

**HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE BETWEEN MINISTERS OF FINANCE AND HEALTH
TOWARDS AND BEYOND THE MDGs**



**Tunis Declaration on
Value for Money, Sustainability and Accountability in the Health Sector**

*A joint Declaration by the Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Health of
Africa*

July 5, 2012

We, the Ministers of Finance and Health and Parliamentarians thank the African Development Bank for hosting the Ministerial Conference on Value for Money, Sustainability and Accountability in the Health Sector, organized by the Harmonization For Health in Africa (HHA) partners (African Development Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, JICA, NORAD, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, USAID, the World Bank, WHO) in Tunis on July 4-5, 2012, in collaboration with the African Union, the Global Health Workforce Alliance, the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and the United-Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

Recognizing that:

- (i) health is instrumental to economic growth, and in reducing inequality and poverty;
- (ii) this is a critical time for Africa to take advantage of its rapid economic growth and to improve human capital in general and achieve better health in particular;
- (iii) millions of Africans suffer severe economic consequences due to the need to pay for out of pocket health care, which in turn aggravates inequities and impedes sustainable social and economic development;
- (iv) millions more do not even seek the care they need due to the high costs of accessing and using it, thereby contributing to avoidable morbidity and premature mortality;
- (v) it is essential for Africa to seize the demographic dividend, which can be enhanced by health sector investments and appropriate economic reforms and policies;
- (vi) technologies and innovations provide unique opportunities for Africa to improve efficiency and effectiveness of health service delivery;
- (vii) despite progress achieved toward the health MDGs, further efforts are required to ensure that people in our countries benefit from the highest attainable standard of health, for themselves and as a driving force for economic and social development in our countries;
- (viii) the *Country Framework for Enhanced Engagement and Action between Ministries of Finance and Health and their Partners* is an important tool to enhance country dialogue towards enhanced health strategies and plans for greater value for money, sustainability and accountability in the health sector;

Convinced that:

- (i) wider and more equitable coverage of health services and greater performance of health systems can be achieved through a more effective and efficient use of both existing and additional public and private resources that economic growth may avail to our countries in the short term and during the post-MDG era;
- (ii) given the growing share of domestic resources in total health spending and the decreasing share of external financing, we must fight against corruption, improve governance, specifically transparency, accountability and sustainability;

Recalling and building on the 2001 Abuja declaration, 2010 Heads of States Summit in Kampala, 2011 4th Joint Annual Meeting of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in Addis Ababa, and the 2011 61st WHO Regional Committee for Africa in Yamoussoukro.

We recommend to (within the broader framework of national government policies and programs):

1. Intensify dialogue and collaboration between our respective ministries and with technical and financial partners.
2. Take concrete measures in our respective countries in order to enhance value for money, sustainability and accountability in the health sector for reaching the objective of universal health coverage and to accelerate progress towards the Health Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development targets by 2015 and beyond.
3. Integrate socio-economic, demographic and health factors into broader development strategies and policies in an effective manner especially in the formulation of medium term strategic plans, in order to optimize good health and population dynamics in building human capital and enhancing development;
4. Design effective investments in the health sector, based on evidence-based strategies leading to the prioritization of high impact interventions, which lead to results. The identified high impact health interventions should be mainstreamed in the comprehensive national health financing strategies with a regular budgeting and financing system;
5. Promote equitable investment in the health sector; ensure that health financing is pro-poor benefiting disadvantaged areas; strengthen regulatory capacity and the development of a strong African pharmaceutical sector as a growth and job creating sector in Africa.
6. Lay out the path to universal health coverage for each country, in particular establishing mechanisms to ensure equitable access to essential health services including social health insurance while ensuring effective safety nets to protect vulnerable individuals, households and communities;
7. Improve efficiency in health systems, including equitable access to skilled health workers and the introduction of measures such as results based financing and incentives to enhance transparency and performance and reduce wastage;
8. Solidify sustainable health financing systems that build on and coordinate the diversity of sources of finance including institutional health financing and better coordination and predictability of external resources to ensure that all have access to good quality essential health services;

9. Strengthen accountability mechanisms that align all relevant partners, build on the growing citizens' voice and ensure the highest possible level of results for the money spent;
10. Increase domestic resources for health through enhanced revenue collection and allocation, re-prioritization where relevant and innovative financing, giving priority to immunizations, non-communicable diseases, AIDS, Tuberculosis and malaria, as well as reproductive, maternal and child health in national budgets.

We call upon:

- parliamentarians and civil society to support the implementation of these recommendations;
- the HHA partners (African Development Bank, the Global Fund, JICA, NORAD, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, USAID, the World Bank, WHO), the African Union Commission, the United-Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Africa's regional and economic bodies and other partners to collaborate with us in implementing these actions, as well as monitoring and evaluating our progress;
- the HHA partners (African Development Bank, the Global Fund, JICA, NORAD, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, USAID, the World Bank, WHO) in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to submit biennial progress report on implementation to us at
 1. the 2013 and subsequent Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank
 2. the WHO Regional Committee for Africa
 3. the AU conference of Ministers of Health;
 4. the Joint Annual Meeting of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
- the HHA partners (African Development Bank, the Global Fund, JICA, NORAD, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, USAID, the World Bank, WHO) to provide technical support to build capacity in health budgeting and financing at the country level; and
- the African Development Bank to work with partners in further fostering and shaping the dialogue between ministers of finance and health and to facilitate and strengthen Africa's voice in the post-MDG agenda.