

# WHO KENYA NEWSLETTER



**Image**

WHO hands over 940 tablets to the Ministry of Health.



**World Health  
Organization**

**Kenya**



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# This Month

JANUARY - APRIL 2024 | VOL 14

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WHO and snakebite experts across Africa, support the launch of the African Snakebite Alliance.

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WHO hands over Ksh 5 million worth of medicines and equipment to bolster healthcare services in Kajiado county.

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WHO Kenya warmly welcomed a US mission team led by Deputy Secretary of Health & Human Services (HHS) to the Kenya country office.

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Kenya's Ministry of Health, in collaboration with WHO, launched the TB Strategic Plan 2023-2028 in response to a notable increase in TB cases nationwide.

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A woman wearing a grey vest over a leopard print long-sleeved shirt and a grey baseball cap is shaking hands with a man in a white suit. They are standing on a red carpet under a white tent. Other people are visible in the background, some wearing blue and white uniforms. The scene is set at an outdoor event.

**We champion  
health and a better  
future for all.**



# Message from the WHO Kenya Representative

Dear Partners and Colleagues,

I am pleased to present the latest updates from WHO Kenya in our newsletter.

In March, WHO reaffirmed its commitment to advancing Kenya's healthcare digitalization agenda by donating 940 mobile tablets to the Ministry of Health. These tablets aim to improve immunization data management in the country, streamlining processes and enhancing access to critical information.

WHO Kenya played a pivotal role in co-organizing and participating in the 2024 Eastern Africa Regional Early Childhood Conference on Early Childhood Development. Under the theme "Investing in Early Childhood: Building Human Capital along the Life Course," stakeholders convened to discuss innovative models of quality early childhood interventions and share insights to enhance the status of early childhood development in the region.

Another significant achievement was the successful vaccination of 1.2 million children against polio in three counties. This milestone underscores our ongoing efforts to eradicate polio and protect vulnerable populations from this debilitating disease.

Other stories you will find interesting, include the establishment of the African Snakebite Alliance (Page 10), the launch of the TB Strategic Plan 2023-2028 to address the notable increase in TB cases nationwide (Page 12) and the introduction of a pilot study to test a mobile app using artificial intelligence to identify skin-related neglected tropical diseases in Kenya, (Page 13).

We hope you find these updates informative and insightful. Thank you for your continued support and collaboration as we work towards achieving health for all in Kenya.

Best regards,  
Dr. Abdourahmane Diallo



**Improving pediatric TB care represents a pioneering effort to address the unique healthcare needs of children affected by this infectious disease.**

- Dr. Abdourahmane Diallo



# WHO Hands Over 940 tablets to the Ministry of Health



**Nairobi, Kenya** - WHO reaffirmed its commitment to advancing Kenya's healthcare digitalization agenda by donating 940 mobile tablets to the Ministry of Health. This significant contribution, valued at \$376,132, was warmly received during a handover ceremony attended by key health officials.

Expressing gratitude for the support, Cabinet Secretary for Health, Nakhumicha S. Wafula, emphasized the importance of digitalizing health services to enhance visibility, particularly in commodity and human resources management. The donation of the tablets, she noted, symbolizes collaborative efforts crucial for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 17 on partnerships.

Ms. Mary Muthoni, Principal Secretary for Public Health and Professional Standards, echoed these sentiments, underlining the necessity of backing the health digitalization agenda for improved service delivery. She highlighted the tablets' potential to strengthen data quality, a fundamental aspect of informed decision-making in healthcare.

The handover ceremony also saw the presence of Principal Secretary for the State Department of Medical Services, Harry Kimtai, who extended gratitude to WHO for their support in enhancing emergency preparedness efforts.



**MARCH 28, 2024**

*Dr. Abdourahmane Diallo, WHO Kenya with Ms. Mary Muthoni Principal Secretary for Public Health and Professional Standards, Ministry of Health.*



## Data is the cornerstone for informing decision-making and hence the need for quality data.

*DR. ABDOURAHMANE DIALLO, WHO KENYA*

WHO Kenya Representative, Dr. Abdourahmane Diallo, underscored the tablets' significance in improving the quality of immunization data, stressing that data integrity is crucial for effective decision-making. He emphasized the importance of reaching the unreached populations, particularly in urban poor areas, displaced communities, and among migrants, for vital vaccinations such as HPV for adolescent girls and measles-rubella.

The donation of 940 tablets marks a significant milestone in the Ministry of Health's efforts to strengthen healthcare infrastructure and improve emergency response



capabilities. These tablets, equipped with features for remote tracking and management, are poised to enhance data quality for decision-making processes within Kenya's healthcare system.

