



Newsletter: June 2021

Welcome to the first iAHO newsletter blast!

We are excited to share the first issue of our bi-monthly newsletter, which will keep you up to date with all the latest news from the integrated African Health Observatory (iAHO). We cover issues touching on health information, health systems and services development, and the work of the Observatory across the WHO African Region.

Visit the iAHO: <https://aho.afro.who.int/>

Learn more about the iAHO:



Emerging from a request from Ministers of health from across the WHO African Region, the integrated African Health Observatory (iAHO) is a strategic health intelligence platform that provides a real-time view of what is happening in the health sector and with progress on the health and well-being of populations.

Hosted by the WHO Regional Office for Africa, this user-friendly online resource is designed to improve public access to, and availability of, essential health information. As highlighted by Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa "the lack of access to quality data is a major barrier to addressing health in our region. WHO's integrated African Health Observatory is a leap toward making health data more available and accessible"

Tweets

Tweets et réponses

Médias

J'aime



Dr Matshidiso Moeti  @Moet... · 1 j ⋮

Lack of access to quality data is a major barrier to addressing health in our Region. [@WHOAFRO](#)'s integrated African Health Observatory (iAHO) is a leap towards making health data more available & accessible.



WHO African Region  @... · 1 j

The [@WHOAFRO](#) integrated African Health Observatory (iAHO) is an all-inclusive platform for health data in the African Region.

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It is ideal for specialists, as well as anyone with an interest in health – researching a topic, checking facts or seeking guidance on health issues in the region.

The platform is a one-stop-shop that marshals harmonized high-quality data from the regional stage, together with the National Health Observatories (NHOs) of the 47 Member States of the WHO African Region.

Besides offering easier access to high-quality data and statistics, the iAHO platform aims at increasing the visibility of key analytics and knowledge products useful for knowledge brokering and evidence-informed decision-making.

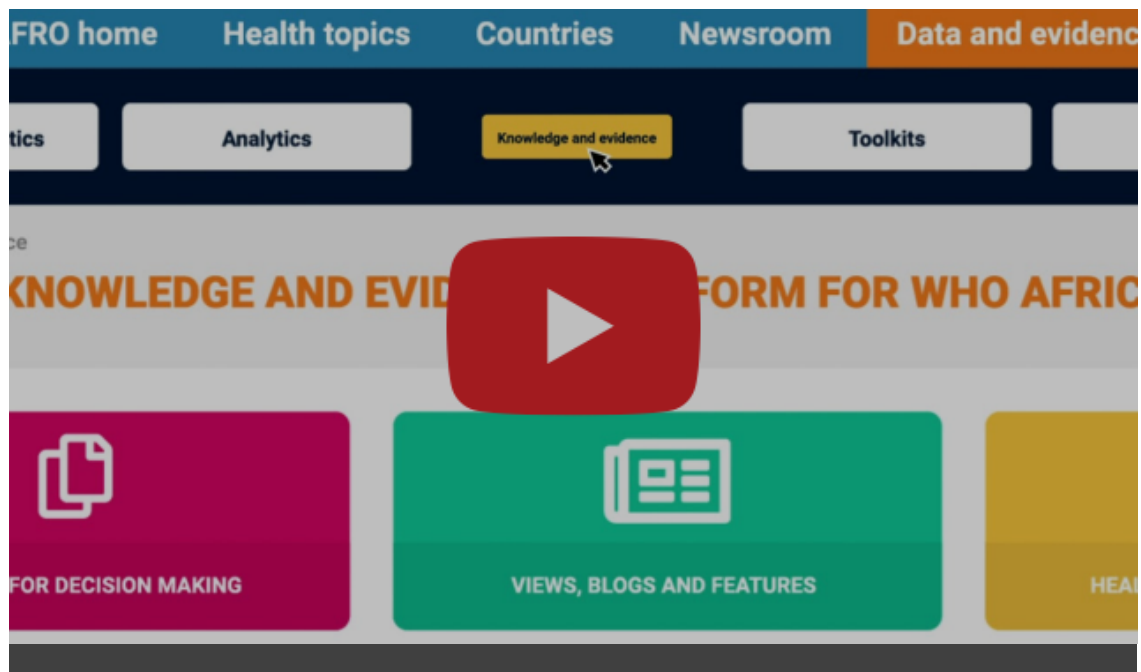
The iAHO is also home to multiple inter-connected regional platforms, allowing for cross-country comparison and learning across the different dimensions of the health system. This offers a stage for health actors to engage and exchange – the sharing and networking roles of the Observatory complement the core marshaling and analysis functions.

Bringing all of this information together for use in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of health interventions, the iAHO contributes to the overall effort to strengthen health systems and ultimately ensure better health and well-being for communities throughout the African Region.

