

## EAHF Conference 2021



9th- 10th September 2021, Kigali.

Honorable Minister of Health - **Dr. Daniel Ngamije.**

The conference was officially opened by the Honorable Minister of Health of Rwanda who, in his opening remarks elaborated the direction on Rwanda in availing Health Services to Rwanda and how important it is to strengthen collaboration with the private sector and Public Private Partnerships to finance the health system. He also emphasized the importance of innovative Health Financing models and urged participants to discuss and share experiences on such innovations created on a win-win basis for the benefits of the East Africa Community.

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## RATIONALE

**East Africa Healthcare Federation (EAHF)** is an umbrella of 7 Country Federations (Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, Ethiopia and South Sudan). They join efforts to raise the voice of the private health sector in member countries and share experience as far as improving the quality of healthcare is concerned.

Every country's Federation heads the federation in a rotatory manner and the year of 2020 and 2021 was for Rwanda to Chair and host the conference.

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## EAHF CONFERENCE 2021 THEME

The EAHF Conference Theme was” **Accelerating Healthcare Breakthroughs by Promoting Innovation and Technology**” The conference was organized by Rwanda Healthcare Federation (RHF) in partnership with all the Sister Federations of the 7 Federations mentioned above.

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## ABOUT RHF

Rwanda Healthcare Federation (RHF) is the premier private health sector body in Rwanda with an ultimate goal of advocating for the interests of the private health sector and promoting access to affordable, equitable and quality health services. The RHF brings together non-state actors in the healthcare space including but not limited to health professionals' associations, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs).

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## WELCOMING REMARKS - DR. JEAN



### CHRYSOSTOME NYIRINKWAYA

Dr. Jean Chrysostome Nyirinkwaya, The Chairman of Rwanda Healthcare Federation, in his opening remarks he explained the rationale for the East Africa Healthcare Federation Conference. He also elaborated on how RHF has joined other East African Countries in implementing activities under the Africa Economic Research Consortium (AERC) whereby RHF trained about 663 Healthcare Providers working both in the private Health Sector and Public on COVID-19 Related Topics. RHF has again produced different Video and Audio Shows broadcasted on TV to support the government in the prevention of COVID-19 and educating citizens on measures to prevent COVID-19 during the pandemic. He also explained that Infographics were developed and shared on RHF Social Media platforms and has also been shared with the EAHF.

Dr. Jean Chrysostome explained also how RHF is partnering with Rwanda Integrated Health Systems Activity (RIHSA-USAID) in mobilizing the private health sector by engaging them to support each other and availing discussion to avail financial access for the development of the private health sector. Dr. Jean Chrysostome Nyirinkwaya has welcomed all the participants to this Hybrid EAHF Conference

2021 and invited them to be productive in the Two days of the conference.

## SPEAKERS OF THE EAHF CONFERENCE



Dr. Egina Francis Makwabe  
Chairman of APHFTA



Dr. Ian Clarke  
Chairman of UHF



Dr. Gakombe Kanyenje  
Chairman of KHF



Mr. Dawit Moges Alemu  
Executive Secretary  
Health Federation of Ethiopia



Mr. Emmanuel Tongum  
Representative of PHSASS



Dr. Grace Ssali Kiwanuka  
Executive Director - UHF



Dr. Jeanine Condo  
CEO / CIICHIN



Dr. Zuberi Muvunyi  
CMO&COO EDPU Africa



Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana, The Director General of Rwanda Biomedical Center



Mr. Jean Damascene B.  
RHF Executive Secretary



Mr. Danny Mutembe  
RHF Vice-Chairman



Dr. Anastasia Nyalita  
CEO/ KHF



Mr. Isaiah Okoth  
Country Director  
PharmAccess Kenya



Mr. Kari-Pekka Murtonen  
JAMK- Finland



Mr. David Owino  
KHF



Shivon Byamukama  
Babyl Managing Director



Dr. Heri Marwa  
Health Financing  
& Policy Advisor



Dr. Kabaga Aflodis  
CEO / HDI Rwanda



Dr. Amit Thakker  
Chairman AHF



Dr. Sylvia Mwelu  
Project Assistant  
KHF



Mr. Isaac Manyala  
Director of Programs  
APHFTA



Mr. Joseph Ndagijimana  
General Manager  
Zipline Rwanda



Dr. Emmanuel Rudakemwa  
Chief Consultant Radiologist  
KFH & RMH



Allen Mutesi Mirembe  
Moderator



Rose Kanyange  
Moderator

### EAHF CONFERENCE 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

A total of Four Hundred and Six (**406**) registered to the EAHF Conference 2021. During the event on DAY 1, about **1003** total logins to the online platform to view a certain presentation were recorded. Among them **227** stayed online viewing the Conference full time. On DAY 2, a total of **1077** total logins were observed and about **236** of them stayed online full time.