Health CS Nakhumicha expressed her appreciation to WHO for the donation, recognizing the tablets' role in enhancing data quality for decision-making at the Vaccines Programme. PS Muthoni reiterated the tablets' potential to bolster the Ministry's digital agenda, while PS H. Kimtai welcomed the donation as a vital step towards improving healthcare delivery in Kenya.

# Investing in Early Childhood: Building Human Capital Along the Life Course

## 2024 Eastern Africa Regional Meeting



**Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, March, 2024** - WHO Kenya co-organised and participated in the 2024 Eastern Africa Regional Early Childhood Conference on Early Childhood Development. The conference served as a platform for stakeholders to take stock of the status of early childhood development in the region, share knowledge, and explore innovative models of quality early childhood interventions.

Under the theme "Investing in Early Childhood: Building Human Capital along the Life Course," the conference brought together policymakers, civil society organizations, grassroots advocacy groups, academia, development partners, and other multisectoral stakeholders interested in improving early childhood outcomes. The event provided an opportunity to showcase innovative programs, foster dialogue, and build consensus around key advocacy issues.

Inspired by the goal of achieving an Africa fit for children by the year 2040 and the African Union's theme of the year "Educate and Skill Africa for the 21st Century", and motivated to contribute to the realization of Agenda 2063

on the Africa We Want, stakeholders expressed concern that the investment in early childhood development is still below the recommended standards. Support to programs in education, health, specialized services, and nutrition remains insufficient in the region.

During the conference, WHO Kenya participated in sessions promoting knowledge exchange and emphasized prioritizing early childhood development in national and regional agendas. They stressed the need for adequate resource allocation and collaboration among stakeholders to scale up development services.

The conference culminated in a series of resolutions and a final communique, emphasizing the critical role of early childhood development as a cornerstone for socioeconomic transformation and sustainable development in the Eastern Africa Region. Participants committed to strengthening their collective efforts to advance early childhood development as a key driver of positive change.







#### Main sessions

There were a total of 9 sessions that gathered everyone together to support, listen and question methods for 'Building Human Capital Along The Life Course'.



#### CARMMA Plus Campaign

During the conference, there was a launch of the CARMMA Plus campaign which aims to reaffirm East Africa's commitment to reproductive health for women, children, and adolescents, fostering accountability, leadership, and improved outcomes by 2030.

# Malaria Day Celebrations in Kisumu County

Gender Health Equity and Human Rights



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## Image

Rose-Lovine Achieng and her son Humphrey, residents of Nyalenda Capital in Kisumu County, share a moment at home.

"I felt relieved. When Humphrey became sick, I shed tears because I felt my only baby boy was very sick."

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World Malaria Day was commemorated at the Pawtenge Primary School Grounds in Muhoroni, Kisumu, Kenya, on April 24th, with the participation of guests, including Hon Susan Nakhumicha, Cabinet Secretary for Health, and Ms. Muthoni Kariuki, Principal Secretary for Public Health and Professional Standards. Despite concerted efforts, Kenya continued to face a significant malaria burden, reporting up to 3.2 million malaria cases and 11,000 related deaths annually.

This year's World Malaria Day theme, "Gender Health Equity and Human Rights," underscored Kenya's commitment to advancing health equity, gender equality, and human rights principles in its malaria control efforts.

The commemoration emphasized collective action towards a malaria-free Kenya, advocating for the rights and equality of all citizens. Kenya's dedication, alongside the support of partners, reaffirmed the nation's resolve to achieve a malaria-free future. With sustained investment in malaria control and resilient health systems, Kenya aimed to make significant strides towards this ambitious goal.



Humphrey recently recovered from severe malaria after Rose-Lovine decided to take him to a local health facility.

Humphrey was admitted to the hospital and stayed for several days before showing signs of improvement.

Rose-Lovine was relieved when she noticed the medicine and treatment was making him better.

"When I saw he was improving, I was very happy."

"They told me about the vaccination, sleeping under mosquito nets, and made me more aware that malaria is real."

Their story highlights the critical role of timely intervention, access to quality healthcare, and education on preventive measures in combating malaria.

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## Global Leaders Advocate for One Health Approach at UNEA6

 February

 WHO, UNEP, FAO & WOH.

