health
and Sanitation, Kenya

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy

1. **Ensure** that migration health is mainstreamed in all legislation, policies, programmes and strategies related to health and development, and integrated within the Kenyan National Health Sector Strategic Plan;
2. **Recommend** the World Health Organization (WHO) Secretariat periodically reports on the progress and implementation of resolution WHA 61.17 in order to share effective practices and results, and to mobilize support from the international community;

Programmatic

3. **Support** the development of a **national forum** for coordinating migration health at national and regional levels in order to enable migrants and host communities to access equitable health care;
4. **Implement** effective, tailor-made interventions that are context-specific, and sustainable, to improve the well-being of migrant groups and host communities;
5. **Increase** the collection, dissemination and utilization of information on migration health through research, surveillance, regular dialogue and migrant sensitive programming; utilize this information to form concrete, evidence-based practices, tools and innovative approaches;
6. **Develop** effective mechanisms to measure and evaluate migration health interventions;
7. **Advocate** for increased resource allocation for effective migration health initiatives;

Partnerships

8. **Strengthen** partnerships between the Government of Kenya, United Nations partners, civil society organizations, migrant representatives and non-governmental organizations to form a concrete action plan for migration health with clear targets and results;
9. **Promote** the harmonization of approaches in migration health strategies regionally and globally via the Government of Kenya and partners.

“This consultation has been instrumental in providing a platform for understanding the health of migrants in Kenya. We are intent on addressing current inequities by establishing a national forum to coordinate migration health interventions and follow up on the implementation of the recommendations made here today.”

Dr Salim Ali, Head, Department of Health Promotion, Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, Kenya



Top right: Ashraf El Nour, Regional Representative for the International Organization for Migration © IOM 2011
Bottom right: Dr. Abdoullie Jack, Regional Representative for WHO © IOM 2011
Bottom centre: participants gather for a group photo © IOM 2011

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Regional Mission for East & Central Africa, Church Road – off Rhapta Road, Westlands PO Box 55040 - 00200, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 20 444 4174 | Email: migrationhealthnairobi@iom.int | www.nairobi.iom.int