### PANEL SESSION OF THE EAHF CHAIRMEN

This session was moderated by **Mr. Danny Mutembe**, The Vice Chairman of RHF. The session attracted discussion whereby The Chairman of Kenya Healthcare Federation (KHF), **Dr. Gakombe Kanyenje** described how the private sector in Kenya participated in logistics coordination, policy formulation and financing. He also applauded the partnership between the private sector and Government of Kenya in procurement of vaccines and highlighted staffing as one of the challenges encountered due to staff turnover as medical workers (nurses majorly) moved to other countries during the COVID 19 pandemic

The Executive Secretary of the Healthcare Federation of Ethiopia, **Mr. Dawit Moges Alemu** also emphasized the contribution of Ethiopia's private sector in procurement of medical supplies during the COVID 19 pandemic in Ethiopia.

**Dr. Ian Clarke**, The Chairman of Uganda Healthcare Federation in his speech focused on the role of private public partnership as a catalyst for increased private sector contribution to healthcare. He also mentioned challenges brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic which also affected other sectors such as the education sector in the region.

**Dr. Egina Francis Makwabe**, The Chairman of Tanzania Private Health Sector Federation (APHFTA) reported that the Federation in Tanzania was in the driving Seating as far as COVID-19 is concerned whereby they participated in fixing issues related to Oxygen supply and availing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on the market for the use of the public in partnership with government, and private sector and faith based organization in procuring them.

**Mr. Emmanuel Tongun**, The Executive Secretary of the Private Health Sector Association of South Sudan, in his speech on behalf of the Chairman of **PHSASS**, mentioned that the association was

registered in April 2014 and since then it played a key role in Promoting the public-private partnership and to achieve the national of objectives of improving general health of the citizens of South Sudan.

**Dr. Pierre Claver Niyonizigiye**, from Burundi Healthcare Federation, reported that the discussed how the private sector collaborated with the government during sensitization campaigns to provide necessary information to vulnerable groups such as Truck drivers involved in cross border transportation to minimize contamination and infections.

**Dr. Jean Chrysostome Nyirinkwya**, The Chairman of RHF explained to the panel that in Rwanda, private health Facilities participated a lot in responding to COVID-19 Pandemic in carrying tests for COVID-19, Treating patients and worked hand in hand with the COVID-19 TASK FORCE established by Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC).

## **PANEL DISCUSSION - THE ROLE OF PRIVATE HEALTH SECTOR AND DIGITAL HEALTH IN THE MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19**

A plenary session on the role of Private Health Sector and digital health in the response to COVID-19 was moderated by **Rose Kanyange** and in the discussion, the panel focused on the necessity to strengthen the Public Private Partnership and use technology as much as possible to improve health Access. The Vice Chairman of RHF, **Mr. Danny Mutembe** elaborated on the need for the region to be able to manufacture some equipment needed locally.

The Programs Manager of Tanzanian Private Health Sector **Mr. Isaac Manyala** has mentioned the role of their Private sector in supporting the government by availing an electronic system to gather data in COVID-19 Pandemic and other diseases in Tanzania.

The Executive Director at the Ugandan Healthcare Federation, **Dr. Grace Ssali Kiwanuka**, explained the role of their Federation in supporting Uganda in community health management in COVID-19 in Uganda. In the conference on Day 1, **Dr. Aflodis Kagaba**, the Chief Executive Officer of Health Development Initiative (HDI) reported the need to strengthen policy formulation in place to make sure there is an inclusion in working together to tackle vaccine hesitancy in the region.

