The Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) conducted performance review and planning meeting from Dec. 24-25, 2015 at Global hotel, Addis Ababa.

The meeting was opened by the welcoming speech of Dr. Alemayehu Mekonnen, Executive Director of EPHA, who explained the significance of reviewing the performance of both project and non-project activities.

In his remarks, Dr. Alemayehu highlighted the importance of working together in drawing up the annual plan of the Association as well.

Ato Semegnew Mengestu, Deputy Executive Director of EPHA, on his part pointed out the need to discuss and review the achievements as per the plan; identify the strengths, limitations and challenges.

Ato Semegnew also stated that the meeting aimed at sharing experiences and making some brainstorming towards the development of the 2016 annual plan.

He further acknowledged the U.S Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Packard and others who provided technical and financial support for the Association. He also extended his sincere thanks to FMoH, all EPHA secretariat staff and chapter offices for creating conducive environment to the EPHA performance and their best achievements respectively.

During the course of the two-day performance review and planning meeting, the various departments and units of the EPHA’s secretariat presented their 9 months’ performance and annual plan for 2016.

Participants thoroughly discussed on the achievements and the annual plan. It was also enriched with discussions and comments, which will be incorporated before the plan is finalized.

Secretariat staff and partners of the EPHA representatives from Packard Foundation and EPHLA, various Universities, and chapter focal persons attended the two days long performance review and planning meeting.
The Ethiopia Field Epidemiology Training Program (EFETP) has warmly welcomed the 7th cohort of residents at a reception held on November 2, 2015 at the Addis Ababa University’s School of Public Health, Zewditu campus.

A round introduction of the new residents, program coordinators and representatives was made by Dr. Adamu Addissie, academic coordinator for the EFETP from Addis Ababa University.

Representatives of SPH-AAU, FMoH, CDC-Ethiopia and EPHA have also delivered opening remarks.

In his opening Speech, Dr. Wakgari Deressa, Dean of School of Public Health (SPH), welcomed the residents and spoke at length about the two-year postgraduate program.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Tatek Anbessie, Program Director at FMoH emphasized on the contribution of the training in managing different public health emergencies in Ethiopia and especially combating the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. He added that, the FMoH is expanding the program to other seven Universities. The expansion includes Field Laboratory track launching in one of these Universities.

He also touched on the relevance of the training in bringing to fruition the new Health Sector Transformation Plan /HSTP/ launched by the FMoH.

Dr. Alemayehu Mekonnen, Executive Director of EPHA, welcomed the residents once again and urged them to exert maximum efforts to shoulder a huge responsibility in strengthening surveillance and public health emergencies management. He also reaffirmed that EPHA is highly motivated to support this program to ensure quality and efficiency.

A representative from CDC-Ethiopia, Dr. Tekeste Kebede, said on his part that CDC-Ethiopia is committed to make all possible efforts to support the program to the best of its level.

At the end of the Program, specific orientation was delivered by the Program coordinators from FMoH, AAU-SPH, EPHA and CDC. Dr. Zegeye Hailemariam, Dr. Adamu Addissie, Dr. Alemayehu Bekele and Dr. Lucy Boulager respectively.

A total of 17 residents were enrolled from Oromia, Amhara, SNNPR Benishangul-Gumuz regions and the Federal Police Hospital.

EFETP is aimed at edifying professionals, who are responsible for strengthening the Ethiopian public health emergency management system through the employment of epidemic investigation, emergency response and surveillance. Since the launch of the program in 2009, a total of 81 health professionals have been graduated and deployed back to their duty stations.
EPHA Conducts Health Research Methods and Ethics Training

The Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) conducted Health Research Methods and Ethics Training from October 12-21, 2015 at Bahir Dar town.

Ato Semegnew Mengistu, Deputy Executive Director of EPHA, warmly welcomed the participants. The training was then officially opened by Ato Wondimu Gebeyehu, head of Regional Health Research and Laboratory at the Amhara Region Health Bureau, Bahir Dar.