During the UNEA6 conference, an environmental assembly hosted by UNEP, leaders convened for the Second Quadripartite Executive Annual Meeting and a subsequent three-day session. They advocated strongly for the expansion of the One Health approach, which emphasizes the interconnected health of people, animals, and the environment. This approach aims to better predict, prevent, and respond to global health threats.

Key outcomes included a commitment to the One Health Joint Plan of Action, which seeks to integrate global systems and capacities for a sustainable future. Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus of the WHO underscored the necessity of sustained political will and resource mobilization to effectively embed One Health principles into national and international policies.

## Regional Workshop Boosts Baby-Friendly Health Care

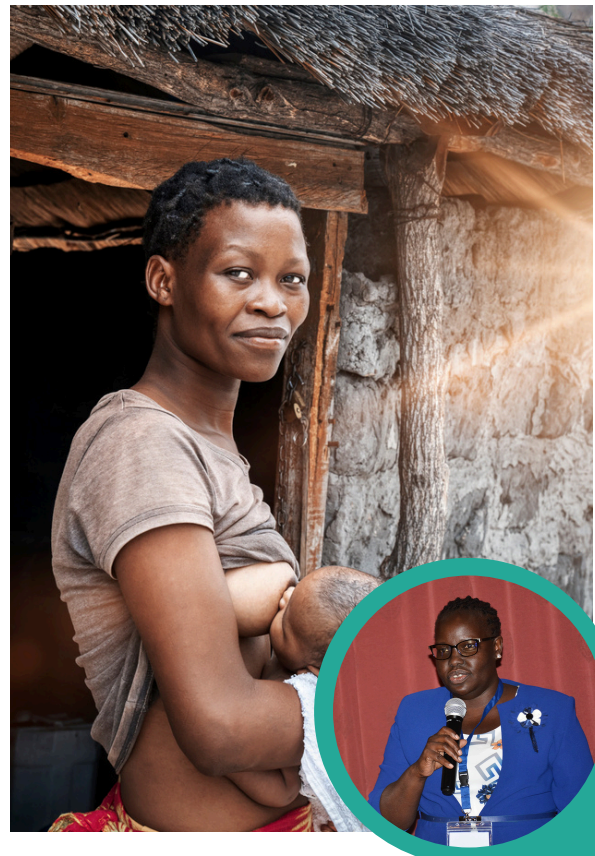
 February

 WHO, USAID & UNICEF

WHO, in partnership with USAID and UNICEF, hosted a regional workshop that focused on the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) to enhance breastfeeding-friendly practices in healthcare facilities across Africa.

Attended by representatives from ten African nations, including Kenya, and supported by international health organizations, the workshop addressed the urgent need to improve breastfeeding rates and mother-baby bonding through the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. This gathering forms part of a broader strategy to reduce infant mortality rates and bolster health outcomes, aligning with global health and sustainable development goals.

The workshop facilitated a dynamic exchange of ideas and best practices, underscoring the commitment of WHO and its partners to strengthen health systems and support maternal and child health in the region.



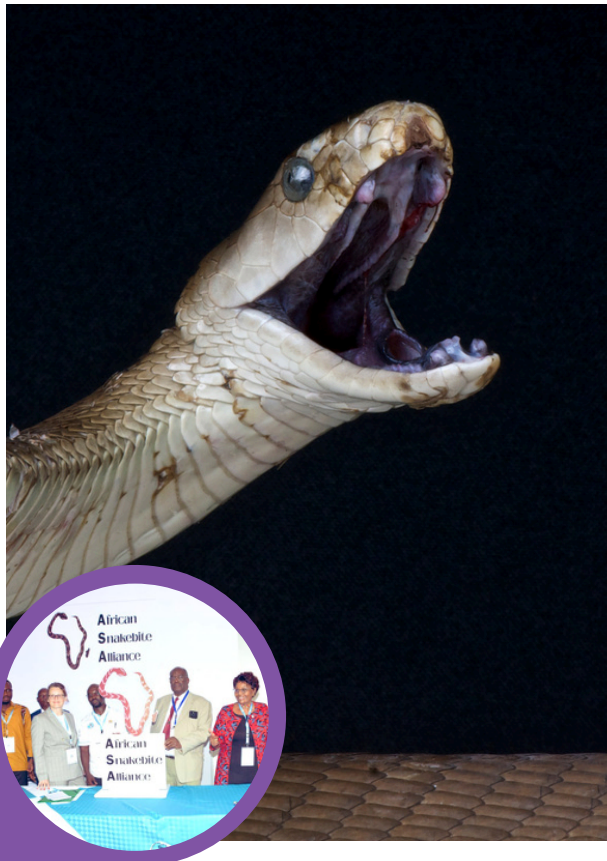
## 1.2 Million Children Vaccinated Against Polio in 3 Counties

 January

 Ministry of Health, WHO, UNICEF & more.

