

Editorial

“We know the body will survive without Head sustenance, but the Stomach, the god that rumbles and thunders when sacrifice is late, this god cannot be slighted”¹

In times of war, in times of peace, the call of the gut is one of the things no one can forget to heed. In this quirky piece of musing from Wole Soyinka, we find a rather witty epistle if we care to dwell on it. However in the world today and in the focus of this edition, less humour abound as evidence shows a grim outlook on gut disorders that may prevent a victim from enjoying his daily meal, less talk of revelling in clever anecdotes derived from such pleasures. In the 2002 WHO estimates, diarrhoeal diseases remain the 5th highest leading cause of deaths, killing 3.1% of the population worldwide. More recent data in the tropics show that mortality from GIT diseases have risen to new heights. These, shamefully, like most third world problems can be preventable.

Going through IFEMED editions of the past few decades, it is amazing that with the exception of HIV/AIDS, the same diseases of yore are still at the forefront of morbidity. Much too little has changed. It is our hope that change, *that* change we have all been waiting for, will come. It is with this tenuous hope that someday

things will be better, that we hold fast to our innocence in these trying times, optimistic that the promise we hold will contribute towards reducing the burden of disease in the developing world. We look forward to the future, when hopefully some measurable positive change would have been achieved. Then we would be able look back with some pride, that we were able to deploy our own academic and editorial wherewithal no matter how little its contribution, into confronting these issues that beset us.

The articles in this edition will then bear us witness of the symbolism that precedes us. Like our fathers before us, we will continue in the propagation of the life risk idealism, believing that as trendsetters on the shores of destiny, we have left a distinct blueprint for future leaders to build on.

After all, we are only the keepers of tomorrow....

Deola Adesanya
Editor-in-Chief 2008

¹ Wole Soyinka. *Salutation to the Gut. Pocket Gifts: Bookcraft Ltd 2002:15. [Essay first appeared in 'Reflections, a collection of Nigerian Prose and Poems. Published in 1963 by African Universities Press]. www.africanbookscollective.com*