

## SUMMARY

### **1. Innovative idea to be carried out?**

In recent years research has shown that e-learning is faster, more cost-effective, more flexible, interactive and more efficient than residential education programmes. However, most of these experiences come from the developed world. Not much is known yet about the effectiveness of e-learning in countries like Kenya, where connectivity is low and where human resources and IT skills are limited. Since 2005 AMREF, in cooperation with several public and private partners, is implementing an e-learning programme for upgrading nurses in Kenya. Despite many successes in this programme, AMREF and the programme partners are also facing some challenges, which are closely related to the context of a developing country. AMREF therefore decided to set up the AMREF Virtual Nursing School, a laboratory in which AMREF and its partners will experiment and test new e-learning tools for nursing education to find solutions to the faced challenges.

The AMREF Virtual Nursing School is one of the 27 nursing schools where nurses are upgraded to Registered Community Health Nurses. The 100 nurses in the Virtual Nursing School will not just follow the regular e-learning programme, but in their educational programme they will use and test new and innovative methods. By doing so AMREF will identify innovative solutions to the challenges related to nursing education in a low income country. The nurses in the Virtual Nursing School will be closely followed and good practices and lessons learned will be systematically documented. Based on the experiences and lessons learned, AMREF will further develop the innovative methods and will replicate it to other nursing schools.

### **2. Insights and results given regarding innovation**

With this project AMREF expects to contribute to expanded access of nursing education to nurses and health workers across Africa. This will enhance the capacity of health centres and hospitals where nurses have been upgraded and will ultimately lead to improved health care in these institutions. At the same time AMREF will generate knowledge and evidence, which will be shared nationally and internationally. This will guide future e-learning implementers on effective learning programs, costs, logistics, infrastructure, policies and implementation processes and will contribute to improved e-learning policy and practices in Kenya and other low income countries. The evidence will also be used to influence governmental policies and practices and will serve as valuable input to global discussions on how to influence and solve the crisis in health human resources in Africa.

In this project AMREF in Kenya closely works together with the Nursing Council of Kenya, Accenture (a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company), the Ministry of Health in Kenya, public training schools (Kenya Medical Training Colleges) and other private and faith based training schools. In this project AMREF will link up with other ICT for development organisations and will provide and utilize information through communities of practice. AMREF would also like to welcome PSO as a partner to this project. PSO, with years of experience in the field of learning and capacity building, can be the perfect partner to assist AMREF in extending its knowledge and strengthen its capacity and that of local partners. Together AMREF and PSO can create opportunities, such as the PSO learning trajectories and workshops, to share project experiences with member organisations of PSO.