

APF ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The inaugural meeting of the African Pharmaceutical Forum (APF) held in the Capital City of Zimbabwe in May 2004. The launch represented the birth of the sixth regional forum following the establishment of the EUROPHARM Forum in 1992.

The regional pharmaceutical forum brings together National Pharmacy Associations, World Health Organization (WHO) and FIP in six regional platforms.

The aim of the forums is to increase partnership dialogue, understanding and activity in different world regions, enabling pharmacy profession to have a greater impact on improving pharmacy services and health by focusing on distinct local or regional needs.

Since its formation, the pioneer President Ms Mabel Torongo has worked hard at bringing together the diverse linguistic and cultural groups that dot our region into a united forum.

We commend her courage in those three long years in the face of very obvious challenges. Her doggedness culminated in the election of the present Executive Committee in Beijing, China, in September 2007.

The focus of this document is to draw up action plans and road maps that will guide the partnership between the APForum, the FIP, WHO and the National Associations in raising the profile and improving the intervention that pharmacists bring to healthcare delivery in our region in an incremental fashion.

In drawing up these plans of action we are conscious of the peculiar challenges that face many of our member associations that have been a stumbling block in our quest for good pharmacy practice.

Our strategies will draw from best practices and evidences of progress which abound from the steps already taken in many of our sister forums.

We therefore welcome assistance from all and sundry as we work to use the forum to add value to pharmacy practice in our region.

STRATEGIES

We shall work towards achieving our goals by:

- √ Mobilizing pharmacists and pharmacy associations in our region to the new paradigm shifts in pharmacy practice and working to equip pharmacist to meet the new challenges.
- √ Work with WHO, Afro region and the country offices to identify local health needs and act in partnership with other stakeholders to address these needs
- √ Plan and execute national and regional projects that will have direct impact in improving pharmacists roles in healthcare delivery.
- √ Act as regional advocates for improved pharmacy practice and rational drug use in our region, this reducing the migration of pharmacists from our region to more endowed regions.
- √ Provide training and retraining programmes for pharmacists in our forum with a view to improving their skills and knowledge.
- √ Conduct and publish research in pharmacy practice and evidence based medicines and to use the finding of such research in improving our practice.
- √ Place premium emphasis in pharmacists evolving roles in public health and sharpen pharmacists skills to play effective roles in public health
- √ Publish and disseminate available healthcare information through our enhanced networks provided by community pharmacies
- √ Influence the curriculum for the training of future pharmacists
- √ Design strategies to increase the participation of pharmacists from our region in FIP/WHO activities.

INITIATIVES

1. Mobilizing the full membership strength of our forum

One strong obstacle to the realization of the early objectives of the forum can be traced to the difficulties in communicating within the region. At the last AGM in China, only 7(seven) member countries were represented and as was revealed during the AGM only 2 (two) countries paid the annual subscription.

Our intention is to reverse this trend and bring on board more of our colleagues from the region. We are working to establish fresh contacts with representatives of potential member organizations. We are approaching the FIP to assist us with the mail address of representative of the member countries of FIP in our region. We have received two contacts for the French speaking group through the assistance of Jean Parrot, Immediate Past President of FIP. We are appealing for help with contacts in other countries in our region.

We also expect member associations to carry out a membership drive for the FIP and ultimately the APF enabling more member benefit from the programs of FIP.

2. Marking WHO World Disease State Days

APForum will mobilize member organization to mount a programme that will identify with and plan events to commemorate the WHO World Disease State days.

This will involve the following:

- √ Printing banners or posters to educate the public on the public health implications of the disease state day
- √ Planning a speaking event to educate the public
- √ Representing pharmacy on media events to mark the day
- √ Visiting schools/markets to speak on the theme of the day.

We shall work with FIP/WHO to provide tool and materials where possible. We plan to mark the following days in the year:

MONTH	DAY	EVENTS
March	24 th	World Tuberculosis Day
May	6 th	World Asthma Day
May	17 th	World Hypertension Day
November	14 th	World Diabetes Day
December	1 st	World HIV/AIDS Day

REGIONAL SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

APForum intends to mount regional seminars addressing topical issues in contemporary pharmacy practice

A Committee is already working on the modalities of having the first seminar for the West African Sub-region. The topic in consideration is ***“Pharmacy Practice – a focus on patient care”***.

We are hoping the seminar will be in Ghana or Senegal and will attract participants from across west and central Africa. Depending on the outcome of the workshop we think we might be able to mount another on in Kenya or South Africa before the end of the year. The topic is chosen in consideration of the successes already recorded by the working draft for field testing published by the WHO on the same subject.