In his keynote address, Ato Semegnew Mengistu stressed that EPHA, as part of its project activity, is committed to stimulate scientific research in the country.

To this end, EPHA has contributed a lot in building capacities and competencies of its professional members. It has also actively participated in the development of curricula and guidelines for the entire nation.

Nineteen health professionals drawn from different universities and health sectors including Semera, Debretabor, Axum, and Benishangul Universities, Tseda Health Science College, Saint Paul Millinium Medical College, zonal health departments and health facilities in the stated regions have attended the training. Six of the trainees were female.

About 500 members of EPHA have been trained in health research methods and ethics since the training program was launched in 2006.

“EPHA has been providing health research methods and ethics training with the objective of improving the understanding and skills of researchers and practitioners in designing and conducting operational research at different levels,” he added.

The training was designed to enable health professionals to improve their capabilities in research designing, planning and implementation. It was also meant to give an opportunity for trainees to develop a research proposal as part of it.

In his closing speech Ato Ayelegn Mulualem, Head of the Amhara Regional Health Bureau stated that EPHA has been engaged in areas of capacity building, promoting professional standards, advocating health issues and advancing the conduct of researches in public health which are all helpful in strengthening the public health system of the country.
January 2016

Role Model

Professor Mesganaw Fantahun

Our role model guest today is Professor Mesganaw Fantahun Afework

Professor Mesganaw graduated as a Medical Doctor in 1985 from Kalinin Medical Institute of the then USSR, in 1992 and later received his Master’s degree in Public Health from AAU. In 2008, he did his PhD in Epidemiology and Public Health in the University of Umea in Sweden. He is now a professor of Public Health with focus on Reproductive Health and Maternal and Child Health.

In 2009, on the 20th Annual Conference of EPHA, he received a Gold Medal award from the Ethiopian Public Health Association, and was hailed as Senior Public Health Researcher. In 2014, he also received the Last-ten-years-Best-Researcher Award from College of Health Sciences, Addis Ababa University.

Felege Tena: Dear Prof Mesganaw, thank you for being our role model guest

Prof. Thank you for giving me this chance.

Felege Tena: Would you please tell us about your background?

Prof. I was born and brought up in Gondar town. In my school days, I used to be one of the best performing students and scored the highest grade among my batch of students in the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate Exam (ESLCE) in the then Halie Sellassie I Secondary School. I then joined the HSI University (now, AAU) which was closed for the “Ediget Behibret Zemecha” (Campaign for Development through Cooperation) in the same year. After the “Zemecha” (campaign), I finished the Freshman Program and left the University for a temporary duty as a high school teacher. I continued my higher education in Russia after a year and a half.

Felege Tena: Today you’ve become a role model for many of us. Who are the right people behind you who worked hard to make your success a reality?

Prof. My parents early teachings, which I tried to make my values throughout my life, on being honest, humble (let others speak about you), careful listener, fair, and helping others have been very instrumental in shaping my life. Any failure in abiding by the values, however, is my sole responsibility. I was also lucky to have great and supportive friends, teachers, family and relatives... It will be too long to list all who have contributed and I defer doing so, in order to avoid grave omissions. In addition, belonging to a generation that encountered a lot of challenges has given me a lot of strength.

A key reflection of these values is decision to return and serve my country and people after being trained several times abroad, in spite of better potential “personal privileges”. This is not to say that I have low regard for people who have left the country, but contribute in many ways to its development.

Felege Tena: How do you describe your professional disposition in the workplace?

Prof. Having had started work as a short-term, high school teacher, I was later engaged in the training and production of health professionals of different types, conducting relevant research and services for more than two decades and a half.
In my endeavours, I tried to give priorities to outputs and contributions to the society, rather than financial and other benefits.