**Dr. Anastasia Nyalita**, The Chief Executive Officer of Kenya Healthcare Federation (KHF) explained how the collaboration with the level of the Ministry of Health in Kenya on matters related to innovations has generated fruits in providing quality of Healthcare Services. She reported that advocacy was one of the things to be enhanced at the regional level where she highlighted that even the movement of goods was affected within the region itself in the period of COVID-19 Pandemic. The role of EAHF, Countries and the East Africa Business Council is crucial in this matter; she explained how the Kenyan side switched to E-Health, having to implement Tele-Medicine to make sure service delivered is not much affected.

**Dr. Jeanine Condo**, The Chief Executive Officer of CIICHIN shared that when the pandemic started, it was recognized that data is key, the policies are now being implemented based on the data. All the interventions will be established based on data and the capacity being able to adjust the interventions based on the changes according to data. She explained how the use of a system like Worldmeter has enabled us to have a quick review on what is happening in different places of the world and make decisions related to travels etc.. the numbers about testing, infected people and many more to guide the decision making.

**Dr. Zuberi MUVUNYI** CMO and COO at EDPU Africa reported that EDPU as an organization involved in innovation and technology in the industry of health, they have been supporting the Government. The healthcare value chain shows that regional states can do everything from prevention, diagnostics, treatment and post treatment using artificial intelligence (AI) using emerging technologies that are available today in our region. He mentioned the benefits of AI and emerging technologies especially in Africa like eliminating deficiencies in poor infrastructure, shortage of health care workers; improve access to healthcare and many more. He also mentioned about Tambua Health in Kenya where they use “a T-Scope probe” which records sounds of air in and out of the patient in order to know healthy or unhealthy lungs.

**Dr. Zuberi Muvunyi** also mentioned that they are working on a project of preventing non-communicable diseases in Rwanda using Artificial intelligence (AI). The system helps to detect who is suffering from diabetic retinopathy and provide quality services to patients accordingly.

**Dr. Sylvia Mwelu, the Project Assistant of Kenya Healthcare Federation** in her presentation said that the project was funded by AERC in regards to COVID-19 response in East Africa. This project was implemented to facilitate a regional coordinated response to COVID-19. It supported the recovering plans of different country federations in the region. The goal of this project was to engage in social and economic situations because COVID-19 had a big impact in the economy at large and in the health sector, in the social sector because none of us anticipated this pandemic. This project was organized in five groups which are Policy, Health, Trade, Transport and Research. As KHF, the project with AERC aimed at supporting and scaling-up the health status of healthcare workers. It supported in creating an online platform where people can

access information anytime. Dr. Sylvia Mwelu mentioned that the importance of the trainings as to also help all people increase each other's participation in the prevention against COVID-19.

**Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana; the Director General of Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC)** presented the situation about COVID-19 in Rwanda and how the country responded to the pandemic. He also presented the pyramid of health system in Rwanda where He mentioned of the 8 Referral Hospitals, 4 provincial hospitals, 36 District Hospitals, 508 Health Centers, 1160 Health Posts, and 58,445 Community Health Workers. The Director General of RBC also showed how the COVID-19 report is done on a daily basis in order to know if the pandemic is increasing its severity or decreasing. He explained that the end of COVID-19 is not known but the important thing is that Rwanda has fighting tools including vaccines whereby for the time of the presentation about 25% of the population had been already vaccinated and the target was to vaccinate about 60% before the next year of 2022 ends.

**Dr. Jeanine Condo** explained to the audience that data collection has been a problem which hindered the progress of COVID-19 prevention but for the moment; there are improvements in availing data via different research online platforms.

**Mr. Danny MUTEMBE** the vice chairman of Rwanda Healthcare Federation discussed the role of private sectors in the process of the prevention against COVID-19 where many countries like Rwanda were supported due to the lack of supplies in this pandemic. He added that it was not an easy journey trying to get back to the usual lives of the citizens; but it was possible via working together. He mentioned the RFDA (Rwanda Food and Drugs Agency) is going through an assessment progress where that is going to allow Rwanda to produce

COVID-19 Vaccines locally and this really shows a big movement towards success in this battle.

**Dr. Zuberi Muvunyi**, in this plenary session concluded that there is no way we can manage this global pandemic without full commitment and engagement of the private sector. He also mentioned that there can't be any successful solution if we are not going digital. He explained the reason is that the prevention of this pandemic; there is huge benefits in the use of technology. He added that from the current period and in the coming years, going digital will be our only way to go to and it involves everyone.

