



World Health Organization

NAMIBIA

Namibia Congratulates and Welcomes new Director-General of WHO

The Namibian Government has congratulated Dr. Tedros Ghebryesus of Ethiopia on his election as the New Director General for the World Health Organisation.



In a press release, the government states that it 'is looking forward to closely cooperating with Dr. Tedros, especially considering the pledge he made during his victory statement, outlining his "central priority" as geared towards "working to achieve universal health coverage", to "provide value for money" and to reform the U.N. agency.'



WHO celebrates World Blood Donor Day

The WHO in partnership with MOHSS and the Namibia Blood Transfusion Services (NAMBTS) on 14 June commemorated the World Blood Donor Day. The event, which serves to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products and to thank blood donors for their life-saving gift of blood, saw blood recipients giving testimonies and donors being honored with certificates.

Speaking at the event, the WHO Representative for Namibia, Dr Charles Sagoe-Moses said blood transfusion is a core service within health care systems and individuals who donate their blood provide



Dr Charles Sagoe-Moses, WHO Representative for Namibia and Dr Britta Lohrke from the Ministry of Health and Social Services

a unique contribution to the health and survival of others. He said that Namibia, like many other countries, faces an ongoing challenge in collecting a sufficient blood supply from safe donors to meet the national requirements. “The donation of blood by voluntary non-remunerated blood donors is recognized as crucial for the safety and sustainability of national blood supplies”, he said. He also advised that in order to ensure safety and a quality outcome, blood supplies and patient blood management should follow updated regulatory requirements and draw from the best available evidence.

Speaking at the same event, the Blood Transfusion and Training Senior Medical Officer at the MOHSS, Dr Britta Lohrke said only less than one per cent of Namibia’s population donates blood regularly. “Patients need this gift of blood and we are thankful to the donors for this important gift”, she expressed. This year’s campaign focuses on blood donation in emergencies. The slogan is: *What can you do?*, with the secondary message: *Give blood. Give now. Give often.*

WHO Namibia Country office has been supporting the Namibia Blood Transfusion Services in increasing awareness on the importance of blood donation and increasing supply of blood products especially during the festive season to prevent the usual low supply of blood products during this season.



Figures 2-5: Blood Donors taking a tour through the Blood Transfusion Lab



Namibia works towards improving Emergency Obstetric Neonatal Care (EmONC)

Maternal, newborn and child health remains key priority programmes for the Namibian government in the era of Sustainable Development Goals. In this effort a second national Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) assessments was conducted in September 2016 with funding from

the European Union and technical assistance from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM). The aim was to bench-mark the current status of maternity services, assess progress since the first assessment in 2005 and inform evidence based programming.



A national workshop was conducted by MOHSS and WHO for dissemination of the findings which resulted in 14 draft regional actions plans to address key recommendations from the assessment and to improve maternal and newborn care services which are essential in improving the survival of mothers and babies.



The first consultation for the development of the new Integrated Strategy to Improve Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH & N) in Namibia (2017 - 2022) was also held during the same workshop.



The new 5 years' RMNCAH & N Strategy will be aligned with the National Development Plan 5 and the United Nations Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016-2030). About 75 participants, including Namibia's all 14 Regional Health Directors, attended the workshop.



Figures 2 & 3: Participants from the EmONC Assessment Workshop



World No Tobacco Day

With support from WHO, the Ministry of Health and Social Services commemorated the World No Tobacco Day. The event was held at the Senior Secondary School in Groot Aub with the aim of educating learners on the risks of tobacco use.

Learners from the Groot Aub Senior Secondary School marching as part of the World No Tobacco Day Commemoration

The Namibia Institute of Pathology (NIP) is expected to submit weekly data to WHO to monitor disease trends and predict epidemics.

On 16 June 2017, WHO together with the Ministry of Health and Social Services provided training to NIP and MoHSS staff on data entry, cleaning and submission to strengthen timely and complete submission of surveillance data. This interactive training focused on the Measles, Rotavirus and Pediatric Bacterial Meningitis (PBM) databases.

Participants expressed confidence after the training to enter, clean and submit measles lab, Rotavirus and PBM surveillance data sets on a weekly basis. WHO's Surveillance Officer, Mr. Petrus Mhata emphasized the importance of these type of sentinel surveillance, roles of the lab staff and current indicators. He further stressed the implication of non-submission of surveillance data as the country miss timely data for action and the implication it could have on other countries in cases of an outbreak.

WHO Country Office donated a laptop to NIP to facilitate timely submission of surveillance data.



Mr Petrus Mhata from WHO looking on as Mr Gerhard van Rooyen from NIP signs for the laptop donated by WHO



Ms Gladys Kabangwe from Ministry of Health and Social Services facilitating the training to a captive audience

Building capacity on Vaccine Preventable Diseases



Ms Liena De Wee EPI Technical Officer in WHO Namibia making a presentation

The Ministry of Health and Social Service with support from WHO provided training to 39 district and regional EPI/Surveillance staff on the surveillance of vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs). The training was supported by 3 technical staff from WHO Inter-Country Support Team, Dr Ahamed Mustafa, Dr Daudi Manyanga and Mr Brine Masvikeni and 2 technical staff from the country office, Ms Liena De Wee and Mr Petrus Mhata.

The purpose of this training was to strengthen the early and effective prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and response to VPDs.



Multi-Year Strategic Plan on Expanded Programme on Immunization

Ministry of Health and Social Services drafted a five year plan on immunization with support from WHO Inter-Country Support Team. The plan aims to strengthen the Expanded Programme on Immunization and will address availability of vaccines, cold chain management, increased access to and utilization of immunization services, communication and social mobilization.



Implementation of the First School Health Forum Recommendations



The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture with Ministry of Health and Social Services are providing training on the implementation of school health and the Health Promoting School Initiative at regional level.



The training is part of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Ministries which was signed early this year as a follow-up to the first School Health Forum held in 2015. Health care providers, education officials, social workers and civil society organisations are being capacitated to initiate and/or strengthen the implementation of school health programmes at regional level. It will further facilitate the establishment of coordination mechanisms at regional level.

Approximately 300 officials have been trained in 12 of the 14 regions. The final two regions training is scheduled for end July 2017. Each region drafted an implementation action plan. Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria provided funding while UNICEF and WHO are

providing technical support.

