REGIONAL OVERVIEW AND PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH IN AFRICA

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Presentation Outline

1. Introduction
2. How Africa compares with other regions
3. WHO Regional interventions
4. Perspectives
5. Conclusion
1. Introduction

• What are the social determinants of health and health inequalities (socio-economic status, racial and ethnic differences in access, living and occupational conditions)

• Complexity of the African socio-economic, political, geographic context – and relationship to health
2. How Africa compares with other regions

- The poverty/development situation
- Child/infant mortality
- Maternal mortality
- Access to water and sanitation
- HIV/AIDS
- Countries in complex emergencies
- Rate of urbanization
- Education levels
Poverty/development situation

- GDP per capita fell by 14% (1981 – 2001);
  - The number of people living in extreme poverty increased by more than 140 million
  - Among the least developed countries most with the lowest human development index (HDI) are in the African region.

Average income of people living on less than $1 a day, 1990 and 2001

Source: United Nations Statistics Division, Millennium Indicators database
Child mortality

Under-five mortality rate, 1990-2003

United Nations Statistics Division, Millennium Indicators Database
Maternal mortality

Countries with 1,000 or more maternal deaths per 100,000 live births

Access to water and sanitation

Population with Sustainable Access to an Improved Water Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>36</td>
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Population with Access to Improved Sanitation

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Source: United Nations Statistics Division, based on country data provided by UNICEF and WHO
HIV Prevalence in adults (15-49) in sub-Saharan Africa and number of deaths, 1990-2004

Source: United Nations Statistics Division, Millennium Indicators database
Number of refugees and internally displaced persons, 2003 (millions)
Urbanization

• Annual urban growth 5-6%

• Largest percentage of slum dwellers is in sub-Saharan Africa where almost three-quarters of the urban population lives in slums.
Rate of urbanization


Source: UN, World Urbanization Prospects, 1999
Education levels

Source: United Nations Statistics Division, Millennium Indicators database
Gender & women’s empowerment

- Enrolment in primary education, 2001: 86 per 100 boys—compared 83 girls per 100 boys in 1990
- Enrolment in secondary education, 2001: lagging behind with girls to boys ratios as low as 46
- Noticeable increase of women in parliament since 1990
Health for All: Agenda 2020

Sets strategic directions to achieve health for all in the 21st century:

• creation and management of enabling environments for health;
• undertaking health system reform;
• empowerment and support at individual, family and community levels;
• creation of conditions that will enable women to participate in, benefit from and play a leadership role in health development.
3. WHO Regional Strategies

Poverty & Health strategy

The strategy provides a framework of interventions with emphasis on:

- increasing advocacy and mobilization of stakeholders inside and outside the health sector;
- targeting priority needs of the poorest;
- health systems reform to redirect interventions towards the poor.
3. WHO Regional Strategies

Health & Environment strategy:
   – Supports Member States to develop and implement policies aiming at improving environment and health conditions, especially of vulnerable groups.

Health promotion strategy:
   – Aimed at supporting Member States to foster actions that enhance physical, social and emotional well-being and prevention of disease, disability and death.
3. WHO Regional Strategies

Other strategies and regional committee resolutions

– The Road Map for maternal and neonatal health

– Injuries, Food safety, CMH etc
4. Perspectives

• The challenge of tackling social determinants in a global context (emerging and re-emerging diseases, migration, globalization, resource mobilization, brain-drain)

• The way-forward in the African region
  – more evidence on pathways on how social determinants create health inequalities;
  – scaling up cost-effective social/inter-sectoral interventions;
  – harnessing regional and global efforts/initiatives to tackle social determinants
5. Conclusion

Addressing social determinants of health will require:

• Coordinated action between local, national, and global partners for health promotion

• Strengthening national health systems – giving particular emphasis to complex humanitarian emergencies/epidemics

• Revitalization of primary health care