In addition to the iAHO platform itself, the AFRO Observatory team provides targeted technical support for the full ownership and strengthening of the embedded NHOs, as well as curating and populating key content as resources are generated and made available.

Contact us at iAHO@who.int for any inquiries or support as needed.

Explore the iAHO



iAHO Presentation

**The newly redesigned
integrated African
Health Observatory (iAHO)**

14 April 2021

**A Webinar
Panel Event**

Watch the official webinar presentation of the redesigned iAHO again!

On 14 April, WHO AFRO held a webinar to present the newly redesigned iAHO. To watch to the panel discussion of the webinar event, click [here](#).

To automatically receive the electronic version of the iAHO newsletter by email kindly register [here](#).

Interview with Dr. Lindiwe Makubalo



Dr. Lindiwe Makubalo

Director, Office of the Assistant Regional Director (ARD), WHO AFRO

What brought about the iAHO?

The need to have an integrated Observatory in the region was a very clear request that was raised in several occasions in the past by the 47 Member States of the WHO African region. Work on health observatory in the African Region started in 2010, and resulted in the establishment of the African Health Observatory (AHO).

Two years later, AFRO was tasked with supporting an initial cohort of Member States in the establishment National Health Observatories (NHOs) – with the intention of ensuring all 47 Member States eventually

put NHOs in place.

However, major challenges persisted such as widespread health information fragmentation in the region and the high costs of setting up national observatories. These were proving an insurmountable obstacle for some countries.

Therefore, the following step was to upgrade the platform in order to house both the AHO and the national observatories of all Member States of the Region under one roof. The integrated African Health Observatory is centrally hosted and coordinated by the WHO Regional Office for Africa, but countries own and manage their NHOs within it.

The iAHO is the answer to requests from the region for a centralized repository that can offer reliable health information coming directly from the source, made available and accessible to all and for a stage to connect at a regional, national and sub-national level.

How does the iAHO platform help shape better health responses?

The main value of this iAHO is that it centralises information that can then be easily shared. We want to make it easier for our Member States to make decisions quickly. Let's take COVID-19 for instance. Today on the Observatory, we have access to a dashboard displaying data describing the evolution of the disease (local transmission, deaths) from across the African region, [rapid policy briefs](#), and information on what is happening in terms of [vaccine response](#).

Individual countries' health systems responses are showcased on the platform, as well as [good practices](#) that can inspire countries in their response to COVID-19.

In addition to this, the Observatory gives us a real-time overview of [health services](#) that are still provided and allows us to see that some services in the region have suffered the full impact of COVID-19. Many people who suffer from other diseases and health issues struggle with access to services, which may hide other issues that could turn out to be even more serious in toll than COVID-19. It is therefore an important source of information that can be used for analysis and decision making.

How does the WHO foster better health information?

There are a number of activities that WHO undertakes in the region, with regard to support to national health information systems. To name a few, we develop and share tools, standards and guides with Member States, in addition to critical capacity-building. We work to provide the necessary technical support and training for the production of good quality data and the provision of robust and reliable health information. The iAHO is an asset in the associated analysis and display of the fruits of these efforts.

We work closely with a number of public health and academic institutions in the countries involved in research and health information strengthening. With partners, we also endeavour to engage in integrative practices that move away from the older, more fragmented approaches to working with Member States – all in alignment with national health information system priorities.

How will the iAHO help address inequities in health in the African Region?

Poor or incomplete health data and evidence will negatively impact the ability to understand a problem and take appropriate action. It leads policy makers to make incorrect or unsuitable decisions when allocating resources or prioritizing interventions. These will ultimately hurt the health and well-being of populations, especially the most vulnerable.

Inequity comes from a distribution of power, goods, services, and other resources in society that is not done in a manner proportional to need. Evidence, data collection, and analysis are the starting point to isolating the causes and implications of such outcomes.

By fostering the generation and analysis of solid, high-quality data, we can start to understand what is currently being observed in terms of equity, human rights, as well as gender issues, and plan interventions (including from a governance perspective) accordingly.

The role of knowledge production and translation is significant as it enables evidence-informed decision-making in the direction of results reflecting the highest attainable standard of health and well-being.

Latest Data



In the News



[Strengthening of health information systems](#)

At the 74th World Health Assembly, it was reiterated that health information systems are essential, especially in times of pandemics. The Secretariat stated its commitment to support WHO Member States in their efforts to strengthen health information systems.



[WHO Africa briefing on COVID-19 - 4th June 2021](#)

With a rising threat of a third wave of COVID 19 in Africa and the majority of vaccines received against the virus being administered to populations, African countries are more ready than ever to receive new vaccines.



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