WHO in collaboration with UNICEF and other partners supported the Ministry of Health Kenya, along with county governments to execute a polio vaccination campaign that immunized 1.2 million children across Wajir, Garissa, and Mandera counties.

The initiative aimed to address the reemergence of polio, particularly following new cases in the Dadaab refugee camps. The vaccination effort focused on children under the age of five in Wajir and Mandera, while extending to those up to 15 years old in Garissa. This campaign is part of ongoing efforts to enhance immunization coverage and maintain public health safeguards in the region, reflecting a strong commitment to controlling and eventually eradicating polio.



## Launch of the African Snakebite Alliance in Kenya

 January

 WHO, Wellcome Trust & leading snakebite experts from Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Ghana (KCCR), Rwanda (UGHE & RBC), Kenya (KIPRE) and Eswatini (EAF).

WHO, in collaboration with snakebite experts from across Africa, supported the international launch of the African Snakebite Alliance in Kenya. The event took place at the Kenya Institute of Primate Research (KIPRE) and was officiated by PS Health Mary Muthoni from Kenya's Ministry of Health.

It was attended by leading snakebite experts from 14 African countries and aims to tackle the neglected public health issue of snakebites, with a strategic goal to reduce snakebite deaths and disabilities by half before 2030. This initiative will focus on uniting experts and policymakers to improve access to life-saving treatments and enhance protection for vulnerable communities.



## 5M Ksh in Medicines and Gear Given During Kajiado Visit

February

British High Commission, CDC, and WHO.

The WHO Kenya team, along with representatives from the British High Commission and CDC, visited Kajiado County, hosted by Governor Joseph ole Lenku. Led by WHO Country Representative Dr. Abdourahmane Diallo, the delegation engaged with County Governor H.E. Joseph Ole Lenku and his team, reinforcing support for health initiatives.

Kajiado County, a WHO Kenya priority area, has received ongoing support, including capacity-building in surveillance and provision of emergency kits. During the visit, Dr. Diallo presented Governor Lenku with a consignment of medicines and equipment valued at KSH 5 million, aimed at bolstering healthcare services.

“We are very happy to be here and to collaborate as we pursue these important areas of health and well-being for the people of Kajiado. WHO wishes to sustain its commitment in supporting better health for all” - Dr. Diallo

## Warm Welcome to US Health Mission Team

March

WHO, Government of America, CDC, USG & more.

WHO Kenya warmly welcomed a US mission team led by Deputy Secretary of Health & Human Services (HHS), Andrea Palm. Alongside Assistant Secretary Loyce Pace, CDC Director Mandy Cohen, and Amy Herman-Roloff from CDC Kenya, they engaged in discussions about WHO's work in Kenya.


Dr. A Diallo, the WHO Kenya Representative, provided briefings on WHO's initiatives, emphasizing the vital role of community surveillance in disease detection. The visit also highlighted the significant potential of our Regional Emergency Hub in combating health emergencies across the region.

This collaborative exchange underscores our commitment to advancing public health efforts and fostering enduring partnerships.



## Launch of the 5-year TB National Strategic Plan

 January

 Ministry of Health, WHO


Kenya's Ministry of Health, in collaboration with WHO, launched the TB Strategic Plan 2023-2028 in response to a notable increase in TB cases nationwide. This collaborative effort underscored the governments commitment to strengthening TB control efforts and improving public health outcomes in Kenya.

The strategic plan incorporates a community-centered approach aligned with WHO's 2022 guidelines, emphasizing evidence-based interventions and community engagement for grassroots TB detection. Through the deployment of Community Health Promoters, the plan aims to enhance TB detection at the grassroots level, addressing the root causes of TB barriers and accelerating progress towards the global goal of ending TB by 2030.



## World TB Day Celebrations

 March

 Ministry of Health, WHO & other partners.

WHO joined national celebrations for World TB Day in Kenya, underscoring the importance of addressing factors driving the TB epidemic. The event, held in Murang'a County, highlighted the government's commitment to TB eradication and emphasized community involvement in disease prevention. CS Health Nakhumicha Wafula and Murang'a Governor Kang'ata emphasized key strategies, including community engagement and digitalization, in public health efforts.

The theme "Yes we can end TB" reflects a collective commitment to accelerating TB control efforts and achieving global targets. Efforts focus on strengthening health systems, expanding access to quality TB services, and integrating TB efforts into primary healthcare to ensure equitable access.



