



International

CPHIA | 2025

Conference on Public Health in Africa

The Durban Promise

Moving Toward Self-Reliance to Achieve Universal
Health Coverage and Health Security in Africa

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC HEALTH IN AFRICA 2025 (CPHIA 2025)

OUTCOME SUMMARY

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA • 22 – 25 OCTOBER 2025

I. INTRODUCTION

A Defining Moment for Africa's Health Sovereignty

The 4th International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA 2025) convened at a pivotal moment in the continent's history. Africa faces a sharp rise in public-health emergencies—up over 40 percent since 2022—amid steep declines in external health financing, escalating debt-service burdens, and widening fiscal constraints. At the same time, the world's attention turns to Africa as **South Africa assumes the G20 Presidency in 2025**, creating a rare opportunity for the continent's unified voice to shape global health priorities.

Amid these pressures and possibilities, CPHIA 2025 became a continental rallying point for scientists, policymakers, innovators, and leaders to forge a new vision of self-reliance, resilience, and shared prosperity. The message was clear: **Africa's health sovereignty is not merely an aspiration—it is a necessity for economic transformation and security.**

Held under the theme *“Moving Toward Self-Reliance to Achieve Universal Health Coverage and Health Security,”* the conference brought together nearly **20,000 participants—both in person and online in Durban** from across governments, academia, civil society, and global partnerships.

Four catalytic priorities emerged as the key pillars of Africa's Health Sovereignty:

1. **African Manufacturing.**
2. **Innovative Health Financing.**
3. **Primary Health-Care Transformation.**
4. **Pandemic Preparedness and Response.**
5. **Data Ownership and Governance.**

Together, these priorities define Africa's roadmap toward **self-reliance, sustainability, and leadership in global health.**



II. Catalyzing Africa's Manufacturing Revolution

Africa still imports 99 % of its vaccines, 70 % of its medicines, and 95 % of its medical devices—a strategic vulnerability laid bare by COVID-19. Progress is accelerating through the Platform for Harmonized African Health Products Manufacturing (PHAHM), and the African Pooled Procurement Mechanism (APPM), supported by over USD 6 billion in continental and partner investment.

Key Calls to Action

- Secure predictable offtake commitments from Member States to create market certainty.
- Operationalize pooled procurement to aggregate demand and ensure sustainable markets for African-made products.
- Enhance regulatory systems by accelerating the operationalization of the African Medicine's Agency (AMA) and expanding WHO-recognized National Regulatory Authorities.
- Align financing across R&D, production, and offtake through mechanisms such as the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator.
- Invest in people and innovation by embedding manufacturing and regulatory expertise within universities and training institutions.

Vision: By 2030, Africa will manufacture, regulate, and procure for itself — anchoring health sovereignty while creating millions of skilled jobs.

III. Financing Health through African Ingenuity

With Official Development Assistance down 70 % since 2021 and debt payments exceeding aid, donor-driven systems are no longer viable. Africa must finance its own health future.

Transformative Agenda

- Mobilize domestic wealth: Fair taxes on digital and urban economies, ring-fenced “sin” levies, and sovereign health funds fed by resource revenues and diaspora remittances.
- Govern with integrity: E-procurement, digital expenditure tracking, and a Pan-African Health Financing Compact for transparency and accountability.
- Reinvest in PHC: Close the US \$3.65 billion CHW gap through domestic and blended financing, institutionalizing Community Health Workers as the backbone of resilience.
- Innovate boldly: AI-driven financing, diaspora bonds, and public-private partnerships to unlock private capital.
- Foster regional solidarity: Pool procurement and integrate markets to lower costs and share risk.
- Integrate climate and One Health: Invest in climate-smart infrastructure and cross-sectoral surveillance linking human, animal, and environmental health.

“The decline in aid is not an end—it is Africa's beginning. Our resources, innovation, and leadership will fund the health of our people.”

