

RE-IMAGINING HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR AFRICA'S HEALTH SECURITY

PRESS RELEASE

Addis Ababa, 28th September 2022 – The Republic of South Africa and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) in collaboration with the Mastercard Foundation hosted a high-level side event on “Re-imagining Health Workforce Development for Africa's Health Security” in the margins of the 77th UN General Assembly, New York, USA.

The event was graced by AU Heads of State and Government or their representatives, the AU Commission leadership, H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia, AU Member States Ministers of Health, Permanent Representatives to the UN, and top executives from partner institutions.

The high-level side event made a strong investment case for health workforce development in Africa and highlighted the need to adopt a multisectoral approach where all ministries involved including health, education, labour and finance work collectively together to reverse the health workforce deficit in our continent. It called for the elimination of all unpaid work and ensure that all health workers are adequately remunerated. It further emphasized the importance of gender parity in all health workforce cadres and ranks including leadership. The need to develop a health workforce measurement metrics framework tailored to the African context was highlighted.

“Our response to the pandemic has remarkably shown that we can take the front seat in achieving and delivering our health security, thus I call on my fellow Heads of State and Government, and partners to increase investment in health workforce development, enhanced domestic funding and collectively support the work of the Africa CDC to ensure that we achieve a fit for purpose health workforce for Africa” said H.E. President Cyril Ramaphosa.

H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat commended the Africa CDC for the immense efforts deployed in delivering on its mandate of safeguarding the health and wellbeing of the continent. He highlighted the chronic shortage of health workforce and remarked that “the success of Africa's response to the pandemic was heavily attributed to the role of health workers and to ensure we are ready for the next pandemic, we need to strategically invest in our health system through accelerating and scaling up health workforce development”.

Ms. Reeta Roy, President and CEO of the Mastercard Foundation noted “The Mastercard Foundation is very committed to supporting the drive to achieve Africa's health security through the action oriented, sustainable and respectful partnership we currently have with the Africa CDC”.

Dr. Ahmed Ogwel Ouma, Ag. Director General of Africa CDC, implored AU Member States and partners not to see health workforce development as a cost to deliver care, but rather a key investment towards health outcomes. An investment that is capable of yielding economic, social and health gains. “To ensure universal health coverage and Africa's health security, it is crucial to reimagine health workforce in size and composition, improve investment in female health workers, collaborate with the private sector, and define measurement metric to track set targets.” Dr. Ahmed added.

The successful side event concluded with the unanimous acknowledgement that a well-trained, fit-for-purpose, appropriately distributed, and optimally resourced health workforce in adequate numbers is critical for Africa's health security. The meeting then issued a Communique, as attached.

##END##

About the Africa CDC

The Africa CDC's mission is to strengthen Africa's public health institution's 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. Learn more at: <http://www.africacdc.org>

About the Mastercard Foundation

The Mastercard Foundation is a Canadian foundation and one of the largest in the world, with approximately \$40 billion in assets. The Foundation was created in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company. Since its inception, the Foundation has operated independently of the company. The Foundation's policies, operations, and program decisions are determined by its Board. For more information on the Foundation, please visit: www.mastercardfdn.org

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