As a trainer, I delivered a number of courses in Reproductive Health (Maternal and Child Health), covered other public health courses when needed, and formally advised over 90 MPH, many more undergraduates and over 15 PhD students. Moreover, I helped many students and colleagues in conducting research and undertaking important public health projects, without being a formal advisor. Oftentimes, I worked with whole batches of students as an informal advisor. In trying to encourage, particularly junior colleagues and students, I try to facilitate authorship of articles for others, although I may have the greatest inputs. I find pleasure in seeing my junior colleagues grow and develop by sharing whatever I have, while trying to maintain fairness in my actions.

I support national universities other than the one I am assigned to, by giving graduate courses and advising students in several universities including Gondar, Mekelle and Bahir Dar universities, and served as assessor or external examiner in many of the national universities.

A key achievement is leading the production of a unique text book which has filled major gaps in training research and managing health services: entitled *Text Book of Reproductive and Child Health with Focus on Ethiopia and other Developing Countries, 2014.*

Felege tena: You carried out various research efforts in the area of reproductive health and also have wide range of publications. Could you please highlight some of them?

Prof: Together with colleagues and independently, I have published over a hundred articles in national and international reputable journals. These are available from the different journals or websites or can be obtained on request. I have also produced a large number of important research (unpublished) outputs and many studies have been presented in conferences and seminars.

To highlight some:

- Burden of Diseases and Health Service Utilization for the Amhara Region (Amhara National Regional Health Bureau, Ethiopia).
- Assessment of Nutritional status of children in drought affected areas of North Gondar for North Gondar Zonal Health Department.
- Youth attitude and behaviour on family planning and HIV/AIDS for the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia
- KAP surveys of youth, women of reproductive age groups and street children on HIV/AIDS for Children AID Ethiopia

(EPHA, AAU, JHU).
Mesganaw Fantahun, Yemane Berhane and Amy Tsui (editors). More than 35 experts participated in the production of the book.
Felege-Tena: How do you express your contribution for the development of public health in Ethiopia?

In addition to the points mentioned above, I have played significant roles in promoting Maternal and Child Health (reproductive health), and public health in general, in relevant government organizations (particularly the FMOH, RHBs), International organizations (WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF), NGOs, professional associations and associations of volunteers. I have served EPHA in many capacities including executive board member, editorial board member, advisory board member, different committees and as leader of different projects.

I have been contributing to the development of public health in all possible ways. Some of them are:

- National Neonatal Tetanus Risk Assessment for WHO/UNICEF and MoH (Ethiopia)
- Lead researcher of the National study of Obstetric Fistula in Ethiopia (Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital)
- Measles Case Fatality Survey in Ethiopia. Team leader of international and national consultants for WHO and MoH (Ethiopia).
- Co-author “Survey of Abortion in Hospitals in Ethiopia” – a core document the improvement of women’s health services. Ethiopian Society of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (ESOG)
- Baseline and monitoring survey of immunization of children and women in CORE Group partners implementation pastoralist and semi pastoralist areas.

Several studies of national importance on “Quality of Reproductive Health Services” are being in collaboration with associations and universities.

