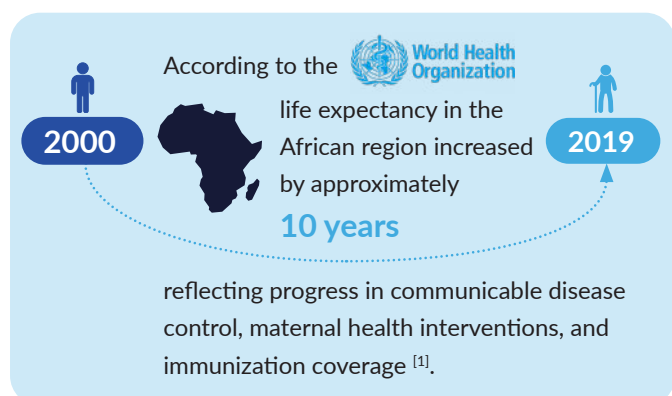


Background

Africa's health sector is at a decisive phase of transformation. Over the past two decades, the continent has recorded measurable improvements in key health indicators, including increases in life expectancy and reductions in maternal and child mortality, largely driven by expanded access to essential health services, disease-specific interventions, and strengthened primary healthcare systems ^{[1], [2]}.



The 2026 Africa Health Business Symposium reinforced a critical continental shift, from viewing health primarily as a social sector cost to recognizing it as a strategic investment that drives economic growth, resilience, and human capital development. This framing is strongly supported by global evidence showing that health investments generate substantial economic returns through improved productivity and labor force participation. ^[3]

Across Africa, governments are increasingly embedding Universal Health Coverage (UHC) frameworks into legislation, expanding social health insurance systems, and introducing domestic resource mobilization strategies aimed at improving financial sustainability. However, while financing reforms are accelerating, implementation capacity has not kept pace with policy ambition.

Despite strong policy frameworks and increasing domestic commitments, many reforms remain unevenly implemented, fragmented across systems, or insufficiently institutionalized to achieve scale. This implementation gap has been widely documented in global health systems literature as a key barrier to achieving UHC in low- and middle-income countries ^[4].

At the same time, the operating environment has become more constrained and complex. Declining external development assistance, rising debt burdens, shifting epidemiological patterns, climate-related health risks, workforce shortages, and the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases are placing unprecedented pressure on health systems across Africa. ^{[5], [6]}

At a continental level, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) highlights that health systems remain structurally vulnerable due to weak supply chains, limited domestic manufacturing capacity, and gaps in financing and workforce availability. ^[5]

Within this context, a central question defines the next phase of Africa's health transformation, how do African countries move beyond investment and policy reform to effectively implement, scale, and sustain health solutions that deliver measurable impact.

The 2027 Africa Health Business Symposium will therefore seek to progressively shift the focus of discussions from financing and policy dialogue towards execution, health system strengthening, and scalable impact delivery.

Key Objectives

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Advance Implementation of Scalable Health Solutions: Shift focus from policy design and pilots to execution pathways that enable proven interventions to be institutionalised and scaled across national health systems.
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Strengthen Health Systems for Sustainable Delivery: Identify and advance institutional, financing, governance, workforce, and regulatory mechanisms required to improve efficiency, accountability, and resilience in health system performance.
- 
Enable Innovation-to-Scale Transitions: Support the integration of digital health, diagnostics, AI-enabled tools, pharmaceutical innovation, supply chain and service delivery models into national systems for sustained, population-level impact.
- 
Catalyse Impact-Oriented Partnerships: Promote collaboration models between governments, private sector actors, and development partners that prioritise implementation, measurable outcomes, and long-term system strengthening.

Symposium Format

The Africa Health Business Symposium 2027 will be structured around two high-level plenary sessions, designed to drive strategic alignment, practical learning, and consensus on implementation pathways. These will be complemented by thematic side sessions focused on deep technical exchanges, country experiences, and scalable solutions.

