CALL TO ACTION TO THE AFRICAN UNION: SECURE AFRICA'S HEALTH SOVEREIGNTY

February 5, 2026

Africa stands at a decisive moment in its public health history. While the continent has demonstrated global leadership through the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and resilient, community-driven HIV programmes, the foundation of this progress is under immediate threat. As we approach the AU Heads of State Summit, the shift in global health financing necessitates a transition from external reliance to absolute Health Sovereignty.

In April 2023, Africa CDC launched Africa's New Public Health Order, a long-term vision for a more resilient, inclusive, and equitable public health system in Africa. This new vision seeks to address the fundamental challenges that have made Africa vulnerable to public health threats in the past. The NPHO is an ambitious but achievable goal, and its potential benefits are immense. It will require a sustained commitment from African leaders and the international community to achieve it.

The current trajectory of health financing is unsustainable and presents a clear risk to continental security:

- **The Funding Collapse:** Between 2021 and 2025, Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Africa is projected to contract by 70%, marking the largest decline in decades.
- **The Epidemiological Surge:** Conversely, the disease burden is rising; outbreaks on the continent increased by 41% between 2022 and 2025.
- **The Investment Gap:** Total health spending in many African nations averages just $17 per person per year—a staggering deficit when compared to the $60 minimum required for essential health services.
- **Domestic Shortfalls:** Currently, many African countries allocate below 10% of their national budgets to health, falling short of regional benchmarks and leaving systems vulnerable to external shocks.

We, the undersigned organizations, call upon the AU Heads of State and policymakers to adopt the following actionable recommendations:

Commit to secure additional, long-term domestic financing for health.

- **Close the Funding Gap:** Move immediately toward the minimum requirement of $60 per person for essential services to eliminate reliance on unpredictable donor priorities.
- **Budgetary Reform:** Increase national health allocations to exceed current levels, which sit below 10%, ensuring health is prioritised as a pillar of national security.
- **Innovative Financing:** Implement blended financing mechanisms and public-private partnerships to create resilient health funds that can withstand global economic shifts.

Commit to accelerate Local Manufacturing & Regional Leadership

- **Sovereign Production:** Invest in local manufacturing capacity for vaccines, diagnostics, and essential medicines to ensure Africa is never again at the back of the global queue during a crisis.

- **Empower Regional Institutions:** Provide sustained, autonomous funding to the Africa CDC and other regional health bodies to lead continent-led solutions.

Commit to institutionalise Community engagement and participation in decision making processes, at national and regional levels.

- **Leverage the HIV Blueprint:** Adopt the community-led, multisectoral partnership models that proved resilient during the HIV and COVID-19 crises as the standard for all health interventions.
- **Ensure Inclusive Policy:** Formalise the role of Civil Society in high-level policy decisions, ensuring those most affected by health crises inform the strategies meant to protect them.

Integration into National Preparedness

- **Policy Synchronisation:** Integrate these health sovereignty strategies directly into national and regional emergency preparedness plans to ensure immediate actionability following the AU Summit.

> **Africa can no longer depend on the unpredictability of external donors. We demand a shift from development assistance to health investment. Sovereignty is not merely a goal; it is a prerequisite for the survival and prosperity of the continent.**

Adopted on February 5, 2026 during a regional webinar convened by AHF Africa, WACI Health, Africa REACH and RANA.

Co-signatories

ADET

Afrique Esperance & Development INGO

AHF Uganda Cares

Almagda Community Development Initiative

Amazon Theatrix Ensemble (A.T.E.)

Amoru AIDS Support Community Initiative (ASCI)

Associação Ekumi Yamuthethene – Associação para o Bem-Estar da Comunidade (ABEC)

ASSOMESCA

Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS (BONELA)

Cancer Alliance, South Africa

Cause Impact

Civil Society Health Partnership

Coalition for Health Research and Development (CHReaD)

Coalition of CSOs for Health Financing and UHC (COFIS-CSU)

Community and Family Aid Foundation – Ghana

Consolation East Africa

Coordination de Secours d'Urgences et Aide au Développement (COSUS-AID)

Corps des Jeunes contre le Paludisme de la RDC

Decisive Minds – Zambia

EANNASO

East African Community

Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network

Eswatini Muslim Women Organization

Global Media Foundation LBG

Good Health Community Programmes

Greenbeehive Solution

Health for Children Organization (HeCOTz)

Health NGOs Network (HENNET)

IMRO Rwanda

Indigenous Women Empowerment Network LBG

International Treatment Preparedness Coalition in MENA Region (ITPC-MENA)

Jeunesse du Monde en Action

KP Consortium in Kenya

Makata Community Engagement and Partnership Organization

MCF Uganda

Most at Risk Young Mothers and Teenage Girls Living with HIV Initiatives (MOYOTE)

Muslim Family Counselling Services

NAMEN+

Nigerian Women Agro Allied Farmers Association (NIWAAFA)

Organisation Enfants Mères (OEM)

Organization for Social Services, Health and Development (OSSHD)

Partnership for Universal Healthcare (PARTCARE)

Patriotic Empowerment Network Sierra Leone

RAHMO Development Organization

Recherche Sans Frontières / Research Without Borders

Restore Hope for Hopeless (RHH)

Rural Infrastructure & Human Resources Development Organization (RIHRDO)

Samasha

SANAC CSF PWUD Sub-sector

SELP ASBL

Sinatsisa Lubombo Women and Girls Empowerment Organisation

Sukaar Welfare Organization

Tanzania Network of People Who Use Drugs (TaNPUD)

Tanzania NGOs for Malaria Elimination Network (TANMEN)

TeenAID International Organization

TV47

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YAWITED

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