

# About AHS

## **Background:**

Sudan is a big country containing 15 states. The majority of population (69%) lives in rural areas. Administratively the country is governed by a decentralized federal system. The Sudanese health system in the last decades has been taken as a model by many observers including the international health organizations. Sudan has always been a pioneer in health-care workforce training. The first medical assistants school was established in 1918, first midwifery school in 1921, and Kitchener's school of medicine in 1924.

Nevertheless, during recent years, the statistics taken from strategic health plans showed a huge shortfall in human resources for health in the nursing and midwifery and other allied health cadres , the deficit in the nursing staff was approximated to be around (52.943), and (16.761) for midwives and health visitors, and (32.000) for medical assistants and other paramedics.

In order to minimize the impacts of the above mentioned crises, a remedial step was taken when a historic document known as Sudan Declaration-2001 was signed as a joint initiative between Federal Ministers for Health, Ministry of Higher Education and WHO EMRO Director. This document approval ceremony was honored by the presence of the president of the republic. The recommendations of Sudan declaration concentrate mainly on the possible ways for the promotion of health services through educational programs and training of the nursing, midwifery and allied health cadres.

Sudan Declaration also called for upgrading the qualification of existing allied health workforce to diploma and B.Sc. degrees by the year 2015.

Due to several reasons, Sudan Declaration has witnessed slow implementation. The very few numbers of these cadres who graduated from the available health institutions lead eventually to huge gap and skill mix between the members of the health team; medical doctors versus nurse, midwives and other allied health personnel. These facts forced the Federal Ministry of Health to establish the Academy of Health Sciences (AHS). AHS was designed to having a central headquarter and state branches covering different remote parts of Sudan.

AHS was inaugurated officially on 26th of November 2005, and honored by the presence of the Federal Ministers of Higher Education and of Health besides EMRO Chief Regional Director. It is considered a good response to the Sudan declaration to meet the requirements of the strategic plan in bridging the gap and developing the health services with the acceptable quality.

**Vision:**

To be a unique institute in educating and developing nursing, midwifery and other allied health-care professionals.

**Mission:**

We take it on ourselves to restore and maintain the skill-mix of the health team through scaling up the education and training of high caliber nursing, midwifery and other allied health-care professionals by providing state-of-the-art community-based training programs in collaboration with the different stake holders to address the needs in Sudan and beyond. In a conducive and stimulating academic environment that insures the high standards of the students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

**Values:**

*Excellence and professionalism:* It is committed to the best academic, scientific and professional evidence based training and research. AHS is providing education for free in order to promote nurses, midwifery and allied health disciplines.

*Heritage:* AHS students and the teaching staff are proud to have values being attributed to Sudanese heritage, culture, which based on virtuous ethics, and on the service approach adopted by the Sudan Ministry of Health.

*Creativity:* AHS encourages its candidates to be creative and unique in dealing with the national and international health problems.

*Justice and fairness:* AHS is committed to preserve the academic bases, cultural diversity, the objectivity and equality of opportunity.

*Community Orientation:* AHS contributes to developing sustainable programs oriented towards the health of urban and rural citizens.

*Continuing Education:* AHS is committed to continuing education for health workers to ensure the continuity of the growth and welfare of our society.

**Strategic Objectives:**

1. To achieve the elements of excellence stated in the strategic plan of AHS, which include:
  - a. Strengthening the relationship with national and states ministries of health;
  - b. Developing and revising the curricula;
  - c. Developing and improving the teaching faculty;
  - d. Establishing needs-specific graduate studies;
  - e. Enforcing the decentralization of the educational process;

- f. Producing high caliber graduates, who fit in the 21st century modern hospitals, satisfy the needs of today's health systems and match the advances of the digital age.
2. To bridge the current gap and maintain the skill-mix of the health-care team by providing needs-tailored quality education.
3. To advocate for academy's graduates through career development.