IV. Transforming Primary Health Care for Universal Coverage

PHC is the backbone of equitable, resilient systems, yet 60 % of its funding is external and out-of-pocket spending exceeds 40 % in many countries. With public-health emergencies up 41 % and a 6.1 million-worker shortfall by 2030, PHC reform is a continental imperative.

Strategic Directions

- Finance sustainably: Institutionalize domestic and innovative PHC financing guided by Africa CDC's *Green Book* and *Lusaka Agenda*.
- Shift from projects to systems: Expand solar-powered, digitally connected facilities and make prevention as strategic as treatment
- Apply the Africa CDC PHC Framework: Leadership, workforce, digital innovation, community engagement, supply-chain efficiency, and accountability.
- Link PHC and local production: Leverage the AfCFTA to strengthen supply chains and turn health delivery into a driver of industrial growth.

Examples from the Continent: Rwanda's universal insurance, Ethiopia's extension program, Tunisia's PHC integration, Kenya's digital CHWs, Egypt's *100 Million Healthy Lives*, and South Africa's *NHI* demonstrate that **people-centred PHC delivers equity, trust, and results.**

V. Aligning with the G20 Agenda

Leveraging **South Africa's G20 Presidency in 2025**, the conference projected **Africa's collective voice** on the global stage—calling on the world to “*Accelerate Health Equity, Solidarity and Universal Coverage.*”

Africa's shared priorities align with the G20 health track:

1. Accelerating UHC through PHC reform.
2. Strengthening and fairly compensating the health workforce.
3. Combating NCDs through prevention and PHC integration.
4. Advancing Pandemic Preparedness and equitable access.
5. Leveraging science, digitalization, and local manufacturing for inclusive growth.

This moment enables **South Africa to carry the voice of the continent** into the G20 deliberations—championing fair global health financing, resilient systems, and recognition of Africa as a strategic contributor, not a passive recipient.



VI. The Durban Promise and Continental Commitments

From Durban, a unified message resounded across Africa:

Health is not charity — it is sovereignty. It is our political choice and our economic future.

The Durban Promise affirms that Africa will no longer wait or depend.

It will manufacture its vaccines, finance its systems, strengthen its PHC, prepare for pandemics, empower its people, and own its data.

This marks the birth of Africa's Health Sovereignty Movement — turning crisis into opportunity and aspiration into action.

Our Continental Commitments

1. Mobilize Africa's Wealth and Innovation for Health Sovereignty

Africa will mobilize its own resources through progressive taxation, health levies, and sovereign funds while channeling these investments into the local manufacturing of health products — vaccines, medicines, diagnostics, and medical devices. Innovative financing tools such as AI-driven budget allocation, diaspora bonds, and public-private partnerships will fuel industrial growth, job creation, and continental resilience.

2. Strengthen Governance and Accountability

Integrate health financing into national plans, link budgets to results, and implement the *Pan-African Health Financing Compact* for transparency and citizen oversight.

3. Reinvest in PHC and Community Systems

Institutionalize and remunerate Community Health Workers, close the CHW financing gap, and move from fragmented projects to robust systems powered by digital connectivity and solar innovation.

4. Foster Regional Solidarity and Market Efficiency

Fully operationalize the **AVMA** and **APPM** to integrate markets, reduce costs, and ensure shared resilience through collective procurement and production.

5. Build Integrated, Climate-Resilient and Pandemic-Ready One Health Systems

Link surveillance across human, animal and environmental health; invest in early-warning systems and regional stockpiles; and strengthen emergency coordination capacities at all levels.

6. Reframe Health as a Strategic Investment

Treat Universal Health Coverage as a pillar of economic growth and national security — a long-term investment beyond electoral and donor cycles.

7. Transform This Moment into Africa's Leadership Era

Establish a continental platform for innovation in health financing and manufacturing, share Africa-led models globally, and embed solidarity and self-reliance at the core of public-health governance.

The Durban Promise

"This is Africa's time — to lead, to innovate, and to thrive. Together, we will make health the cornerstone of Africa's prosperity and global leadership."