

Public health for all... and all for public health!

Public health can be seen as a science and art of preventing disease and promoting health and wellbeing of people through the organized efforts of society [1]. The discipline of public health emerged as a social action to control communicable diseases some two centuries ago [2]. The subsequent scientific advances in the field of microbiology, emergence of new diseases and health problems and the rapidly advancing technology have all shaped the development and maturation of public health of today. Emerging new concepts such as health promotion, lifestyle issues and social dimensions of health are increasingly accepted and demanding public health to be adaptive to cope with changes. Therefore, public health is a cross-cutting field and it is not strange to find a wide range of health and non-health professions engaged in actions contributing to public health ranging from advocacy to the spheres of sophisticated procedures.

During the recent years, the field of public health has gained special focus and interest. With the advent of globalization and increasing complexities of emerging and re-emerging health problems and challenges, public health discipline has strongly come to the forefront of mankind battle against diseases and ill-health. In this highly interconnected world of today, health hazards and events can not be confined to certain borders and they will definitely have global dimensions and implications. This has clearly been shown in issues and events ranging from Avian Influenza to the migration of health professionals. Therefore, public health should aim for all, in the sense of expanding coverage of public health interventions and personnel to reach and serve all populations in urban, rural and remote areas in every country. The simplest form is access of people to basic

needs, preventive services, healthy lifestyles and a minimum package of health care.

Now, 'all for public health' is the real challenge because the critical mass of public health personnel lies at the heart of ensuring effective public health interventions. A need is there now to promote the mentality of appreciating and adopting public health as a wide discipline that is not limited to people specialized professionally in public health or having medical or health background. Public health workforce is broadly defined to include all those engaged during a significant part of their time in work that creates the conditions within which people are going to be healthy [3]. In this sense, graduates from different backgrounds and activists in the society can be regarded as part of the public health workforce. Public health leaders should attend to this and should demonstrate leadership and advocacy to mobilize the required human resource for public health. It is high time for different health professions in developing countries to come together and spearhead the movement towards establishing the broad alliance for public health.

In Sudan, we are planning to launch the Sudanese Public Health Association as a network to bring together different bodies in the field in order to forge a campaign for public health advocacy, awareness and eventually strategic and sustainable development of the field to exercise its leadership role in ensuring the health of the nation.

Elsheikh Badr