## Launch of AI App to identify skin conditions in Kenya.



April



WHO, University of Catalunya, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases and Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI).

WHO, in collaboration with partners, launched a pilot study in Kenya to test a mobile app using artificial intelligence to identify skin-related neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). This tool holds the potential to revolutionize the diagnostic process by enhancing health workers' capabilities to effectively detect and manage skin conditions.

During a detailed workshop, experts including Dr. Joyce Onsongo, WHO-Kenya lead for NTDs, along with county health workers, discussed the app's potential to boost prevention and treatment strategies, showcasing the promising integration of technology and public health in fighting NTDs.

## Launch of NTD Supply Chain Initiative



February



JSI, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, WHO, USAID

JSI has been chosen by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, in partnership with WHO, USAID, and pharmaceutical companies, to implement the Supply Chain Technical Support Mechanism (SCTSM) for Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs). This initiative aims to address supply chain challenges and improve access to NTD medicines.

Over the next five years, JSI will work closely with WHO and other partners to strengthen supply chains in eight African countries, including Kenya, enhancing data collection, inventory management, and integration of NTD medicines into national health systems. This project supports the global effort to prevent, control, or eliminate NTDs by 2030, addressing a significant health challenge affecting over one billion people worldwide, with a particularly high burden in Africa.





## Enhancing Nursing & Midwifery in Kenya



January



WHO, Ministry of Health

In response to global health directives, Kenya has taken significant strides to fortify its nursing and midwifery sector. Following the adoption of the Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery 2021–2025 (GSDNM) by the Seventy-fourth World Health Assembly, Kenya crafted its National Nursing and Midwifery Policy for the period 2022–2032. This policy outlines a comprehensive framework to guide the profession's development, practice, and service delivery in Kenya.

To ensure effective implementation of the policy at the grassroots level, a coordination meeting convened Chief Nursing Officers, nurse leaders from various sectors, regulatory bodies such as the Nursing Council of Kenya, professional associations, and the Nurses Union. Together, they reviewed the policy's implementation status and collaboratively devised a strategic plan for nursing and midwifery. This concerted effort aims to address healthcare challenges and improve service delivery across Kenya's diverse counties, aligning with global directives for enhanced healthcare outcomes. The meeting provided a platform for experience sharing and learning across counties, fostering discussions and consensus on strategic priorities for Nursing and Midwifery in the country.



## Partnerships to Strengthen Health workforce in Kenya



February



United Kingdom, Ministry of Health, WHO &amp; other partners.

WHO signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the United Kingdom's Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to strengthen the health workforce in Kenya. Through the Global Health Workforce Program (GHWP), WHO is supporting the Ministry of Health to optimize the health workforce in Kenya through improved data availability and utilization, enhancing workforce performance and quality, and developing evidence-informed policies and strategic plans.

Similarly, the Tropical Health Education Trust (THET) will manage partnerships for health workforce development in Kenya, Ghana, and Nigeria, aiming to build stronger health systems and progress towards UHC. THET will closely liaise with WHO country offices to contribute to Human Resources for Health planning and management, supported by DHSC funding under GHWP in Kenya.



# Thank you! From the WHO Kenya Country Office Team

Our Kenya office is staffed by a diverse team committed to operational excellence, effective policy development and more. Through diligent work across various domains, our team strives to improve health throughout Kenya.

Captured below are images from a recent visit to the Lunga Lunga community, organized by our office's Staff Welfare Association (SWA). The visit, led by Dr. Joyce Onsongo, was our first since 2008 and involved distributing essential supplies such as unga, cooking oil, soap, sugar, dengue, and clothes. This effort underscores our teams dedication to community engagement .





# Acknowledgements

## EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

Your support and partnership are crucial to our mission in Kenya, enabling us to save lives and serve the vulnerable. We thank you for empowering our technical staff to deepen government support, accelerate progress towards Sustainable Development Goals and enable us to plan for longer term approaches to health systems strengthening. A big thank you to our key “thematic funders”. The funds our partners provide give a degree of flexibility that allows WHO to be more effective and efficient in allocating funds for our joint priorities. As we enter the new fiscal year, having already secured **33.4% of our \$42,399,040 budget**, we want to express our profound gratitude. Although some key pillars such as Healthier Populations remain underfunded with only 8% raised so far. Your ongoing commitment not only drives our success but also inspires a ripple effect of health improvements across Kenya. **Thank you!**





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