



African Network of Medical Excellence

A multi-national health project proposed by the Ministries of Health of: Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda
In cooperation with the International NGO Emergency.

Introduction

Strengthening national Health Systems in developing countries is a commonly recognized critical factor in the struggle to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The capacity to develop National Health Systems able to deliver an effective and comprehensive medical care, together with the implementation of appropriate training programmes, represent crucial steps in improving the health of the populations, particularly of the most vulnerable groups.

In addition to improving effective disease prevention and a widespread delivery of primary health care, we acknowledge the urgent need of establishing Centres of Excellence in Africa covering different medical disciplines, to provide high standards of treatment through secondary and tertiary services, and to serve as models to shape the Health Systems and enhance their capability.

This is consistent with a rational approach to the development of medical services and with the ethical principles of medicine.

Objective

The objective of this project, jointly designed by the Health Authorities of the participating countries and by the international NGO Emergency, is to enhance within each country the capability to deliver state-of-the-art health care in the most relevant medical and surgical disciplines, and to promote medical and scientific cooperation.

The African Network of Medical Excellence provides an operational framework open to all Countries willing to develop Health Systems based on the principles defined in the following paragraph.

Philosophy of intervention

The project is thought and will be developed according to the principles of Equality, Quality and Social Responsibility (**EQS**) as defined in the "**Manifesto for a Human Rights based Medicine**", approved by the participants to the 1st International Workshop *Building Medicine in Africa* held in San Servolo (Venice) in May 2008.

We define as "Centre of Excellence" an EQS based facility able to achieve optimal clinical results with transparent and effective management.

A Centre of Excellence contributes to strengthen the health system by increasing knowledge, providing qualified training and attracting committed personnel. A Centre of Excellence also constitutes a model with positive fallout on the entire health system by orienting and improving clinical standards and performances.

Structure of the project

During the 2nd International Workshop *Building Medicine in Africa* held in San Servolo (Venice) on 16-17 April 2009, a joint program to develop Health Systems was designed after reviewing the most urgent health problems in the different participating countries, and having identified the initial priorities of intervention.

New countries, namely Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia, decided to join the programme in February 2010. South Sudan has also become part of the initiative by participating to the 3rd Workshop hosted in Venice on 13-14 October 2010.

The initial structure of the network consists of establishing one Centre of Excellence in each participating country. It encompasses the following medical and surgical disciplines: Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Infectious and Tropical Diseases, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Traumatology and Rehabilitation, Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery.

The international vocation of each Centre of Excellence and the cooperation among them will include

- referral of patients for treatment from different partner countries
- exchange of health personnel for training
- sharing of experiences, working protocols and management policies.

Following the model of the Salam Centre, the network will also include primary health facilities that will not only respond to the basic needs of the local population but also work as screening facilities for the specialties included in the regional project.

Each country hosting a Centre of Excellence of the Network will facilitate all the procedures to ensure a smooth running of the above-mentioned activities. Treatment will be provided completely free of charge for all.

The initial distribution of the Network's Centres is defined as follows:

- 1 Trauma and Rehabilitation Centre in Chad
- 1 Centre for Paediatric Surgery in Uganda
- 1 Paediatric Hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo
- 1 Centre for Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Rwanda
- 1 Centre for Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Central African Republic
- 1 Centre for Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Sierra Leone
- 1 Centre for Obstetrics and Gynaecology in South Sudan
- 1 Centre of Orthopaedic Surgery in Eritrea
- 1 Centre for Infectious and Tropical Diseases in Egypt
- 1 Centre for Oncology in Ethiopia
- 1 Rehabilitation Centre and Orthopaedic Workshop in Djibouti
- 1 Centre for Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery* in Sudan

* The Salam Centre for Cardiac Surgery is operational since May 2007

In addition, following a recommendation expressed by the Workshop's participants, the establishment of a no-profit Centre for production and distribution of Drugs and Consumables is included in the project. This Centre, meant to supply all involved countries, will be located in Egypt.

General Structure of the Centres of Excellence

Taking into consideration the specific context of each country, the centres of excellence will have the following general characteristics:

1) Bed capacity

Approximately 100 beds for Obstetrics and Gynaecology Centres

Approximately 80 beds for medical and surgical Paediatric Centres

Approximately 80 beds for Orthopaedic and Trauma Centres

Approximately 40 beds for Rehabilitation Centres

Approximately 60 beds for Infectious and Tropical Diseases Centres

2) Diagnostic services

For Surgical and Medical Centres:

Laboratory

Blood bank

X ray Department

CT scan

Ultrasound department

3) Surgical Block

For Trauma and Orthopaedic Centres

3 Operating Theatres

Intensive Care Unit (approx. 6 beds)

Sterilization Department

For Obstetrics and Gynaecology Centres

2 Operating theatres

4 Delivery Rooms

Female Intensive Care Unit (approx 4 beds)

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (approx 4 beds)

Sterilization Department

For Rehabilitation Centres

1 Operating Theatre

Sterilization Department

4) Outpatients Department

Consultation rooms

Dressing room

5) Rehabilitation Centres

Prosthetic production workshops

Orthoses production workshops

Physiotherapy Department

Vocational training workshops

6) Pharmacy

7) Administration Block

Offices

Meeting room

Teaching rooms

8) Domestic services

Kitchen

Cafeteria

Laundry

Maintenance

Stores

9) Guesthouse for foreign patients

Implementation policies

Management and clinical policies will be based on the experience of the Salam Centre for Cardiac Surgery, established in 2007 in Khartoum, Sudan.

The international NGO Emergency, in cooperation with the national health Authorities, will be responsible of implementing the different phases of the

project: construction, equipment, staff selection and training, clinical and administrative management.

The design and construction of all the network's facilities will address the need for high performance/low cost structures and environmentally friendly and sustainable buildings.

Clinical protocols and guidelines, as well as the selection of medical products and technologies, will be consistent with international scientifically proved standards and not oriented, shaped or determined by lobbies and corporations involved in the health industry.

Local capacity building will be implemented through theoretical and practical training of all medical and non-medical personnel.

The training will take place in Centres of Excellence, utilizing up-to-date protocols and guidelines, with qualified and continuous in situ guidance, supervision and long-term commitment.

In order to guarantee universal access to clinical services all users fees will be waived.

Monitoring and evaluation

All participants agree on establishing a joint committee to ensure that all projects are consistent with the philosophy of this initiative.

The joint committee will be in charge of promoting the African Network of Medical Excellence (ANME) among other African countries, national and international institutions, the scientific community, teaching and research centres, potential donors.

To guarantee a successful outcome of the project – that is the improving the health status of the population - the committee will evaluate on a regular basis all relevant clinical indicators.

The appropriate allocation and rational use of resources will constantly be monitored.

Financial Resources

The issue of health financing is crucial in ensuring the success of the project.

All promoters of the African Network of medical excellence agree to provide financial contribution to project and to work together to secure the adequate funds for a smooth running of the hospitals.

The provisional estimate of the financial requirements is set in USD 250 million, comprehensive of the construction, equipment and the initial 3 years running of all facilities included in the project.

Each participating country will contribute directly to cover 20% of the costs. Emergency, as technical partner, will provide qualified and highly committed international personnel.

Appropriate financial procedures that satisfy best international practices will be applied to ensure transparent and effective use of funds.

We undersigned appeal to the international donor community to support this initiative and provide adequate resources.