

PRESS RELEASE

THE One MILLION COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS (CHW) WORKSHOP IS LAUNCHED AT THE IFAKARA INTERNATIONAL HEALTH TRAINING CENTRE IN TANZANIA

IFAKARA, TANZANIA, 15 April, 2013: The One Million Community Health Workers Campaign Workshop, was launched by the Tanzania Deputy Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Seif Rashid accompanied by the WHO Representative (WR) of Tanzania, Dr Rufaro Chatora at the Ifakara International Health Training Centre on 15 April 2013. The Launch was attended by the participating Ministries of Health from: Tanzania (Mainland), Malawi, Nigeria, Liberia, Comoros, URT-Zanzibar: the SARN Coordinator representing RBM Secretariat, University of Columbia, the One Million CHW Coordinating Committee, WHO, UNICEF, other partners and Professor Jeffrey Sachs attended via Video link.



The Tanzania Deputy Minister of Health, 3rd from left during the opening of the One Million CHW Campaign workshop

Professor Senga Pemba, the Director of Ifakara introduced the guests and stressed the need to work diligently to achieve a sustainable CHW campaign.

In his remarks, the Deputy Minister said that advances towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can be greatly accelerated by urgently expanding primary health care service delivery capacity across Sub-Saharan Africa and Community Health Workers are critical to this strategy.

The WR, Dr Rufaro Chatora said that we have reached a decisive moment in which there is need for redefining the role of the CHWs, their supervision and conditions of service. He informed the participants that the CHW campaign is not a new development because it is already operating in some countries with huge impact in accessing the remote isolated communities where access to health care is limited.

Through Video link, Professor Jeffrey Sachs reminded the audience that we have only 1000 days in which to achieve the remaining before 2015 when Sub-Saharan Africa will report back on the achievement of the MDGs in particular the health related MDG 4, 5 and 6. It is therefore a key moment – a call to action in which we will strengthen the role of the CHWs to access every Household and also achieve the One Million CHW target. The world, UN Agents, NGOs, Governments, Communities, Donors and partners must rally together in support of the world's most promising workforce, “**the CHWs**”.

The next steps include supporting participating countries to develop Operational Plans which will be costed and presented to the One Million CHW Campaign Organizing Committee for resource mobilization. SARN Secretariat will be facilitating Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zanzibar to develop the plans. It has to be acknowledged however that there remain critical issues to be harmonized such as M/E, data management, reporting systems, the SMS for life, training, CHW working conditions and workload, TORs and inter-departmental/partners collaboration.

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