

## **World Health Summit Berlin 2013: M8 Alliance Statement**

*“Scientific progress is enormous, but it does not reach the people who need it the most. The burden of disease is even getting greater in many regions of the world. This is not tolerable. We have to take responsibility.”*

(Detlev Ganten / John Wong, Presidents of the WHS 2013)

No country can be successful without a healthy population and social well-being. Since only a healthy society can move forward and overcome economic and social obstacles, money has to be committed to tangible and the most beneficial priorities. Policy-makers and funders need to recognize the impact of good health to socio-economic development.

The challenges we face are not mere problems of the health sector. We need good governance of health systems and good governance for health. The solution of national problems still requires policy coherence and collective action at a global level, through the joint working of a great variety of different actors. Health should be used as a “Trojan horse” in order to effectively engage other sectors and jointly build adequate institutional arrangements supported by academia, politics, health economy, and civil society.

Considerations of universality, equity and justice lie at the very core of any approach towards health and health promotion, which in turn is closely linked to other policy arenas with similar intent, such as social security and education.

Concluding discussions at the World Health Summit 2013, the pre-eminent forum for strategic health dialogue, the M8 Alliance calls for action in four major areas:

### **1. Research and Innovation**

Research and innovation in health care is not only about the innovative approaches to diagnosis, treatment and other care services; it is also about ensuring sustainable health and wealth for patients and society in the future.

- Research capacity building in low- and middle income countries: The gap between developed and developing countries in their capacity to carry out research needs to be minimized. The InterAcademy Medical Panel (IAMP) has pointed out that systematic attention to build capacity for health research in low- and middle-income countries is crucially needed. Educated people need to find adequate working conditions in their own countries and ‘brain drain’ needs to be prevented. Under country leadership, stakeholders should assess the adequacy of national research capacity, support priority setting for investment, and provide international development assistance.

## 2. Education and Leadership

To build high-performing and sustainable health systems, well-trained leaders are needed that serve the needs identified by their communities. ‘Education is the best vaccination.’ How can we do a better job in improving our education systems and building leadership capacity within the next generation?

- Young leaders: Academic institutions have an enormous amount of expertise and knowledge. Therefore, they have to engage in the process of formulating and implementing health and social policy. The voices of young academics and scientists around the world must be heard and listened to. There is a lot of potential by using their creativity and innovative minds. The Global Young Academy provides an adequate platform for this purpose. Moreover, the IAMP Young Physician Leaders Programme provides leadership development equipping young leaders with the necessary skills to make informed decisions throughout the policy process.

## 3. Evidence to Policy

Knowledge translation into national policies is essential, and government effectiveness can be significantly enhanced through the use of scientifically-rigorous evidence about what works. To obtain optimal health outcomes we also need to understand which communication processes are most efficient in helping people to adopt healthier lifestyles and adhere to prevention and treatment strategies.

- Antibiotic resistance: The global occurrence of antibiotic resistance must be tackled by evidence-informed policies. It is one of the most imminent global health challenges. An integrated global surveillance system; information and education programmes on the rational and responsible use of anti-infective drugs; prevention and control policies; encouragement of pharmaceutical companies to develop new antimicrobials through inter-sectoral partnerships (PPPs etc.); and the enhancement of research and development capability of developing countries are necessary. These are addressed in a joint InterAcademy Panel (IAP) - IAMP statement under preparation.

## 4. Global Health for Development

Universal Health Coverage has been defined in the Rio+20 Political Declaration as being crucial to “enhancing health, social cohesion and sustainable human and economic development”. The World Health Organization’s World Health Report 2013: *Research for Universal Health Coverage*, indicates that the gap between the present coverage of health services and the ideal of Universal Health Coverage remains large. It is often not clear on how to fill this gap in every setting and context. The move towards universal health coverage is crucial.

- Research for Universal Health Coverage: There is a need for research on how to expand health services with limited resources. For this purpose, the global health community has to continue investing in local research in order to develop a system of Universal Health Coverage tailored to each individual country's situation.

The M8 Alliance supports regional activities and the establishment of local innovative models for Health coverage. The World Health Summit Regional Meetings are an effort to support this development e.g. in the Asian Pacific Region with the WHS Regional Meeting in Singapore 2013 and in South America with the WHS Regional Meeting in Sao Paulo 2014.

In support of this concept the M8 Alliance is also paying special attention to conflict prone regions such as the MENA Region.

- Regional focus of the WHS 2013 : The MENA Region was chosen as a focus for examination due to the on-going transitions that require the stable foundation provided through a new social contract. Structural changes that promote fairness, accountability, and equity across the region's health sector and at the macro-economic level are inevitable. The situation of refugees as well as overall health system governance has not received adequate attention. Interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral networks of academics and health policy experts can significantly impact and contribute to the development of evidence-based policies and knowledge sharing. The ideal is the integration of multi-sectoral evidence-based approaches to inform policy, while enhancing networking, partnerships, knowledge transfer and the training of a public health workforce able to support this work. A regional network might also establish links to the EU in order to support the building of analytical and policy making capacity in the region. A statement that calls for short-term emergency action and long-term transition processes will be attached to this statement. (available for download at: <http://bit.ly/MENA-Statement>)

The M8 Alliance of Academic Health Centres, Universities and National Academies is a collaboration of academic institutions of educational and research excellence committed to improving global health, working with political and economic decision makers to develop science-based solutions to health challenges worldwide.

[www.worldhealthsummit.org/m8-alliance/members](http://www.worldhealthsummit.org/m8-alliance/members)

IAMP (InterAcademy Medical Panel) is the global network of national medical academics and national science academies with medical divisions, with an aim of evidence-based advice to governments on health issues. IAP is the global network of national academies of sciences.

[www.iamp-online.org](http://www.iamp-online.org)

The World Health Summit 2013 took place from October 20 – 22 in the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin.

**Documents:**

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