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**African Union Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal,
Newborn and Child Mortality (CARMMA)**

Continental CARMMA Commemoration in the Republic of Ghana
12-18 November 2017

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND

The Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) is a major initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC) aimed at promoting and advocating for renewed and intensified implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action for Reduction of Maternal, Newborn and Child Mortality in the Africa Region. The Campaign was launched in May 2009 under the theme: **“Africa Cares: No Woman should Die while Giving Life”**.

The main objective of the campaign is to accelerate the availability and use of universally accessible quality health services including those related to sexual and reproductive health, that are critical to the reduction of maternal and child mortality. The focus is not to develop more strategies and plans but rather to ensure coordinated and effective application of existing plans and strategies.

Since its inception in 2009, 47 African Union Member States have launched and successfully domesticated the campaign with others on track to do so. The countries have not only launched the campaign but have implemented activities aimed at improving political commitment and leadership for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (RMNCH). The campaign has achieved a lot in improving reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health including increased allocation of resources for health generally and RMNCH specifically.

Despite the tremendous decline in child and maternal mortality, the continent fell short of the required rate of decline to achieve MDG 4 and 5 targets by 2013. A number of African countries made firm progress and managed to attain the MDG 4 and 5 targets. However, much still need to be done as over 70% of women and children continue to die from preventable causes and indicators for adolescent reproductive health are very poor. RMNCH is unfinished business requiring renewed focus, vigour, and determination in the post-2015 period. Alongside this, there should be renewed efforts and attention to putting in place strong accountability mechanisms to end preventable maternal and child deaths, address health system challenges as well as sociocultural barriers to health. In addition, ownership of the bold and ambitious Africa-wide aspirations in Agenda 2063 is critical for Africa to determine its own destiny in the pursuit of attaining a healthy and well-nourished citizens of Africa.

As a result of the Executive Council Decision EX.CL/662(XIX) that mandated the AU Commission in collaboration with Member States to commemorate Annual CARMMA Week in November every year, the Commission has set aside, 14-17 November 2017 to mark the event in the Republic of Ghana. As part of this year's event, the Commission is delighted to launch the CARMMA Evaluation Report, nine years the campaign was first instituted by African States. The CARMMA evaluation report sought to determine the impact and sustainability of the campaign. In addition, the evaluation was intended to determine how the campaign should move forward within context of Agenda 2063 with particular reference to Aspiration Six which calls an “Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential offered by African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children” the SDGs, UN

Secretary General's Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' health and other global initiatives on maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health.

Furthermore, the event in Ghana is part of the African Union's commitment to acknowledging individuals, communities, organizations, and governments that continue to make remarkable efforts to ensure that Africa's mothers and children survive and thrive to reach their full potential, the Commission is delighted to recognize the leadership and tremendous efforts of the Republic of Ghana to improve maternal and child health outcomes and promote the welfare of women and children. Also, , the Commission also acknowledges the pivotal role being played by the President of Ghana as co-chair of the UN Secretary-General's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Advocates.

The Commission is also pleased and proud that as co-chair, President Akufo-Addo is working with his fellow Advocates to promote the SDGs as part of an ambitious and transformative global development agenda with specific reference to its Aspiration three that calls for ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. In particular, the SDG Advocates promote the universal character of the SDGs, including their commitment to leave no one behind in order to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and promote the engagement of new stakeholders in the implementation and financing of the SDGs; to encourage partnerships with governments, civil society and the private sector to share knowledge and resources; and to raise awareness for the integrated nature of the SDGs.

It is in view of the above, the Commission in collaboration with Government of Ghana are organizing the 2017 Annual Continental Commemoration of CARMMA in a twin events in Kumasi and Accra, respectively. A colloquium is planned for the event in Kumasi, which will bring together various stakeholders including CSOs, academics, media as NGOs to discuss the maternal and health issues on the continent under the topic ***“Adding MNCH on the Health Agenda in Africa- How Should Africa Proceed?”***. At the main event in the Accra, President will launch the CARMMA Evaluation Report on the campaign, nine year since was first instituted by African Heads of State and Government. Due to the increasing attention by the African First Ladies to maternal, child and adolescent issues, the event will also be graced by First Lady Ghana, Government Ministers and relevant government functionaries.

2. OBJECTIVES

The event will bring together Member States to share experiences in maternal, newborn and child health and chart the way forward to end preventable maternal, child and adolescent deaths by 2030.

Specifically, the event will:

- a) Launch of the CARMMA evaluation report;
- b) Launch and popularization of AU Health Policy Documents: Africa Health Strategy 2016-2030), Maputo Plan of Action (2016-2030), Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy (2016-25)
- c) Celebrate the progress in the implementation of CARMMA in Ghana;
- d) Share experience on Maternal, Newborn and Child and Adolescent Health issues among a diversity of high level state and non-state actors;
- e) Showcase and celebrate country achievements in reducing maternal, newborn child and adolescent deaths; and
- f) Champion for the prioritization of MNCAH and SRHR in the Sustainable Development period, and first 10 years implementation of Agenda 2063

3. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The following are the expected outputs from the week long commemoration:

- i. CARMMA Evaluation Report Launched
- ii. Increased awareness and enhanced political commitment and leadership on ending preventable maternal and child deaths;
- iii. Increased partnerships, commitment and involvement of a variety of stakeholders to support CARMMA activities in Ghana;
- iv. Prioritization of MNCH and SRHR post 2015 and
- g) AU health policy documents popularized which includes; Africa Health Strategy 2016-2030), Maputo Plan of Action (2016-2030), Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy (2016-25)
- v.

4. DATES AND VENUE

The national launch of CARMMA and the high level event to commemorate CARMMA Week will take place from **12-18 November 2017** in Kumasi and Accra in Ghana.

5. PARTICIPANTS

The celebrations will be attended by African First Ladies and high level government officials from neighbouring States .the African Union Commission leadership, representatives of the Governments of the United Statesand , Canada, UN Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, and other invited guests will also attend the event.

6. LOGISTICS AND LANGUAGE

The Republic of Ghana, African Union Commission and partners will meet the conference costs related to the commemoration. Partners will meet the costs associated with the participation of invited delegates from Member States. Invited delegates are requested to obtain their visa from the embassy of the Republic of Ghana in their respective countries. The event will be conducted in English and French.

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

Additional information could be obtained from the following:

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