

REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA**ORIGINAL: ENGLISH**Seventy-third sessionGaborone, Republic of Botswana, 28 August–1 September 2023Provisional agenda item 11**DRAFT RESOLUTION****REGIONAL STRATEGY ON DIAGNOSTIC AND LABORATORY SERVICES AND
SYSTEMS, 2023–2032 FOR THE WHO AFRICAN REGION**

(Document AFR/RC73/7)

The Regional Committee,

Having considered document AFR/RC73/7 entitled “Regional strategy on diagnostic and laboratory services and systems, 2023–2032 for the African Region”;

Recognizing the need to strengthen diagnostic and laboratory services and make them more available and accessible in order to achieve universal health coverage through the primary health care strategy and contribute to global health security;

Recalling Regional Committee resolution AFR/RC58/R2¹ on strengthening public health laboratories; the Maputo Declaration² on strengthening of laboratory systems and resolution WHA76.5 (2023) on strengthening diagnostics capacity;³

Deeply concerned that more than half of the global population and probably a greater proportion in the African Region does not have access to diagnostics;⁴

Noting that fairly poor consideration is given to medical imaging services, clinical and public health laboratories, and diagnostics at the peripheral level of health systems, with poor availability, accessibility and quality;

Acknowledging the need for efficient diagnostic and laboratory systems as part of health systems;

¹ Strengthening Public Health Laboratories. WHO Regional Office for Africa: A Critical Need For Disease Control. <https://www.afro.who.int/sites/default/files/sessions/resolutions/AFR-RC58-6.pdf>, accessed 4 January 2023.

² <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/the-maputo-declaration-on-strengthening-of-laboratory-systems>

³ apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA76/A76_R5-en.pdf

⁴ [https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736\(21\)00673-5.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(21)00673-5.pdf)

Cognizant that Member States face challenges in structuring and operationalizing diagnostic systems and guaranteeing the resources necessary for their functioning and sustainability,

1. ADOPTS the Regional strategy on diagnostic and laboratory services and systems, 2023–2032 for the African Region;
2. URGES Member States:
 - (a) to increase political commitment and leadership to promote the strategy, including by enacting legislation and establishing regulatory frameworks to enable strengthened laboratory and diagnostic services in the Region;
 - (b) to mobilize domestic and external resources and ensure sustainable financing to support the implementation of the strategy as an integral part of the national health plan;
 - (c) to review and adapt the existing structures, systems, policies and strategic plans for quality diagnostic and laboratory services networks and systems at national and subnational levels;
 - (d) to expand laboratory and imaging services to subnational levels and ensure minimal laboratory tests at first-level and remote health facilities utilizing existing and new technologies;
 - (e) to commit resources and develop an appropriate and adequately skilled health workforce to operationalize essential diagnostic services at all levels of the health system;
 - (f) to invest and ensure logistics and maintenance of equipment by trained technical personnel;
 - (g) to engage private sector laboratories and their networks in all aspects relating to diagnostic and laboratory services;
 - (h) to establish a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to collect and capture data annually on the existing diagnostic and laboratory services using and adapting the existing tools in line with the information management system structure;
 - (i) to promote implementation of the regional and global laboratory and diagnostic frameworks and resolutions;
3. URGES WHO and partners:
 - (a) to disseminate policy guidance, technical guidelines, and review resolutions and recommendations to support implementation of the strategy;
 - (b) to provide support to Member States to develop evidence-based policies and operational plans that are regularly monitored and evaluated;
 - (c) to support Member States with technical advice on equipment maintenance training opportunities for improving health diagnostic services;
 - (d) to promote synergy and alignment with International Health Regulations (2005) core capacity building and primary health care implementation with and between partners;
 - (e) to promote collaboration between key regional and international partners for increased financing, greater capacity strengthening, and concurrence on initiatives to achieve maximal impact.