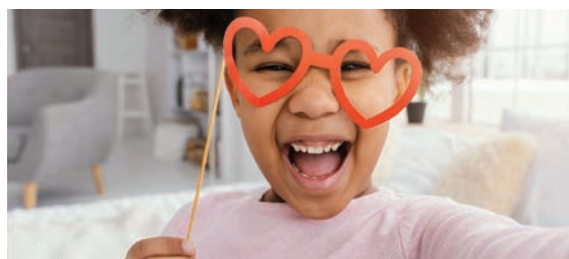


NAIROBI DECLARATION ON EVIDENCE TO POLICY

Accelerating the implementation of the regional and global strategies on oral health in the WHO African region



16 November 2023, Nairobi, Kenya

We, the participants of the Evidence to Policy Conference, oral health educators, chief dental officers, representatives from Ministries of Health and WHO, from 24 countries of the WHO African region¹, meeting in Nairobi to determine key evidence-informed strategies and actionable recommendations to accelerate the creation, dissemination, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of oral health policies in the WHO African region;

Recognizing that oral health has too often been relegated to the periphery of health care systems, with many people experiencing poor oral health, including 480 million Africans affected by oral diseases which cause pain, disrupt employment and school attendance, thereby limiting personal potential, imposing a heavy burden on communities and governments, and slowing social and economic development in the region;

Cognizant of the provisions of the WHO Global strategy on oral health and its Action plan (2023–2030) and the African Regional oral health strategy 2016–2025 to address the oral disease burden through the recognition of the status of oral health as part of noncommunicable disease prevention and control towards universal health coverage, we hereby affirm and commit to:

1. Strengthening collaboration between academic institutions and ministries of health through the establishment of formal partnerships and communication channels;
2. Encouraging active government support and involvement for oral health research and policy activities, including prioritizing oral health research agendas, securing and allocating dedicated and sustainable funding;
3. Building research capacity in oral health, including by developing and implementing training programmes and mentorship schemes to enhance skills in oral health research, particularly in implementation science and policy evaluation;

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4. Engaging a wide range of stakeholders, such as nongovernmental organizations, patient advocacy groups, professional associations, the private sector, and international health organizations in oral health policy development and implementation;
 5. Integrating oral health in all policies through active efforts to incorporate oral health into all policies and programmes across the life course;
 6. Utilizing digital technologies and leveraging digital platforms, including social media, institutional websites and online repositories, to disseminate oral health policies and research findings;
 7. Establishing and fostering collaboration at national and regional levels to share resources, expertise, and best practices;
 8. Prioritizing and focusing research efforts on identifying practical solutions, effective implementation strategies, and robust evaluation methods, while ensuring that research priorities align with public needs and challenges in oral health;
 9. Developing and disseminating evidence-informed policies, guidelines, and standards for oral health practice, research, and policy implementation;
 10. Including oral health, public health and population-based oral health research in curricula health professionals.

We pledge to maintain the relationships formed at this meeting and to expand them to others who share our belief that oral health is a right and not a privilege. As such, oral health must be considered a fundamental component of universal health coverage. We will work collectively to build the evidence required to inform policies that are actionable and lead to accessible, affordable and high-quality oral health.

¹ Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Republic of Tanzania, United Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.