

Statement on Resilient Health Systems and Health Emergencies

76th WHO Regional Committee for Africa (RC76)

Agenda item 18.8: Progress report on the Framework for sustaining resilient health systems to achieve universal health coverage and promote health security, 2023-2030 in the WHO African Region

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The frontline of any health emergency is not only at a hospital; it is also at primary health care. We must build resilient primary health care in the face of emergencies such as infectious disease outbreaks or extreme weather events fuelled by climate change.

Primary health care can prepare for such emergencies through community engagement and multisectoral collaboration. Primary care facilities and services must be able to prepare for, respond to and recover from such emergencies while also maintaining essential routine services.

The World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) in the African region calls for:

- Inclusion of climate change in primary health care policy and attention to WHO guidance on climate resilient health systems
- Investment in strengthening primary care facilities and services and harnessing of global funds allocated to climate adaptation within health systems
- Preparedness of the primary care workforce, through training and support in outbreak detection, planetary health and emergency response.
- Integration of primary care providers into plans for emergency preparedness and disaster responses.