

SUCCESS STORIES





Message from Country Representative - Dr Owen Kaluwa

We are pleased to share with you the World Health Organization Ghana Country Office (WCO) Success Stories. The WHO Country office for Ghana began the year 2016 with a three-day staff retreat in January at the Elmina Beach Hotel in the Central region where staff outlined priorities and strategies to strengthen WHO's contribution to the national health agenda during the year.

They also developed action plans on the 4 thematic areas of the WHO Transformation Agenda - (i) Ethics, Pro-Results values (ii) Smart Technical focus, (iii) Strategic Operations and (iv) Effective Communication and Partnership to facilitate its implementation in Ghana.

Working in collaboration with the Ministry of Health/Ghana Health Service and other allied health institutions and stakeholders, the WHO country office, provided support aimed at achieving its mission which is attaining the highest level of health by the people in the country through its six operational areas which are (i) Communicable Diseases (ii) Non-Communicable Diseases, (iii) Promoting Health through the Life Course (iv), Health Systems, (v) Preparedness, Surveillance and Response (vi) Corporate services and enabling functions.

It is our hope that you will find this report useful and engaging. These achievements are the result of a collective effort involving the WHO Regional Office and the WHO Headquarters who have constantly supported us in our work and deserve our sincere gratitude. I wish to conclude by offering many thanks on behalf of the WHO Country Team to the Ministry of Health and its Agencies, the United Nations Agencies and other partners within and outside the health sector for making our work meaningful and successful in 2016.

I. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

This Category focuses on the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis, Tuberculosis, Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

I.1 HIV/AIDS

In this area of work, support was provided to update national HIV/AIDS strategy, as contributions to global efforts to strengthen national capacity to deliver key HIV interventions through active engagement in policy dialogue, development of normative guidance and tools, dissemination of strategic information, and provision of technical support.

Key Achievements

- Ghana has adopted the Treat All policy for HIV care in line with the new WHO recommendations. WHO in collaboration with partners supported the National HIV/AIDS Control Program (NACP) to develop the 90-90-90-roadmap with the focus to locate, test, treat and retain persons living with HIV/AIDS in care for universal coverage.

- Development of Pediatric HIV Acceleration Plan, an HIV Task Sharing Policy and Revision of treatment guidelines in line with new WHO recommendations.
- Strengthening capacity for PMTCT and Early Infant Diagnosis (EID) programming, integration of services and how to address programmatic gaps.

I.2 MALARIA

Support was provided in the implementation of the 2014- 2020 strategic plan of the National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) whose main goal is to reduce the malaria morbidity and mortality by 75% by 2020 (using 2012 as baseline)

Key Achievements

- Support was provided for the first country consultative visit by a joint team from WHO, PATH, and GSK with the objective to provide a detailed overview of the proposed pilot implementation and Phase IV study
- Capacity strengthened for improved malaria surveillance, data collection, management, analysis and use for decision making

I.3 TUBERCULOSIS

In this area of work, support was provided to the National Tuberculosis Control Programme to update, adapt and implement national tuberculosis tools and guidelines which have contributed to increased TB treatment coverage and community /stakeholder participation in TB prevention and control as well as contributing to the implementation of the global strategy and targets for tuberculosis prevention, care and control in line post 2015 agenda.

Key Achievements

- Support for conduct of a prevalence survey by KCCR to establish the burden of Multi-drug Resistance TB
- Mobilization and engagement of stakeholders in support of TB prevention and control during commemoration of World TB Day

I.4 NTDs

WHO in 2016 maintained technical and logistic support for planning, research and surveys, surveillance and mapping and delivery of drugs for Mass Drug Administration (MDA) for Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs).



Key Achievements

- Logistical support enabled the delivery of than \$5 million worth of donated drugs for the MDA exercise with coverage of 80% of the targeted population in 2016.
- Support for a survey in 113 selected sentinel villages in 9 regions to determine onchocerciasis prevalence and assess the effectiveness of the MDAs as the country plans towards onchocerciasis elimination.
- Provision of 20,000 Schistosomiasis educational booklets which were distributed to schools in the high-risk communities to provide information on the disease and how it can be prevented

- Three months awareness campaign on Guinea Worm Disease and Cash Reward System aired on National Television as part of in-country post-certification activities
- Onchocerciasis prevalence survey conducted in 113 villages in 9 regions with results ranging from 0 to 38.2%
- Drug trials for Yaws and Buruli Ulcer (BU) and study on rapid diagnostic test for BU supported

1.5 VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASES

This area work focuses on vaccine preventable disease (VPD) prevention and control in Ghana through (i) the strengthening of the routine immunization activities which focuses on the reaching every child (REC) approach (ii) supplemental immunization activities (commonly referred to as mass vaccination campaigns) and (iii) Vaccine Preventable Disease (VPD) surveillance.

