

## Introduction

Achieving the health system targets outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG3) requires substantial investment. Estimates indicate an annual funding gap of USD 274 to USD 371 billion globally through 2030 to strengthen health systems and ensure universal health coverage (UHC) [1]. However, fiscal challenges across Africa, including limited domestic revenue and budgetary constraints, impede progress. In 2020, only two African countries met the Abuja Declaration target of allocating 15% of their national budgets to health [2]. COVID-19 further exacerbated these constraints by reducing government revenues and narrowing fiscal space [3].

## Current Landscape and Trends

### Global Fund Investments

From 2021 to mid-2024, approximately 72% of Global Fund investments were directed toward Africa, underscoring the region's reliance on external funding for critical healthcare interventions [4]. However, concerns over sustainability and donor dependency persist.

### Innovative Health Financing Mechanisms

Countries like Rwanda and Zimbabwe have implemented innovative financing models, such as national insurance schemes and health levies. Rwanda's Mutuelles de Santé, partially funded through community-based contributions, increased health service accessibility and achieved significant coverage [5]. Similarly, Zimbabwe's HIV/AIDS levy supports antiretroviral treatment, with 50% of funds allocated to procurement [6]. While these mechanisms have shown promise, challenges such as scalability, limited peer-to-peer learning, and sustainability persist.

## Policy Imperatives

- Increase Domestic Resource Mobilization:**  
African nations must prioritize health in budget allocations, targeting at least 15% as per the Abuja Declaration [2]. Tax reforms and efficiency improvements in collection can bolster resources.
- Strengthen Regional Knowledge Sharing:**  
Promote cross-country learning on successful financing models, fostering innovation and scalability [7].

- Expand Use of Innovative Mechanisms:**  
Leverage health levies, public-private partnerships, and performance-based financing tailored to specific national health priorities.
- Optimize International Aid:**  
Align donor funding with national health strategies to maximize impact and complement domestic efforts [4].

## Proposed Actions [7]

- Regional Policy Dialogues**  
Host forums for policymakers to share best practices in health financing, focusing on scalability and adaptability to different contexts.
- Enhance Multi-Sectoral Collaboration**  
Engage stakeholders from finance, health, and development sectors to create integrated funding approaches.
- Advocate for Increased Budget Allocations**  
Highlight the economic and social returns of investing in health systems, demonstrating how it contributes to productivity and national development.
- Promote Evidence-Based Decision-Making**  
Encourage research into the effectiveness of health financing models, ensuring policies are informed by robust data.

## About the Session

This session will bring together health financing experts to discuss critical gaps and opportunities for scaling sustainable financing mechanisms. Participants will explore innovative strategies such as health levies, public-private partnerships, and performance-based models, focusing on actionable solutions to improve equity and access.

## Expected Outcomes

Tangible steps will be put forward to address identified gaps in health financing. These strategies will focus on scaling innovative financing solutions, strengthening policy frameworks, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders to ensure sustainable and equitable healthcare systems.

## References

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- [7] World Health Organization, *Innovative Financing for Health Systems*, 2021. [Online]. Available: [Innovative International Financing For Health](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241512364)

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