## **The second day: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Mr. Isaiah Okoth** Country Director of PharmAccess Kenya discussed the types of Biotechnology that can be used in healthcare which are very essential in universal health coverage. He mentioned that healthcare can be a business because it costs money and that it can have good outcome based on its value. Technology has a big impact in providing quality services to the patients because it boosts up the system.

**Dr. Alfred Marwa** Health Financing and Policy Advisor in PharmAccess mentioned the challenges of the progress of using technology in healthcare which include limited budget, lack of knowledge and political decision interference, lack of political commitment, limited public private partnership, and limited technology. After mentioning these challenges, he also provided possible solutions. Some of them are the increase of government spending on health that needs to be done, improving the quality of healthcare, public private partnership and we should learn from each other

and innovate as per the situation of the Easter African Healthcare Federation arrangement.

**Mr. Joseph Ndagijimana** the General Manager of Zipline in Rwanda presented about the mission which is to provide to every human on the planet with instant access to vital medical supplies. He emphasized on the benefits of technology in healthcare where he reported that Zipline Rwanda has observed that healthcare services can be scaled to the national and regional territory. He again explained that services that are included in Zipline are warehouse and fulfillment, online demand delivery, data and performance management.

**Ms. Shivon Byamukama** the Managing Director of Bably – Rwanda presented about the services that Bably Rwanda offers to the Rwandan Citizens and she described the mission of Bably-Rwanda which is to avail affordable quality services in the hands of everyone and she added that Bably operate in 17 countries. Bably Rwanda has different partners which include Rwanda Social Security Board (RSSB), the Ministry of Health in Rwanda, the Ministry of ICT and National Identification Agency for patient identity verification. She furthermore informed the audience that these partnerships allowed them to provide quality services to the citizens and helped them to know the identity and needs of their clients. Bably Rwanda also collaborates with mobile network providers, private pharmacies and private insurers in the countries where they operate.

## **PANEL SESSION ON HEALTH FINANCING AND DIGITAL HEALTH**

**Dr. Emmanuel RUDAKEMWA** the Chief Consultant Radiologist in King Faisal Hospital (KFH) and Rwanda Military Hospital (RMH) explained that technology is indeed the backbone of what we are doing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Dr. Emmanuel added that

we could only mitigate what we do through innovation and technics that do not need person to person interaction. **Ms. Shivon BYAMUKAMA** the Managing Director at Bably in Rwanda commented that one of the things that were found very helpful in Rwanda, is having an environment where people are willing to innovate because the innovator doesn't work as an independent person; it's an ecosystem in place. She added that it also important to understand that ecosystem and map potential partners to allow smooth operations.

**Dr. Alfred MARWA** showed to the audience how political commitment is needed whereby those who cannot afford to pay; government can support and those who can afford to pay some; government can top up what they cannot afford. He mentioned that this is a routine normally that can help in achieving the universal health coverage. He again explained that the role of digital innovation in easily identifying people with no capacity to pay, those who need care and it can increase the efficiency in times of accessing healthcare.

**Mr. Isaiah Okoth**, mentioned again that technology is needed in healthcare so as to provide good quality of services to the patients which will lead to good standards of living of citizens without any impacts caused by bad quality services delivery. **Dr. Emmanuel** showed in this plenary session that it's high time that technology work for our people to make sure that what they are doing becomes very useful to them in terms of welfare. He added that in terms of widening what the scope of activities being done in the region and make it have an impact on the continent.

## **PRESENTATION OF SOUTH SUDAN HEALTH CARE FEDERATION**

**Mr. Emmanuel TONGUN** the Representative of PHSASS presented to the audience that it operates

in South Sudan and deals with Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, Pharmaceutical Manufacturers, FBOs and CBOs. PHSASS represents the private health sector institutions in the country and it engages in national policy making and has a membership in COVID-19 National Task Force. South Sudan got some challenges which include having weak government institutions at some points, weak banking system, poor road infrastructure, lack of sustainable power infrastructure, and the increase of logistics costs among others.

