

## **AGENDA ITEM 13.8-DRAFT GLOBAL TRADITIONAL MEDICINE STRATEGY (2025-2034)**

Zimbabwe is honoured to deliver a statement on behalf of the 47 Member States of the WHO Africa Region on the proposed Draft Global Traditional Medicine Strategy (2025-2034).

The WHO African Region welcomes the Draft Global Traditional Medicine Strategy (2025-2034). Our region has actively participated in the development of the new global traditional medicine strategy through a regional consultation held from June to July 2024. The region is committed to promoting traditional medicine and acknowledges the significant contribution of traditional medicine to healthcare systems worldwide.

The Africa Region endorses the Draft Global Traditional Medicine Strategy, and hopes it will contribute significantly to achieving universal health coverage, improving health outcomes and advancing sustainable development.

The Africa Region has developed a plan of action for the Africa Union's third decade of traditional medicine and its corresponding monitoring and evaluation framework for the period 2025–2034. The plan outlines nine key objectives, including accelerating the implementation of national traditional medicine policies, promoting research and development, and integrating traditional medicine into health systems.

While the above initiatives demonstrate the Africa Region's commitment to promoting traditional medicine, the region is still confronted with many challenges including;

- 1) Mistrust among stakeholders
- 2) Scarcity of research and data in national health systems
- 3) Inadequate financing
- 4) Weak regulatory mechanisms
- 5) Deficient education and training – Education and training opportunities for traditional medicine providers remain limited, alongside weak regulation of their practices.
- 6) Under recognition of traditional health practitioners
- 7) Limited safety monitoring capacity

Member States are encouraged to establish comprehensive regulatory frameworks for traditional medicine. Such frameworks should include:

- **Quality Control:** Standards for the cultivation, harvesting, and processing of medicinal plants.
- **Efficacy Assessment:** Protocols for the scientific evaluation of traditional remedies.
- **Safety Monitoring:** Systems for adverse event reporting and pharmacovigilance.

We call upon Member States, international partners, and stakeholders to support the implementation of the global traditional medicine strategy and the regional plan of action. The Africa Region seeks the World Health

Organisation`s assistance in mobilizing resources to support the development of traditional medicine.

The WHO Africa Region reaffirms its commitment to promoting traditional medicine as a vital component of healthcare systems and urge the World Health Organisation to assist the Africa Region in overcoming the challenges in implementing the strategy.

I thank you.