

Accordia Global Health Foundation
2009 Infectious Diseases Summit

Building Healthcare Leadership in Africa:
*Preparing individuals and institutions for leadership roles in
healthcare policy, education and research*

A Call to Action

We, the participants at the 2009 Accordia Infectious Diseases Summit in Kampala, April 20-22, 2009, representing a diverse group of constituents from 21 countries; do hereby call upon governments, civil society, private sector, and professional organizations to concurrently strengthen health leadership and management capacity in Africa at the individual, institutional, and network levels;

Acknowledging the long-term nature of the infectious disease crisis in Africa and the need to prepare not only for this but also for future epidemics;

Recognizing the critical importance of well-functioning health systems in Africa to achieving the Millennium Development Goals;

Further recognizing the shortage of skilled human resources, led by innovative and inspired leaders, necessary to create and sustain strong health systems;

Noting the complexities of the global economic environment, shifting policy and political contexts, and evolving forces of globalization; and

Aware that effective leadership and management leading to strengthened health systems and sustained improvements in population health requires a paradigm shift.

We call specifically upon:

1. Individuals to:
 - a. Practice the qualities and characteristics of good leadership and integrate it into their daily work;
 - b. Make an explicit commitment to mentor and teach other leaders and to celebrate their successes;
 - c. Create an enabling environment and promote freedom of decision-making within agreed parameters so that leaders are empowered to innovate and lead in a complex environment;

- d. Pro-actively seek high-potential leaders at all levels, offer challenging assignments and an array of development experiences, and develop clear career paths to build capability and to increase retention;
- e. Consider the impact of working within culturally diverse settings on our combined effectiveness.

2. Institutions to:

- a. Develop a long-term vision and strategy that are linked to the greatest needs of society and that include metrics and performance criteria that communicate the impact and value of the institution at both the local and global levels;
- b. Play an external advocacy role in influencing donors and other funding stakeholders, using research and evidence to show the importance and synergy of leadership and science in developing public policy and driving its implementation;
- c. Invest in a robust and transparent talent management 'framework' that assesses, develops, promotes and evaluates leaders at all levels of the healthcare delivery system and defines the right incentive and reward systems to ensure active mentorship;
- d. Focus on the next generation of leaders, understanding their interests and building criteria that enables risk-taking and overproduces leaders who can step up to dynamic challenges;
- e. Ensure an operating environment and support structures necessary to enable effective leadership at all levels;
- f. Refresh academic curricula, including formal leadership training, implementation science, and translational research to link science to practice;
- g. Fully utilize the potential impact of IT infrastructure improvements and take action to leapfrog technology and overcome traditional roadblocks;
- h. Link with non-traditional partners, where appropriate, to implement cutting edge, reality based approaches to leadership development;
- i. Ensure organizational relevance by actively engaging with government ministries, private sector partners, local communities, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders.

3. Networks and the global community to:

- a. Prioritize investment in leading individuals, institutions, and networks that will drive scale-up and sustainability of infectious disease services and essential strengthening of health systems in Africa in the long term;

- b. Integrate leadership and management development strategies at the individual, institution, and network levels into comprehensive country health workforce strategies and plans;
- c. Recognize the critical importance of a base of core funding to leading institutions in building a stable platform on which to respond effectively and efficiently to the greatest needs of society;
- d. Work collaboratively, utilizing best practices, to establish metrics to evaluate leading institutions as well as successful leadership and management practices and their impact on health outcomes;
- e. Research the evidence amongst institutional leadership practices and the impact on healthcare delivery;
- f. Share leadership-development programs and curriculum redesigns and ensure open source sharing of best practices through effective networks;
- g. Leverage IT infrastructure advances to enable South-South professional networking, map leadership opportunities across Africa, and expand mentorship.