- First Research and Publications Officer of Gondar College of Medical Sciences, now Gondar University (1996 - 1998)
- Leader of the Dabat Rural Health Project (1998-2000) at establishment, at the University of Gondar. It was later known as Dabat Health and Demographic Surveillance Site and now Dabat Research Centre. Played a key role to sustain the centre through the SAKAKAO Global Research and Innovative Training award in 2000.
- Established the first Research Bulletin for the Gondar College of Medical Sciences-(Now Gondar University), which has now grown into a journal (Ethiopian Journal of Biomedical and Health Sciences).
- Coordinator (co-principal investigator) of the Butajira Rural Health Program (2006-2009), the oldest Health and Demographic Surveillance in Ethiopia and a founder of INDEPTH. Developed a proposal for sustaining the Program and worked on expansion of similar surveillance sites in the country to improve representativeness of data for the country.
- Principal Investigator of the “Strengthening Graduate Training and Research in Reproductive Health Project”, SPH/AAU and Gates Institute/Bloomberg School of Public Health/JHU, collaborative project. Played a major role in establishing a “National Advisory Group” for reproductive health and related research, training and service.
- Former member of the Ethical Review Board- Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital
- Chair of the EPHA Training and Research Advisory Group (TRAG)
- Member of the task force that prepared the “Technical and procedural guidelines of safe abortion services” in Ethiopia
- Lead in preparation of tools and manuals for establishing causes of death by verbal autopsy in sentinel sites in Ethiopia. (CSA and Ministry of Health)
- Member of the Governing Board of University of Gondar (2009 – 2012).
- Consultant for Strategic Plan development for Prevention of Obstetric Fistula in Ethiopia.
- Lead consultant for “Tools for Planning, Implementation and Monitoring Adolescent and Youth Friendly Service Standards and Integration of Adolescent and Youth Friendly Reproductive Health Services in the health delivery system” (FMOH, WHO, UNFPA, Other partners)
- Lead consultant for the preparation of “Maternal and New born Health Road Map” for the Federal Ministry of Health of Ethiopia and WHO.
- Lead consultant for the preparation of the revised “National Reproductive Health Strategy” (FMOH, WHO)
- Editor: Treatment Guidelines for Tikur Anbessa Teaching Hospital.
- Lead consultant for the Federal Ministry of Health in collaboration with UNFPA Ethiopia “Roadmap in midwifery education and service quality in Ethiopia, 2016-2025”
- Trainer on fundamentals of monitoring and evaluation for WHO/Ethiopia program officers.
- Trainer on “Health Promotion” to process owners of disease
Nutrition

Global Nutrition Targets 2025: Info-graphics

Highlighting the key messages and recommended actions

Anemia: is a condition in which the number of red blood cells or their oxygen-carrying capacity is insufficient to meet physiologic needs, which vary by age, sex, altitude, smoking, and pregnancy status.

Iron deficiency is thought to be the most common cause of anemia globally, although other conditions, such as folate, vitamin B12 and vitamin A deficiencies, chronic inflammation, parasitic infections, and inherited disorders can all cause anemia.

In its severe form, it is associated with fatigue, weakness, dizziness and drowsiness. Pregnant women and children are particularly vulnerable.

Anemia increases the risk of adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes

Breastfeeding: is the normal way of providing young infants with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development. Virtually all mothers can breastfeed, provided they have accurate information, and the support of their family, the health care system and society at large.

Colostrum, the yellowish, sticky breast milk produced at the end of pregnancy, is recommended by WHO as the perfect food for the newborn, and feeding should be initiated within the first hour after birth.

Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended up to 6 months of age, with continued breastfeeding along with appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age or beyond.

Exclusive breastfeeding provides babies the perfect nutrition.

Stunting: Promoting healthy growth and preventing childhood stunting

Stunting is a largely irreversible outcome of inadequate nutrition.

Con’t...8
January 2016

STUNTING | THE GOAL
By 2025, reduce by 40% the number of children aged under 5 years who are stunted

WHY IT MATTERS
- Stunting is a largely invisible, but inevitable consequence of inadequate nutrition and repeated bouts of infection during the first 1,000 days of life
- Stunting has long-term effects, including: Diminished cognition and physical development, reduced production capacity and poor health

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
- Scale up prevention
  - Improve the identification, measurement and understanding of stunting
  - Develop evidence for effective prevention strategies
- Maternal nutrition
  - Improve the nutrition of women of reproductive age
- Support breastfeeding
  - Support optimal breastfeeding practices
- Community support
  - Provide community-based strategies to prevent infection-related causes of stunting

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM
- Globally, approximately 162 million children under the age of 5 years are stunted
- 162 million children
- Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia
- 5 are stunted children under 5
- 39% of all births worldwide are low birth weight

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT | THE GOAL
By 2025, achieve a 30% reduction in low birth weight

WHY IT MATTERS
- Low birth weight is a major predictor of perinatal mortality and morbidity