Key Achievements

- For the first time in past 10 years, 9 out of 10 regions in Ghana achieved the two global indicators for Polio (AFP) surveillance.
- Over 235,000 children vaccinated with Penta and other antigens in African Vaccination Week
- Men A vaccine (MenAfrivac) introduced into routine immunization programme against meningococcal A
- Switch from tOPV to bOPV successfully implemented. All tOPV retrieved and destroyed as required
- Feasibility study on oxytocin integration into EPI vaccine cold chain conducted and report submitted to CDC
- Joint publication with WHO, Noguchi Institute and CDC on decline of rotavirus diarrhoea following vaccine introduction

2. NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs) AND RISK FACTORS



This Category of work focuses on NCDs and their risk factors and conditions including Mental Health and Substance Abuse and Violence and Injuries

2.1 NCDS and risk factors

In this area of work, support was provided for the promotion of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder action for NCD prevention and control; prevention and reduction of NCD risk factors and for the early detection and management of NCDs.

Key Achievements

- Technical and Financial assistance was provided to the NCD stakeholders technical working group meetings to develop a budgeted Programme of Work (POW) for NCDs.

As part of the support to establish 10 establishing ten functional cervical cancer screening sites in Ghana, WHO donated Service 2 electro-surgical resection machines with accessories, 2 Colposcopes and 2 cryotherapy guns with accessories to the Ghana Health Service.

- Support provided to develop educational materials to create awareness on cervical cancer prevention and control and increase demand for screening.
- Capacity strengthening in the area of International Trade and Investment Law, Tobacco Control and Health achieved.

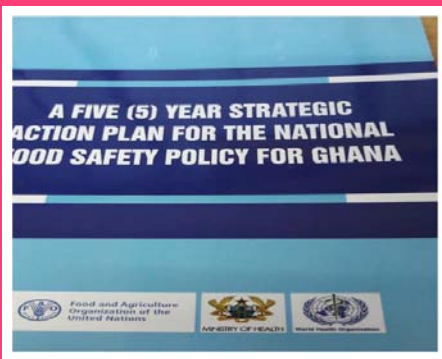
- Development of draft Legislative Instrument (LI) on the harmful use of Alcohol
- Supported the development of the National Alcohol Policy for Ghana
- Legislative Instrument on Tobacco Control passed by Parliament

2.2 NUTRITION

In this area of work, support was provided mainly towards strengthening national capacity for nutrition and for the monitoring and implementation of national nutrition action plan in line global efforts to establish and monitor implementation of national nutrition systems and plans

Key Achievements

- National Food Safety Plan developed, validated by key stakeholders and disseminated at a national forum



3. PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH THE LIFE COURSE

3.1 REPRODUCTIVE MATERNAL, NEW-BORN, CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH

In this category of work, support was provided to strengthen the existing partnership among Ministry of Health, WCO, UNFPA and other Partners to improve maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health.





Key Achievements

- The Ghana Health Service/MOH has been supported to develop a National Adolescent Health Service Policy and Strategy (2016 – 2020)
- Technical and financial assistance was provided to the GHS/MOH to conduct a situational analysis to assess the current system of Maternal Deaths Review in Ghana
- National Newborn stakeholders' forum to address the common causes of neonatal mortality in Ghana was successfully held.
- WHO Adolescent Health Job aids has been adapted for Ghana
- Child Health Promotion week and Africa Vaccination week was successfully commemorated for 2016 to promote preventive child survival interventions like Immunization, Vitamin A Supplementation, Growth monitoring, birth registration and ITN

4. HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

This area of work focuses on promoting a healthier environment, ensuring assess environmental health risks and addressing the root causes of environmental and social threats to health as well as monitor environmental parameters and its effect on health. PHE develops policies, strategies and interventions based on the scientific analysis of the evidence base for environmental and social determinants of health.



Key Achievements

- The WHO Country office supported the Ministry of Local Government and the Ghana Health Service to build the capacity of regional and district level staff in a number of areas. The capacity of regional and district level staff was strengthened in water quality assessment and monitoring, disaster preparedness and response planning and health emergency preparedness in the three Northern Regions.
- Support was provided for the development of Water Safety Plans (WSPs) template for small towns and rural water systems. WSPs are recommended by WHO as the most effective means of consistently ensuring the safety and acceptability of a drinking water supply.
- WHO supported SHEP to develop and print Behaviour Change Communication Materials for use in Schools (e.g. school health clubs) in the WASH in DPC Districts in Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions.
- Supported the implementation of National Strategy for Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage
- 2012-2013 WASH Accounts conducted to provide a comprehensive picture of WASH sector financing, similar to the Health Accounts.

