

THE TRANSFORMATION AGENDA OF THE WHO SECRETARIAT IN THE AFRICAN REGION:

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Regional and country preparedness and response capacity to epidemics improved to ensure health security.
 - Country capacities to implement the International Health Regulations have improved and Member States now have increased capacity to detect and rapidly respond to outbreaks.
 - The WHO Secretariat is better organized, resourced and equipped to support Member States to detect and rapidly respond to epidemics.
- The Region is moving towards universal health coverage (UHC) through primary health care.
 - Access to cost-effective interventions has increased.
 - The burden of communicable diseases has been reduced.
- Sustained progress was made in the last two years towards ending polio in the African Region.
 - More than 122 million children were reached with at least one polio vaccine dose through supplementary immunization activities, and all 47 countries now have functioning polio surveillance systems.
 - WHO AFRO is leveraging existing polio structures and assets to support other crucial public health priorities as part of polio transition.
- Human resource needs are being realigned, and gender imbalance addressed.
 - Enhanced talent management has led to improved human capacity to deliver.
 - Women representation among the total WHO AFRO workforce is improving, moving from 31% in 2018 to 33.8% in 2023.
- Capacity to deliver better to country priorities.
 - The Secretariat is adapting its methods to become more agile in providing technical support and resources to country offices, in support of Member States.
 - Consolidated and upscaled technical support being provided to Member States by Multi-Country Assignment Teams.
- Improved managerial accountability, transparency and risk management.
 - AFRO's robust financial management systems and processes, including budgeting, forecasting and reporting, is ensuring that resources are allocated and used effectively towards the attainment of UHC.

- AFRO has continued its seven-year run of satisfactory audit conclusions, marking improvements in the timely implementation of audit recommendations.
- Staff awareness, engagement, accountability, transparency and ethical behaviour improvements.
 - AFRO leadership further invested in creating a respectful work environment across the region by establishing a platform for staff to express their views, and to raise concerns.
 - Staff well-being continues to be a focus of the Secretariat's leadership and a flexible work arrangement policy was introduced in May 2023 to allow for a healthy work-life balance.
- Strategic partnerships strengthened.
 - Dynamic partnerships with the African Union, including with Heads of State and governments, and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, is highlighting the need to improve health resilience.
 - Partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations is helping to reach the most vulnerable and remote populations, especially in emergency situations.
- Enhanced communications.
 - AFRO has bolstered its external communication through the significant improvement of its online presence and brand image, including revamping its website with new theme-focused pages to diversify content.
 - AFRO increased its social media presence and engagement to reach an audience of over 150 million through 29 media campaigns, better connecting with its stakeholders and partners.