

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Marrakesh Declaration 2023

**We the participants of the second African and first South-South Health Harm Reduction conference**, met on September 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> to deliberate on Health Harm reduction with a particular focus on water, environment, and food security, supported by the African Union and Africa CDC.

**With over 800 participants** from 87 countries and 5 continents – which included Ministers and other Government officials, health practitioners, scientists, researchers, media representatives and civil society - the Conference was a pre-eminent gathering of minds committed to improve access to safe and quality health for all in Africa.

We are united by our commitment to the health and well-being of the people of Africa, and hereby declare our resolute intent to achieve health sovereignty in Africa and throughout the world through south-south collaboration on Health Harm Reduction strategies. Furthermore, we emphasize the pivotal role of sustainable development through African driven South-South cooperation in realizing this vision. In doing so we declare the following;

## **Recognizing the Urgent Imperative:**

1. We reaffirm that health sovereignty is a fundamental right of all African nations, essential for ensuring the resilience of our continent's health systems.
2. We further reaffirm and acknowledge that health harm reduction is a holistic approach that necessitates addressing the root causes of health challenges, including water scarcity, food insecurity, environmental degradation, and the social determinants of health.

## **Commitment to Action:**

1. We commit to pursuing comprehensive health harm reduction strategies, grounded on evidence-based practices, that prioritize prevention, equity, and resilience of health systems.
2. We pledge to prioritize water security as a cornerstone of health harm reduction, ensuring access to clean and safe drinking water for all communities.

3. We commit to addressing food security as a core component of health harm reduction, striving to eliminate hunger and malnutrition by promoting sustainable agriculture, food production, and equitable distribution systems.

4. We recognize the profound impact of the environment on health and pledge to promote environmental sustainability by safeguarding natural resources, conserving biodiversity, ensuring clean air quality and mitigating against the effects of climate change.

5. We recognise that the most important aspect of disaster management is to have a high level of preparedness to avoid improvisation at a time of disaster. We need to invest in strengthening health harm reduction and recovery systems in disaster response, and provide comprehensive training on multi -sectoral protocols towards building Hazard resilience.

6. It is imperative to ensure health equity in emergency management when natural disasters occur.

### **South-South Cooperation for sustainable Health Development:**

1. We acknowledge that South-South collaboration is an invaluable catalyst for the rapid and sustainable development of Africa. We therefore pledge to strengthen partnerships among African nations and with other developing countries to share knowledge, expertise, and resources for mutual growth and development.

2. We commit to fostering collaboration in health research, technology transfer, capacity building, and the sharing of best practices to enhance our health systems and infrastructure.

3. We commit to developing centres of excellence and South-South Health Bureaus to develop joint policy formulation to achieve health sovereignty and universal health access in the global south.

### **Resilience and Unity:**

1. We affirm our unwavering solidarity as African nations, recognizing that our collective strength is our greatest asset in achieving resilient populations and health systems.

2. We call upon governments and the private sector, to join us on this journey by providing leadership in driving this endeavour alongside civil society, academia, and international development partners. This will entail mobilizing resources and expertise to support our vision for a healthier, more prosperous Africa.

In this spirit of unity, determination, and shared purpose, we, the participants of the African Global Health Conference, solemnly endorse this declaration. We are committed to taking concrete actions, collaborating across borders, and driving sustainable change to realize health sovereignty, harm reduction, and rapid development throughout the African continent.

