



BUILDING AFRICA'S HEALTH SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

Investing in the Health Workforce, Community Health and Sustainable Immunization Programmes

COMMUNIQUÉ

AT THE 39TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN UNION

13 February 2026

We, the Ministers of Health and Finance of African Union Member States, together with Heads of Delegations participating in the High-Level Side Event themed, **“Building Africa’s Health Security and Sovereignty: Investing in the Health Workforce, Community Health and Sustainable Immunization Programmes,”** convened on the margins of the **39th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly** in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

PREAMBLE

MINDFUL that Africa, a continent of over 1.5 billion people, continues to experience a high frequency of public health emergencies, including infectious disease outbreaks, climate-related shocks, and humanitarian crises;

CONCERNED by the persistent burden of preventable morbidity and mortality from communicable and non-communicable diseases, maternal, newborn and child conditions, and the increasing strain on health systems exacerbated by climate change and Human Resources for Health challenges;

RECOGNIZING that Africa bears more than 25% of the global disease burden while accounting for a disproportionate share (3%) of the global health workforce;

ACKNOWLEDGING that a fit-for-purpose, well-supported, and equitably distributed health workforce, particularly Community Health Workers (CHWs), is foundational to Primary Health Care (PHC), Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPPR);

RECALLING the collective commitments of African Union Member States, including the Abuja Declaration to allocate at least 15% of national budget to health; the Assembly/AU/Dec.649(XXIX) (2017) decision to recruit, train and deploy two million Community Health Workers across the continent; the Assembly/AU/Dec.816(XXXV) (2022) decision establishing the AU Health Workforce Task Team (HWTT) to strengthen continental coordination; and the Assembly/AU/Dec.877(XXXVII) decision designating H.E. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, as the AU Champion for Human Resources for Health and the Community Health Delivery Partnership, thereby elevating health workforce and community health workers as sustained political priorities for Africa’s health security;

WELCOMING the leadership of Africa CDC and the progress made in strengthening evidence, coordination mechanisms, and continental tools to advance health workforce development and community health systems; including Africa CDC-commissioned work on health workforce financing options to inform national planning and support continental advocacy.

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WE, the Ministers of Health and Finance, convened under the leadership of H.E. Senator Kashim Shettima, GCON, Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, representing H.E. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, AU Champion for Human Resources for Health and Community Health Delivery Partnership, and guided by the deliberations of this High-Level side event, hereby call upon African Union Heads of State and Government, Member States, and development partners to strengthen political commitment, to increase sustained investment in Human Resources for Health and Community Health Workers, and agree on the following:

1. Provide Sustained Political Leadership

- **Call** on African Union Heads of State and Government to elevate Human Resources for Health (HRH) and Community Health Workers (CHWs) as strategic pillars of Primary Health Care (PHC), Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPPR).

2. Strengthen Health Workforce Systems

- **Noted with appreciation** the AU Health Workforce Compact and affirm the AU Health Workforce Task Team (HWTT) as the principal continental coordination and accountability mechanism for Human Resources for Health.
- **Directs Africa CDC**, in consultation with Member States, to advance continental standards for health professions' education and training, support progress toward mutual recognition of professional qualifications, and strengthen health workforce data systems to enable evidence-based planning, deployment, and accountability.

3. Accelerate Progress Toward the Continental Target of Two Million Community Health Workers by 2030

- **Reaffirm** the continental commitment to recruit, train, deploy, institutionalize, and sustainably support two million Community Health Workers by 2030, and call on Member States to accelerate their integration into national Primary Health Care systems, ensuring fair remuneration, adequate protection, supervision, career pathways, and alignment with immunization and Pandemic Prevention Preparedness and Response (PPPR) priorities, particularly for underserved, zero-dose children, and hard-to-reach populations.
- **Call on Member States** to roll out the continental community health Programme scorecard at both political and Programme levels to track progress and ensure accountability in alignment with the Lusaka Agenda.

4. Increase and Sustain Domestic Financing for the Health Workforce and Community Health Workers

- **Call on Member States** to increase and sustain domestic investment in health workforce development and community health workers, in line with the Abuja Declaration and the Africa Health Workforce Investment Charter, and to strengthen cross-sectoral coordination among Ministries of Health, Finance, Education, Labour, and Civil Service.
- **Directs** Africa CDC to intensify its work with relevant stakeholders to identify and assess sustainable financing options for national Human Resources for Health and Community Health Programmes and report to the AU Assembly.

- **Call on Member States** on regular reporting through Africa CDC to the Assembly of the African Union on progress toward the 2030 target, and with health workforce investments aligned to strengthening routine immunization and life-course vaccination.

5. Develop and Finance Continental and National Community Health Acceleration Plans

- **Commit** to developing comprehensive and costed acceleration plans for Community Health at the continental and national levels, aligned with the continental target of two million CHWs by 2030.
- **Directs** Africa CDC and the Continental Coordination Mechanism (CCM) for Community Health to convene a High-Level Continental Meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, before June 2026, to support Member States in finalizing costed national CHW replenishment and acceleration plans and to launch the Continental Community Health Acceleration Plan.
- **Call on Ministers of Finance** to participate actively in this process to ensure that national Community Health acceleration plans are integrated into national budgets and medium-term expenditure frameworks, with dedicated budget lines and sustainable financing mechanisms.
- **Call on development partners**, development finance institutions, the private sector, bilateral partners, and philanthropists to align catalytic and blended financing behind government-led, costed HRH Strategies and Community Health Acceleration Plans. Support fiscal sustainability by integrating HRH and CHW plans into national budgets and medium-term expenditure frameworks.

6. Directs Africa CDC to report on progress at the Mid-year coordination meeting in July 2026, the governing structures of Africa CDC and the AU policy organs.

Adopted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 13 February 2026



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Africa CDC is a continental autonomous health agency of the African Union established to support public health initiatives of Member States and strengthen the capacity of their public health institutions to detect, prevent, control and respond quickly and effectively to disease threats.



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