



## **Are Data Informing Public Health Action?**

### ASLM2021 Roundtable 3

#### **Co-conveners**

- **Dr Mohammed Abdolaziz**, Africa CDC
- **Dr Abdourahmane Sow**, WAHO

#### **Panelists**

- **Elmarie Claasen**, Health Information System South Africa
- **Karl Schenkel**, World Health Organization
- **Dr Awoke Temesgen**, Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME)
- **Deepak Batra**, IQVIA
- **Marianne Holm**, International Vaccine Institute (IVI), Seoul
- **Andreas Gilsdorf**, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

#### **Summary**

Accurate and timely public health data is necessary for evidence-based decision making and public health action, including understanding the performance of country programmes, identifying public health gaps, and directing resources to where they are needed most to improve health and save lives. This cannot be overemphasized during public health emergencies as it is even more pertinent to improve the uptake of reliable data to drive strategic health action. However, too many countries still lack both the infrastructure to routinely gather health data and the analytical capacity to use these data for effective health actions in routine or emergency situations. In addition, given the absence of a functional coordination body (national public health institute or its equivalent) to converge all public health data and serve as a single source of truth, it is even more difficult for some countries to make evidence-based decisions guided by public health data. The lack of digitalization across the different levels of the health system also continues to hinder timely reporting and hence decision-making. Public health action cannot afford to continue shooting blind. There is a need to understand how robust, reliable, and nationally and/or regionally owned health data systems can be established on the continent.

#### **Objectives**

This session will evaluate the utilization of data currently captured and explore the extent to which these data influence decisions and country policies while identifying strategies to improve data uptake. The panelists will bring a 360 perspective of challenges, opportunities and recommendations to use health data for public action in Africa. African and international policymakers, epidemiologists, experts in surveillance, and representatives of companies managing e-data will confront their experiences and opinions.

At the end of the session the participants will understand:

- The concept of data acquisition, warehousing and use in Africa
- The successes and challenges of data digitalization and integration during public health emergencies
- The strategies and best practices to enhance translation of public health data to action
- The opportunities for public-private partnerships to facilitate the timely availability of accurate public health data for disease surveillance.

#### **Session Programme**

- Welcome, introduction and opening remarks
- Moderated question and answer panel discussion
- Summary and closing remarks