It is our desire to ask WHO/FIP to assist us to get some of the editors of the Handbook as resource persons for the Workshop.

The workshop will also seek to attract other healthcare providers to this epoch seminar.

PUBLICATIONS

- (a) The forum intends to public on a regular basis “drug alerts”. This will bring information on drugs, medicines and pharmacy practice to health consuming public.

We shall also encourage member associations to adopt these alerts and pass it on to their members through e-mail or SMS alerts.

Member countries will also be encouraged to contribute information to a pool for dissemination to other colleagues.

This will also carry information on quality of medicines in circulation and can give information concerning suspected fake drugs.

The forum will work in liaison with the WHO and regulatory authorities in our different countries for information on drugs and medicines.

- (b) The forum intends to publish an annual bulletin – “the African Pharmacist”. This will be a general interest bulletin in English and French that will seek to highlight successes recorded in our pharmacy practice challenges. The bulletin will also carry commercial adverts to help offset cost of production.

PHARMACY SELF CARE PROJECT

The pharmacy self care project which is ongoing will be invigorated. In line with the directives of the last AGM, a Committee is being set up to review the self care cards already adopted by the forum. They include the Malaria Fact Card and the Bilharzia Fact Card.

The product at the review will be sent to member countries for adoption in line with prevailing country specific prior to publication.

The Executive Committee is also working to introduce two or more in a series of fact cards:

- √ The HIV/AIDS Fact Card, a draft copy should be available to member/association by May 2008.
- √ “Administration of eye drops”/eye ointments.

SPECIAL PROJECTS/ASSIGNMENT

The forum will adopt a special project each year. The choice of project will be determined by the needs and challenges facing pharmacy practice in our region.

This year, our project will be; ***MAPPING THE PHARMACY RESOURCES in our region.***

Under this program, each member association is expected to carryout a mapping exercise of the resources available to pharmacy.

The results will be collated by the APForum and published in our bulletin the African Pharmacist. The expected detailed mapping exercise should provide answers to – Number of Registered Pharmacists male/female ratio, total numbers in the last three years, Segregated according to areas of practice, number of schools of pharmacy and yearly output, number of community pharmacy, etc.

A consultant is already working on the format of the questionnaire that member association will use to collate information’s on the project, etc.

APPRECIATION AWARD

APForum intends to recognize and rewards exceptional pharmacists and friends of the profession who are judged to have contributed in no small measure in advancing pharmacy practice with an annual appreciation award.

We hope we can make the awards a media event aimed at promoting the profession.

Modalities for this recognition are being worked out and the time and place for the awards will be announced in due course.

COMBATING COUNTERFEIT MEDICAL PRODUCTS

A recent publication of the FIP considers counterfeit medicines as a threat to personal and public health worldwide.

According to the International Products Anti-Counterfeiting Taskforce (IMPACT), it is reasonable to estimate that the burden of counterfeit medicines ranges from 10-20 % of sales in developing countries.

APForum is willing to join forces with this international network in the global fight against counterfeiting and related activities. We are working to see how a member of our forum will represent the forum at the Global forum of the Task Force scheduled for Singapore, in March 2008 and also to establish a collaborative partnership with the IMPACT.

INTER STATE VISITS/COLLABORATION

APForum will encourage inter country visits and programme exchange among pharmacists in our forum.

In implementing these programs we shall encourage our member associations to share information on their programs with the forum.

Our hope is that members from different countries/associations can participate in annual conferences of sister association. We are discussing with the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) to invite two or three Pharmacists from our member association to their Annual National Conference in November 2008.

Our expectation is that invited guests will pay for their transportation while the inviting association provides accommodation and feeding as much as is possible.

EXTRA PHARMACEUTICAL ACTIVITIES

APForum would want to identify with the challenges of Global warming through a programme that will sensitive government and the people in our region to the impact of Global warming.

In the program/project, we shall embark on a TREE PLANTING CAMPAIGN as our contribution to the solution to Global warming and other environmental challenges. The plant a tree project will seek to work with government and other stakeholders to plant tree in designated areas and to subsequently manage the frees planted.

This initiative is expected to be a media event and efforts should be made to publicize the activities.

Member associations are to adopt strategies that will showcase pharmacist's activities in this regard.

APPEAL FOR SUPPORT

Above, represents a basket of programmes and project that we honestly believe will bring the forum closer to both the health consuming public and our individual pharmacy practitioners.

One of our biggest constraints both at the national and regional level is poor funding.

We are also using this opportunity to appeal to friends of our forum to identify with us and offer any kind of assistant that will help us in carrying out all our proposals.

We count on the goodwill of a host of our friends.

Thank you

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