

FUTURE PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSES IN AFRICA

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Background



As the WHO, regional health organizations and different countries of the world are planning a multi-pronged strategy against possible future outbreaks and pandemics, Africa and her Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) remain the epicentre for disease outbreaks.



The African Union (AU) and leaders of member states must therefore put in place as a matter of urgency and sustain where they are already in existence, workable SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely) policies on epidemics and pandemics preparedness and emergency responses.



To institutionalize policies at preventing or reducing the burden of future disease outbreaks and pandemics, sound mechanistic approach and emergency preparedness must be tailored to achieve multifaceted responses:



There is need to establish a hands-on national and regional but globally competitive institute for special and standard knowledge acquisition and technical know-how on infectious diseases peculiar to Africans that are directly or indirectly inimical to population health.

Regional Knowledge Hub/ Pandemic Institute

Sentinel Epidemiological Surveillance at One-health

In a bid to improve her sentinel Surveillance and monitoring of aetiologies of the current pandemic and all other endemic diseases from time to time, Africa must continue to foster relationships among member states.



Biobanking facilities and a database within the continent will strongly assist in the area of the sample and isolate preservation that is crucial for laboratory diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccine seed strain selection and development.

Biobanking and Genomic Database

Community Hygiene and Biosecurity

Therefore, policies on classical intervention strategies including community hygiene are sacrosanct to discourage and eliminate arthropods, rodents and other known reservoirs in living apartments.



There must be policies to control or prevent encroachment of the forests, animal trading, and mixed transportation of animals and humans.



To actualise SMART future pandemic preparedness and emergency responses, Africa must be willing to invest heavily in the establishment of molecular research laboratories in major institutions and hospitals in every country.

Regional Pharmaceutical and Non-pharmaceutical Interventions