

## **“Mobilising Healthcare Professionals and Resources for Capacity Building in Africa”**

Presentation from AfricaRecruit on the feedback and outputs from the survey conducted as a precursor to the Africa Diaspora Health Care forum which took place on the 21st and 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2006. The finds from this survey will inform policy recommendations, programmes and infrastructure where applicable. Above all, the capacity to harness the skills of the Diaspora will be facilitated.

The year 2006 has been designated by the World Health Organisation as the Human Resource year for Health, and by the United Nations as the Year of Migration. The World Health Organisation reports that of the 175 million people (2.9% of the world's population) living outside their country of birth in 2000, 65 million were economically active. The rise in the number of people migrating is significant for many developing countries because they are losing their better-educated nationals to richer countries. Medical practitioners and nurses represent a small proportion of the highly skilled workers who migrate, but the loss for developing countries of human resources in the health sector may mean that the capacity of the health system to deliver health care equitably is significantly compromised. It is unlikely that migration will stop given the advances in global communications and the development of global labour markets in some fields, which now include nursing.

The global shortage of healthcare professionals and the loss of skills by Africa have resulted in a situation where Africa is not able to address its healthcare needs. At the same time Africa is experiencing in some countries an explosive number of patients with HIV, more deaths from malaria, tuberculosis and in some cases many deaths or morbidity that can and should have been prevented if adequate skills and resources such as medication were available.

"Africa faces a huge burden of potentially preventable and treatable disease that not only causes unnecessary deaths and untold suffering; it continues to block economic development and damages the continent's social fabric" ***New Partnership for Africa's Development Health Strategy.***

The Commission for Africa reports called for an extra one million health workers to be trained in Africa by 2015. The commission wants the world's richest nations to provide \$7 billion to develop Africa's health infrastructure.

### **Why Mobilise the African Diaspora Healthcare Professionals?**

With so much of its healthcare resources based outside Africa, mobilising the resources in the Diaspora in a constructive and structured manner will result in innovative and practical solutions that will be of added value to Africa's Healthcare enabling Africa to address its capacity to meet the related **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**. The NEPAD health strategy emphasises the need to reduce the brain drain of essential human resources for health development. NEPAD strategic vision for health development can only be achieved through increased resource mobilisation, strengthened management and more equitable distribution and allocation of financial and human resources.

"Successful implementation of the NEPAD health strategy is contingent upon the achievement of innovative and effective partnerships between African governments and health development partners, based on the principle of African ownership, and underpinned by active collaboration and coordination at the global, regional and national levels" ***New Partnership for Africa's Development.***