### **Decentralization Policy**

AHS is adopting an effective decentralization policy to manage the 15 state branches more or less like the government, where as each state branch is allied to its State Ministry of Health and border of directors, while the head quarter in Khartoum is allied to the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) and border of directors lead by the undersecretary of FMOH

The function of the head quarters in Khartoum is to develop the strategy and the working plans, assure quality, review and develop curricula, develop teaching faculty and other assisting staff, mobilize resources, raise funds, organize teaching materials like skills labs, libraries, etc. On the other hand the state branches focus mainly on the actual training and day to day education.

### **International relation and stakeholders**

AHS have supported by WHO Sudan and EMRO office as well as other international development agencies.

The Association of Health Professions stake in AHS with FMOH.

### **Educational Philosophy system:**

AHS is adopting an outcome-based approach, insuring the proper innovative dynamicity between the product and process, where "the product defines the education process".

## **Curricula:**

AHS curricula are driven by the outcome based approach using the mixed “SPICES” model of educational strategies in designing and developing Curricula.

The available Curricula have been prepared by specialists in different aspects of Medicine and health sciences from the Federal Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Higher Education and most of which were approved by the WHO in a joined workshop at Gezira University.

To ensure the quality of the educational process, AHS adopts a system of continuous curricular development and review that through the Center of Curricula and Staff development (CCSD).

## **Teaching Staff**

AHS has a full and part time staff recruited from medical doctors, nurses, midwives, and allied health personnel, FMOH qualified Employee are requested to give a percentage of their time to teach at AHS. The required qualification for the lecturers are PhD, MD, MSc, and for other teaching assistants and lab instructors the minimum qualifications are B.Sc and higher postgraduate diploma. They are also as additionally qualified in health professional education. All staff have either completed or are scheduled to take these courses.

One of the CCSD function is to improve the teaching capability of staff members through workshops and courses on new methods of teaching aiming at evidence based education.

## **Quality assurance processes**

AHS is developing a quality assurance processes through standard operating procedure (SOPS) for each activity. AHS is managing to put these systems in place to ensure quality.

### **Supporting Committees:**

Standing Quality and planning Committee.

Standing Curricula Committee.

Standing Committee for Translation, Authoring and Publishing.

### **Language**

The teaching is bilingual Arabic and English languages.

### **Students' selection and programmes**

AHS started effectively in 2007 and since then there are around 16.000 students who study in AHS programmes such as nursing, midwifery and other allied health professions. There are 17 programmes including in addition to the above other allied health programmes like medical assistant, assistant dentist, lab assistant, assistant anesthetist etc.

### **Academic Degrees:**

AHS is accepting students from the Sudanese higher secondary school certificate.

AHS awards the following degrees:

- Technical Diploma equivalent to university qualification after studying six classrooms equivalent to 90 credit hours at least, including theoretical and practical training, 40% to 60% respectively.
- B.Sc. after studying eight semesters equivalent of 120 credit hours; including theoretical and practical training, 40% to 60% respectively.
- Up-grading Old System Cadre: Four semesters equivalent to 60 credit hours; it includes theoretical and practical training, 40% to 60% respectively.

## **Challenges:**

- 1- Quality assurance balancing between quality and quantity.
- 2- Decentralization of the educational process, expansion in states.
- 3- Curriculum design and development (review/new cadres).
- 4- Staff development and continuous training.
- 5- Finance and fund raising.
- 6- External Accreditation.

## **The way forward:**

- To develop a framework and pathway for clinical education based on competencies.
- To develop and maintain higher level of practice based on clinical competence, accountability and protecting the public from unsafe practice following the knowledge updates.
- To develop a monitoring system that evaluates every now and then the clinical practice and clinical competence supported and assessed by academically approved well trained teaching staff.
- To develop a concrete plan liaising with other to have the graduate candidates being employed and well distributed.
- To develop a concrete applicable system of continuous training for the graduated candidates.
- To collaborate with other centers with national universities working together to achieve the health goals
- To collaborate with other centers abroad and to be exposed to their experiences.