Plenary Session 1: Ministerial Session: Financing and Governing Health Systems for Implementation

The ministerial session will convene Ministers of Health, Finance, and other relevant institutions to further on health financing reforms and their implementation across African countries and will focus on:

- Country experiences in implementing health financing reforms and UHC frameworks
- Progress in domestic resource mobilisation and statutory financing mechanisms
- Key challenges in translating policy into implementation at scale while highlighting solutions
- Institutional, legal, and fiscal mechanisms that enable sustainable delivery
- Priority areas requiring technical, financial, or partnership support

This session will prioritize peer learning, candid reflection, and solution-oriented exchange, with a strong emphasis on moving from policy intent to operational execution.

Plenary Session 2: Access to All: Turning Equity into Action

This plenary session will convene policymakers, development partners, and private sector stakeholders in a structured dialogue focused on defining and advancing equitable access as a core pillar of health system strengthening across Africa. The discussion will focus on translating equity commitments into system-wide policy and strategic outcomes aligned with Universal Health Coverage goals.

The emphasis is on what equitable access requires at a systems level, and how countries can intentionally design health systems that reduce disparities and ensure no population is left behind.

The discussion will focus on:

- Defining and operationalizing equitable access through national policy and health system design, with attention to availability, affordability, quality of care, and geographic inclusion Identifying and addressing systemic barriers that drive inequity, including financing gaps, weak governance, fragmented procurement systems, and uneven service coverage
- Embedding equity into national health strategies, planning frameworks, and accountability mechanisms to ensure long-term sustainability
- Strengthening alignment across sectors and stakeholders on what “access for all” means in practice and how it is measured

This session will serve as a policy and systems alignment platform, consolidating shared understanding, commitments, and strategic direction to guide equitable health system design and reform across the continent.

Plenary Session 3: Industry Leaders Exchange Session: Scaling Solutions for System-wide Impact

This plenary session will convene private sector leaders, innovators, investors, and implementation partners in structured dialogue with governments and development stakeholders focused on how to scale proven solutions within African health systems. The session shifts from system design to real-world execution and expansion of what already works.

The emphasis is on delivery, scale, and operational execution, including the practical enablers required to move innovations from pilots to sustained, system-wide impact.

The discussion will focus on:

- Scaling proven and validated health innovations across diverse country contexts and health system environments
- Operational models for effective public–private co-implementation, including delivery partnerships and system strengthening approaches
- Integration of scalable solutions into national systems to ensure sustainability and institutionalization
- Financing mechanisms, procurement systems, and regulatory frameworks that enable or constrain scale, and practical pathways to address them
- The role of the private sector as an implementation and delivery partner in strengthening health systems at scale

This session will serve as an execution and scale platform, consolidating practical experiences, investment opportunities, and implementation pathways to accelerate the expansion of effective solutions across the continent.

Thematic Co-curated Side Sessions

The thematic side sessions will explore priority and emerging health issues shaping Africa’s health systems. These sessions may be refined as planning evolves, but will broadly cover the following key areas:

Health Financing and Sustainable Resource Mobilization; Primary Healthcare; Health Workforce Development and Retention; Digital Health and Health Innovation; Pharmaceutical Ecosystem; Health Security, Pandemic Preparedness and Response; Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs); Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH); Data Systems and Health Information Infrastructure; Sexual and Reproductive Health and

Rights (SRHR); Women's Health and Gender Equity in Health Systems; Climate Change and Health; Mental Health; reflecting the growing importance of these areas in advancing resilient and equitable health systems across Africa.

Anticipated Participants

-  Government leaders (Health, Finance, Trade ministries)
-  Private health sector
-  Private (non-health) sector
-  Health investors and fund managers
-  Donors, multilateral organizations and NGOs
-  Development finance institutions
-  Health startups and entrepreneurs
-  Civil society, community health actors and FBOs
-  Academia, researchers and think tanks

Conclusion

Africa's health transformation is at a defining moment. Substantial progress has been made in elevating health as a strategic investment and advancing reforms across financing, governance, and innovation ecosystems.

However, the next phase of transformation will not be defined by policy ambition or investment volumes alone, but by the ability to implement solutions at scale and sustain them within resilient national systems.

The 2027 Africa Health Business Symposium will therefore serve as a catalytic platform to shift the continental dialogue from commitment to execution from fragmented innovation to integrated systems and from promising interventions to measurable, sustained impact.



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