



# 2017

## Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention Annual Report





*Meeting of Africa CDC Technical and Advisory Council, March 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

## Our Vision

A safer, healthier, integrated and prosperous Africa, in which Member States can efficiently prevent disease transmission, implement surveillance and detection, and always be prepared to respond effectively to health threats and outbreaks

## Our Mission

To strengthen Africa's public health institutions' capacities, capabilities and partnerships to detect and respond quickly and effectively to disease threats and outbreaks based on science, policy, and data-driven interventions and programmes



Official inauguration of Africa CDC, January 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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# Message from the Director

## Establishing the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention: One Year Later



Africa bears the highest burden of infectious disease pathogens in the world but has the weakest public health systems and infrastructure. This situation poses a severe security and economic threat to the continent. For instance, the Ebola virus disease outbreak in West Africa killed an estimated 11,000 people and reversed fragile economic gains in the affected countries. More recently, the world has observed the emergence and re-emergence of infectious diseases with pandemic potential. Social and environmental determinants related to urbanisation, as well as increases in population size and mobility have created conditions conducive to the spread of infectious diseases. The population of Africa is expected to increase from 1.2 billion to 2.4 billion people by the year 2050. Additionally, the widespread use of medications has created an enormous threat due to emerging antimicrobial resistance. To address these challenges, African leaders have taken two significant actions: first, in January 2017, African Heads of State and Government launched the

Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) to ensure Africans have a public health institution capable of mitigating against the social, economic, and security dimensions of infectious disease threats. Second, in July 2017, these leaders issued a declaration to accelerate the implementation of International Health Regulations (IHR) on the African continent.

As outlined in this annual report, considerable progress has been made in establishing the Africa CDC since it was launched in January 2017. The Africa CDC has primarily focused its operational activities on five strategic pillars: 1) surveillance and disease intelligence, 2) emergency preparedness and response (with a focus on pandemics), 3) laboratory systems and networks, 4) innovative information systems, and 5) public health institutes and research. From an administrative perspective, the Africa CDC governance structure and a corresponding policy manual have been developed and approved by the Africa CDC Governing Board. Recruitment of the first cohort of permanent staff is ongoing. Moreover, despite being in its infancy, Africa CDC effectively supported nine outbreak responses in several Member States during 2017.

In 2018, Africa CDC's priorities will include:

1. Support Member States to establish or strengthen National Public Health Institutes and the five Africa CDC Regional Collaborating Centres in Egypt, Nigeria, Gabon, Zambia, and Kenya.
2. Establish the Regional Integrated Surveillance and Laboratory Network (RISLNET) to ensure that all public health assets are efficiently

used in each region to detect and rapidly respond to disease threats. RISLNET will also become the platform to implement next-generation sequencing and advanced molecular diagnostics, event-based and antimicrobial resistance surveillance, pandemic preparedness plans, and prevention and control of neglected tropical and non-communicable diseases.

3. Establish a broad public health workforce agenda in the areas of the field epidemiology, laboratory leadership, and public health informatics. Africa CDC will also launch several public health leadership and Masters in public health scholar programmes.
4. Launch a public-private philanthropic partnership, given the economic threat that outbreaks and other public health emergencies pose to businesses, ensure that donors and technical partners closely coordinate their efforts with Member States, Africa CDC, and the World Health Organisation to ensure unified engagement.

Lastly, Africa CDC expresses its gratitude to the partners that have stood with us since the inception of this exciting endeavour. Sincere thanks go to the following partners: The United States Government through the Department of Health and Human Services and United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and United States Agency for International Development, the Chinese Government through the China Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the Japanese Government, the Kuwait Government, the World Health Organisation Regional Office for Africa and for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Centres for Global Health Diplomacy in Washington DC, McKinsey and Consulting, UNAIDS (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS), the International Association of National Public Health Institutes, and Emory University.



Dr. John Nkengasong  
Director of Africa CDC



*Her Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, former Chairperson of the African Union Commission and His Excellency Prof Alpha Condé President of the Republic of Guinea and African Union Chairperson officially launch the Africa CDC, January 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

# Executive Summary

## In 2017, Africa CDC

- **Established** its identity
- **Promoted** its roadmap to achieve a safer, healthier, integrated and prosperous Africa
  - » Launch of five-year strategic plan
  - » Scientific Symposium and accompanying technical workshops
  - » Lancet and other journal commentaries
- **Convened** governing and advisory bodies for endorsement of strategic plan
- **Secured** landmark regional cooperation from African Regional Economic Communities in setting up five Africa CDC Regional Coordinating Centres
- **Equipped** Member States with sustainable tools for emergency management and response
- **Received** endorsement from Governing Board for “Africa CDC Governance and Procedures Manual”
- **Recruitment** of senior Africa CDC scientific and administrative leadership underway



“ We’re systems-focused, not disease-focused. Our mission is to support African nations as they create strong health systems and institutions, and then ensure that they are sustainable, fully functional operations that can be called on to fight multiple diseases. ”

- Dr. John Nkengasong, Director Africa CDC

# Africa CDC Signature Accomplishments in 2017

Launch of **five year** strategic plan



Outbreak **response** and emergency management

- Nigeria Lassa fever
- Nigeria meningitis
- Mozambique and Namibia malaria response
- Democratic Republic of the Congo Ebola
- Ethiopia cholera
- Madagascar plague
- Sierra Leone community event-based surveillance

