

**REPORT ON 4<sup>TH</sup> ASPHA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) HELD ON 28<sup>TH</sup>**  
**SEPTEMBER, 2013 AT THE CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION**  
**CENTER, CAPE TOWN**

**INTRODUCTION**

The 4<sup>th</sup> AGM of ASPHA was held in Cape Town, South Africa on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2013 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. The meeting brought together eighteen delegates from five different countries (Ghana, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Botswana, South Africa and Kenya).

The meeting started at 9:05am with self-introduction by delegates. This was followed by a welcome address by the President of ASPHA (Prof. Fred Binka). The President in his address enumerated some of the commitments that were made at the 3rd AGM in Accra.

**REPORTS**

**Launch of African Federation of Public Health Associations (AFPHA)**

Dr. Flavia Senkubuge gave the report on the launch. She explained how students were given a platform to either just participate or present papers. It was then suggested that ASPHA can collaborate with AFPHA and have its meetings together so ASPHA members could get the chance to participate and also present papers. AFPHA is a body for practitioners whiles ASPHA is for trainers.

**Advocacy & Fundraising Committee**

Prof. Binka indicated that fundraising has been a challenge. He then suggested that we develop a concrete proposal that can attract funding from donor agencies.

**Education Committee**

Prof. David Coetzee indicated that the response from members after Dr. Leslie London forwarded the report on the general core competencies towards standardization had been poor. The same can be said on the exchange of students. An interactive ASPHA website should be set up to link to AFPHA and PHASA either through Google or by proprietary means through Microsoft. ASPHA should also have a Facebook account, Twitter and a Blog.

## **Report from Country Coordinators**

**South Africa:** This was presented by Dr. Flavia Senkubuge. She informed the delegates that the University of Pretoria has been partnering with the University of Nairobi to exchange external examiners. The difficulty they face was being recognized by the University authorities to be adequately remunerated for their service, travel and accommodation costs. It was also noted that University of Cape Town and Wits have established links with some African Universities to exchange external examiners.

**Botswana:** Prof. Matchaba-Hove indicated that the University of Botswana carried out a needs assessment of public health before setting up the School which was established last year. In Botswana, the lack of Public Health personnel especially at the senior level was huge and it would be useful to have MPH and later PhD. It currently has only five (5) MPH students and hopes to add another five.

Regarding the issue of exchanging examiners, the School was very thin on the ground with two departments (Department of Public Health and Department of Occupational and Environmental Health) and few academic staff. The Faculty can therefore not send them out. He noted that they would find the database of Professionals being developed very useful since they could fall on it for external examiners and also lecturers to teach.

They were currently developing a curriculum for MPH and were also advocating for post graduate diploma and certificate courses that could be incorporated into the MPH curriculum. Furthermore, they were excited about flexible options of training especially the distance learning MPH program by the University of Western Cape and would want to introduce that.

It was again noted that ASPHA had been able to facilitate a lot of links for the University of Botswana with other Schools of Public Health in Africa which have provided tremendous support to their recent Public Health School. This linkage from ASPHA had also helped two (2) Universities in Nigeria to set up two specialist programs in South Africa. It was suggested that we underscore these achievements when writing funding proposals.

**Democratic Republic of Congo:** Dr. Desire Mashinda indicated that they have three Public Health Schools which train Public Health Practitioners in his country.

## **ELECTION OF NEW EXECUTIVES**

It was proposed that the old executives be retained, and this was approved by the House.

## **ACTION POINTS**

1. Need to involve the media in our activities
2. Need to engage with Student Associations and give them a voice in shaping the agenda
3. Develop Draft Core competencies
  - a) Basic outline
  - b) First draft by end of October 2013
  - c) Final draft before Christmas i.e., 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2013
4. ASPHA meetings should be held to coincide with AFPHA meetings
5. Endorsed participation in the Global Federation
6. Student groups to participate in ASPHA
7. Mapping of Public Health graduates
8. Develop a database of all lecturers in our member institutions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The AGM came to a close at 5:00pm followed by a special dinner for the delegates at the Seafood Restaurant.