## **DIGITAL REHABILITATION IN THE EAST AFRICA REGION**

**Mr. Kari-Pekka Murtonen**, Head of International Relations at the Institute of Rehabilitation at JAMK University of Applied Sciences in Finland. He explained what digital rehabilitation is in summary and furthermore elaborated that it is a way of providing rehabilitation services through technology and innovation and this plays a big role in these times of COVID-19 because it reduces the interaction between many people hence supporting in social distancing. He showed the ongoing studies where digital rehabilitation and reported that from the global perspective 93 studies on digital rehabilitation and 105 studies on tele-rehabilitation have been done. Mr. Kari-Pekka Murtonen explained again that the use of digital rehabilitation supports the health system of the countries in general and boosts up the development of the country's engagement in digital rehabilitation and hence help in increasing the access to rehabilitation services across the world.

## **PRESENTATION OF ACTIVITIES BY MULTI STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIP**

**Mr. David OWINO** from the Multi Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) described that MSP has different

partners which are AMREF Health Africa, Malteser International, KHF and Unitley. There is dialogue change model in MPS; first it is exploring and engaging stakeholders, the second is to build and formalize, the third one is to implement and evaluate projects; and then the last one helps the organization in sustaining and expanding impact of what MSP does. Mr. David Owino explained that there are also some gaps identified in MSP which are policy gaps, curriculum gaps, weak association and bills. It leads to different outcomes which are membership, policy, recognition and increased capacity if responded to in a correct manner.

## **CLOSING REMARKS- CHAIRMEN OF EAH FEDERATIONS-ALL**

The closing remarks attracted the presence of the regional federations' chairmen. **Mr. Danny Mutembe the Vice Chairman of Rwanda Healthcare Federation (RHF)** moderated the session.

The chairman of Uganda Healthcare Federation (UHF) Dr. Ian CLARKE mentioned that it was a pleasure to be a part of a good regional team in the Healthcare Federations and he added that the use of digital and technological modes facilitate in healthcare services delivery to the patients and insuring the prevention against diseases and community health outcomes are achieved.

The chairman of Kenya Healthcare Federation, **Dr. Gakombe Kanyenje** informed the audience in that the use of technology is key to success and he shows how it is used in making communication between patients and the healthcare providers in an easy way. He added that it leads to time saving, saving tickets and allows patients to reach out to the therapists anytime there needs even through mobile phones.

The Chairman of **Africa Healthcare Federation (AHF)** **Dr. Amit Thakker** has appreciated the work

achieved by the East Africa Healthcare Federation (EAHF) in making this conference a success. The chairman of Africa Healthcare Federation congratulated the involvement of the private sectors in innovation and technology usage to provide health care services. **Dr. Amit Thakker** added that this engagement should continue as it leads to better standards of living of the regional citizens and the whole African region in general.

**Dr. Jean Chrysostome Nyirinkwya**, the chairman of RHF in closing remarks, mentioned that through innovation and technology as tools; we shall decrease the face to face contact between the healthcare providers and patients and hence support in social distancing necessary for the prevention of COVID-19. Dr. Jean Chrysostome who chairing the EAHF took this opportunity to virtually transmit the chairmanship to Uganda Healthcare Federation within this conference.

**Dr. Theophile DUSHIME**, the Technical Advisor of Minister of Health / Rwanda represented the honorable Minister for a closing remarks and He explained that there should be a strong collaboration between public facilities and private facilities. This collaboration hast to be attained by strengthening the existing public-private partnership in regional member states. The Technical Advisor of the Honorable Minister added that digitalization should be encouraged for efficient and effective operations in the healthcare service delivery

## **CONCLUSION**

The East Africa Healthcare Federation Conference of 2021 was an opportunity to discuss over the theme "Accelerating Healthcare Breakthroughs by promoting Innovation and Technology".

Referring to the discussions within the two days it has been found that digital health and using

technology for healthcare service delivery is a way to go for the regional states and more specifically and whole world in general.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The attendants of the EAHF Conference 2021 recommended the following:

### **TO THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH – EA COMMUNITY**

- To facilitate the regional Healthcare Federation and support them in their operations.
- To strengthen the Public – Private Partnership (PPP) in healthcare delivery in member countries.
- To facilitate the country federation accessing financial services and provide collaterals where possible.
- To continue extending the support on innovations from the private healthcare sector

### **HEALTHCARE FEDERATIONS OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

- To continue collaborative operations between Healthcare Federations of the EAHF.
- To support the Private-Public Partnership in each country of the East African Community.

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