- Regional and District level staff trained in water quality assessment and monitoring, disaster preparedness and response planning and health emergency preparedness in the three Northern Regions.
- National stakeholders trained in Household Water Treatment Technologies Regulation and Certification Systems
- Analysis of WASH Accounts for 2013-2014 conducted under GLAAS TrackFin, and results validated by stakeholders.

- WHO provided technical and financial assistance in building the capacity of 358 executives and members of Ghana Coalition of Non-Governmental Organisations in Health (GCNH) nationwide. The capacity building was geared towards the membership of twenty implementation partners of GCNH who were implementing activities for immunisation under GAVI Health Systems Strengthening support
- WHO supported the process of the development of the CHPS policy as well as a roadmap to accelerate its implementation

5. HEALTH SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

In this area of work, support was provided for the implementation of the National Health Policy and Strategic Plan in line with International Health Partnerships to improve country governance capacity to formulate, implement and review national policies, strategies and plans

Key Achievements

- WHO has supported MOH and agencies forecast Human Resource for Health (HRH) needs for the sector for the next 15 years up to 2030.

5.1 ACCESS TO MEDICAL PRODUCTS AND STRENGTHENING REGULATORY CAPACITY

This area of work focuses on the development of policies (mostly situated in the National Medicines Policy) and strategies to assist in achieving access to medicines. These include the development of clinical guidelines and essential medicines lists, setting up Drugs and therapeutic committees in health facilities, capacity building for the National Regulatory Agency and support to the National Health Insurance scheme for reimbursement activities.

Key Achievements

- The Ministry of Health led the development of an Antimicrobial Resistance Policy in the spirit of “One Health” working together with the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Organization of Animal Health that is represented by the Veterinary Services Division of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Other stakeholders involved in the development of the policy include the Environmental Protection Agency, Civil Society Organization, Academia, Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Assessment of the Blood Regulatory System



6 HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES

WHO's strategic agenda on preparedness, surveillance and response has as one of its main focus areas strengthening national networks and systems capacity to anticipate, prevent, respond and control epidemics and other complex health emergencies as well as manage risks to health in other public health events. Technical support and advocacy for building core capacity for the 2005 International Health Regulations and community sensitization on public health emergencies were also priority.

Key Achievements

- **Support for Meningitis outbreak in Upper West and Brong Ahafo Regions**
 - About 4,000 vials of ceftriaxone for treatment of meningitis were secured and delivered to affected regions. Also some 160,000 doses of ACW meningitis vaccine were mobilized

Monitoring during the reactive meningitis vaccination campaign was successfully conducted in Nadowli, Nandom and Jirapa districts in the UWR. In all 137,883 persons aged 2-29 years were vaccinated representing a coverage of 98.2% of the target population

● Support for Cholera outbreak response in Central Region

- An Epidemiologist, Logistician, risk communication expert and WASH specialist were deployed to Central Region to support on the ground response activities and training. Rapid containment was achieved within 6 weeks following intensive implementation of high-impact interventions. No deaths were reported despite 692 suspected/confirmed cases recorded



Vaccination campaign in Nadowli

● Support for Laboratory capacity building

- Assorted consumables and reagents for sample collection, packaging, transportation and diagnosis procured and distributed to public health laboratories and Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research to strengthen diagnostic capacity
- Over 200 laboratory staff trained on sample collection, shipment and biosafety/biosecurity measures
- A simulation exercise to test sample management of the public health laboratory system was supported.



● Intergraded Disease Surveillance Response (IDSR): Social mobilisation

- About 239 community health volunteers in 5 border districts were oriented on

- Over 200 Traditional Medicine Practitioners and Community Radio Operators oriented in risk communication approaches for Public Health Emergencies
- Over 276 communities sensitized on cholera and meningitis prevention and control through durbars Research to strengthen diagnostic capacity

● **Support for International Health Regulations (IHR)**

- WHO supported the Ministry of Health to adopt, print and distribute IHR advocacy materials including 300 pieces of IHR (2005) booklets, 50 pieces of hand-held IHR Flip Charts and 6,000 pieces of Flyers on Frequently Asked Questions on IHR.
- WHO provided technical support to the country to conduct the self-assessment of IHR capability to prevent, detect, and rapidly respond to public health threats

PHE: Miscellaneous capacity building

- About 28 Point of Entry staff were trained on ship inspection and sanitation
- Simulation exercises to test capacity for response to cholera were conducted in 6 regions
- Influenza sentinel sites were supported to strengthen influenza surveillance including facilitate shipment of samples to the National Influenza Centre in NMIMR for testing, refresher training of staff in influenza surveillance protocols and a study tour of the model Kumasi South sentinel site to observe best practices and learn lessons to improve performance in the other sites.
- Thirty-three WCO staff were trained in health emergency management