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
- Integrated health care
  - Fully integrate pregnancy care with appropriate maternal and post-natal care, and nutritional care for preterm and small for gestational age infants
- Adolescent girls
  - Improve maternal nutritional behaviour with adolescent girls
- Community support
  - Strengthen community-based packages of care

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM
- Globally, approximately 162 million children under the age of 5 years are stunted
- Low birth weight accounts for up to 2/3 of all deaths annually
- 42 million children

OVERWEIGHT | THE GOAL
By 2025, reduce and maintain childhood overweight to less than 5%

WHY IT MATTERS
- Childhood overweight is increasing in all regions of the world

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
- Support healthy diets
  - Develop coherent public policies to ensure healthy diets throughout the life-course
- Dietary guidelines
  - Authoritative food-based dietary guidelines to improve nutrition in the population
- Social norms
  - Improve community understanding of nutrition and healthy dietary practices

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM
- Globally, approximately 162 million children under the age of 5 years are stunted
- 52 million children under 5 are moderately or severely stunted

Source: www.who.int
EPHA Forms New Subchapters in Different Regions

The Ethiopian Public Health Association /EPHA/ has formed subchapters from October 25 to November 14, 2015 in different regions. The newly formed subchapters at zonal and woreda levels include Hawassa, Yirgalem, Aleta Chuko, Yirgachefe, Hageremariam, Yabello, Mega, Moyalle, Wolita Sodo, Arbaminch, Gidolle, Konsso and Jinka.

Members Affairs and Networking Department of EPHA has assigned focal persons for the 26 institutions for continuous promotional activities and facilitating the registration of new members.

During the event the overall activities of EPHA were discussed. A total of 1,500 people drawn from Universities, hospitals, zonal and woreda health departments have attended the discussion sessions.

EPHA Conducts Immunization in Practice (IIP) Training in Oromia and Gambella Regions

The Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) conducted immunization in practice training from January 13th -17th, 2016 in Oromia and Gambella Regions, Woliso, and Ambo Town respectively.

The objective of the training was to equip selected health professionals and Health extension workers in two Regions with basic immunization knowledge, techniques and procedures.

It also aims at increasing the low EPI coverage of the region caused by knowledge and skill gap. During the course of the five-day training, a number of exercises and group work were given to maintain interactive teaching and learning process. In addition, pre- and post-tests were incorporated to evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

Different immunization equipment, supplies and standard IIP modules were used for the program.

About 185 professionals have been trained and 15 trainers provided the training.
prevention and health promotion, process owners of public relations, and health promotion officers from regional health bureaus and the Federal Ministry of Health of Ethiopia (WHO,FMOH).

- Lead consultant: MI-Ethiopia Community-Based Maternal and Neonatal Health Project in Afar Region
- National Principal Investigator of the EPHA/WHO international multi country collaborative research project “Preventing unsafe Abortion: How well do community health workers assess eligibility and follow-up care for early medical abortion”. Several articles are being published internationally and nationally.

Felege Tena: We would like to thank you again for the time you have dedicated to us to answer these questions.

Prof. Thank you for your consideration!

Establishing the “Dabat Health Project” 1997.

Disclaimer:

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Message of Condolence

The Late Dr. Hailu Yeneneh
1947 - 2015

EPHA is deeply shocked and saddened by the passing away of the Ethiopian Public Health Association /EPHA/ active member Dr. Hailu Yeneneh, a pioneer and dedicated professional in the area of Public Health. His impact on the fields of researches will continue to be felt many years. Dr. Hailu has contributed a lot in the development of public health in Ethiopia. He was an awardee of the EPHA senior public health research award in 2010.

He was kept active in serving at EPHA General Assembly as a secretary until his last time.

With this condolence message, EPHA would like to express its deepest sympathy to his family members, friends, colleagues and all those who know him closely. Dr Hailu was married and a father of two. He will be missed by all of us. We hope that he will take a peaceful eternal life.
Partial view of the General Assemble (GA) representative meeting December 26, 2015