Technical **engagement**

- Event-based surveillance workshop proposed elements to form the basis of Africa CDC surveillance and disease intelligence strategy
- Outlined strategic direction for public health workforce development on the African continent



Public **forums**

- International Association of National Public Health Institutes Annual Meeting (Rome)
- Global Health Security Initiative (Kampala)
- Universal Health Coverage (Tokyo)

Launch of **Africa CDC** website

- Website provides information on activities and milestones to the public





# Our Impact

## Nine Outbreak Responses

Africa CDC epidemiologists provided invaluable technical support during communicable outbreaks throughout the continent

### Nigeria

- Supported three separate outbreak investigations (Lassa fever, meningitis, and monkeypox)
- Supported the first-ever activation of a sub-national emergency operations centre (Lassa fever)
- Streamlined surveillance (Lassa fever)
- Facilitated a comprehensive evaluation of Nigeria's outbreak response capacity (meningitis)
- Revised national meningitis preparedness and response plan to include higher sensitivity alert thresholds
- Launched a case control study to assess risk factors associated with monkeypox exposure and resulting negative psychosocial sequelae

### Mozambique and Namibia

- Conducted national and regional analysis of malaria trends
- Produced epidemiological bulletins, developed templates for data-sharing agreements
- Created a Malaria Monitoring Dashboard and a checklist for malaria outbreak investigation
- Introduced standard operating procedures for conducting impact evaluations







# Strategic Plan

## Priority Activities

Africa CDC's vision and mission will be accomplished through its focus on five strategic pillars.



## Surveillance and Disease Intelligence

- Introduction of weekly event-based surveillance reporting to African Union Commission leadership
- Multi-sectoral event-based surveillance workshop in Cairo provided valuable input for Africa CDC to form its strategy for closing gaps in disease intelligence at continental, regional, and national levels
- RISLNET roadmap introduced to global public health community
- Founding member of Epidemic Intelligence Open Source steering committee to make platform for protected analysis and exchange of disease or event signals available to public health experts in Africa
- Designed and introduced Malaria Monitoring Dashboard, streamlined reporting and analysis for malaria surveillance data in two malaria elimination countries (Mozambique and Namibia)



## Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Intensive training and application of public health emergency management principles (including activation of Emergency Operations Centres) in three Member States experiencing outbreak or disaster events
- Critical support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo Ministry of Health to strengthen cross-border surveillance on the border shared with Sudan and the Central Africa Republic during and after its recent 2017 Ebola outbreak
- Landmark Emergency Response Coordination Meeting jointly hosted by Africa CDC, WHO Africa Regional Office, and WHO Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network Secretariat
- Initial recruitment for Africa CDC Mobile Response Teams



## Laboratory Systems and Network

- Launched RISLNET framework
- Technical partnership with Africa Society for Laboratory Medicine for laboratory mapping
- Develop plans for an Africa CDC Laboratory Leadership Programme
- Implement modern advanced molecular technologies and multiplex pathogen assays



## Information Systems

- Through the Regional Collaborating Centres, launched an information and partnership exchange platform (“Project ECHO”) to facilitate weekly discussions on regional public health issues
- Founding member of Epidemic Intelligence Open Source steering committee to introduce platform for protected analysis and exchange of disease or event signals among trusted experts



## National Public Health Institutes and Research

- Prepared Framework for National Public Health Institute Development
- Developed concept notes for Africa CDC short courses on topics spanning from antimicrobial resistance to pandemic preparedness and governance
- Developed scientific review and clearance protocol to protect Africa CDC scientific integrity

# Engagement Across Africa

## Regional Collaborating Centres



**Five** regional visits completed

**Four of five** Regional Collaborating Centres officially launched



**Regional Collaborating Centre buildings dedicated** and formally opened for business in **three regions**

**Rationale for Regional Collaborating Centre establishment presented** to and endorsed by leadership of Regional Economic Communities



## Regional Networks (RISLNET, AMRSNET)

- Framework for Combatting Antimicrobial Resistance, drafted and reviewed by expert panel, establishes AMRSNET as a mechanism to harmonise continental policy regarding susceptibility testing, pharmaceutical production and distribution, and use of antimicrobials in agriculture and livestock
- Capacity for advanced molecular diagnostics and multiplex pathogen assays will be introduced at the regional level
- RISLNET will be active through the five regional collaborating centres



### RISLNET

Regional Integrated and Surveillance Laboratory Network

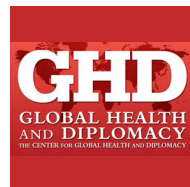
### AMRSNET

Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Network



# Collaboration and Partnerships

(Technical, Strategic, and Financial)



# Looking Forward

## 2018 Goals

- **Hire** and install Senior Africa CDC leadership
- **Support** Member States to establish or strengthen National Public Health Institutes
- **Implement** technical activities through the five Regional Collaborating Centres
- **Promote** RISLNET to respond to disease threats and build up surveillance capacities throughout Africa
- **Expand** public health workforce capacity in all sectors, particularly laboratory, informatics, and animal health
- **Launch** public-private philanthropic partnerships





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*Inaugural meeting of Africa CDC Regional Collaborating Centre for Southern Africa, July 2017, Lusaka, Zambia*