



HARVARD T.H. CHAN
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



**HEALTH STRATEGY AND
DELIVERY FOUNDATION**

PRESS STATEMENT: INITIATIVE ON THE FUTURE OF HEALTH AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCY IN AFRICA

Dakar, Tuesday March 15, 2022: Members of the Core Panel of the Initiative on the Future of Health and Economic Resiliency in Africa (FHera) convened in Dakar, Senegal from March 14 - 15, 2022.

The Panel is co-Chaired by Dr. Muhammad Ali Pate, Professor of the Practice of Public Health Leadership at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Minister Prof. Awa Coll Seck, Minister of State in the Presidency Senegal. It comprises key leaders, academics and practitioners affiliated with the World Health Organization (AFRO), UN Economic Commission for Africa, the Africa Center for Disease Control, Institut Pasteur de Dakar, Congo Medical Research Foundation, Health Strategy and Delivery Foundation, The Brookings Institution, Agence Francaise de Developpement, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, and partners including The Lancet, Rockefeller Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation and facilitation by McKinsey & Company. The Core Panel is appreciative of His Excellency Macky Sall, President of Senegal and 2022 President of the African Union, for his support of the initiative and strategic leadership in the continent.

The Initiative is a multi-stakeholder, multisector platform of panel members, positioned at the intersection of policy, research and scholarship, and actions for impact on the African continent. It aims to contribute towards the emergence of a better future for health and economic resiliency in Africa, based on experiences before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in alignment with Agenda 2063 of the African Union, which envisions a united, prosperous, peaceful and people-centered continent, in a sustainable planet.

In its Dakar deliberations, the Core Panel outlined key principles and priority areas for realizing its objectives. There is an urgency to reshape the narrative of African health systems towards autonomy and self-reliance and develop strategies and partnerships accordingly. Focusing on prevention and promotion of public health and well-being of communities, in an integrated manner is critical, with consideration of changes in the burden of disease, and determinants, such as education, hygiene, nutrition, migration, agriculture and food systems, climate change and the environment.

Health can be a key driver of economic growth with African youth and women, as arrowheads for societal transformation. The panel called for reforms of policies, systems and regulatory structures to improve efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and responsiveness to the needs of communities and the citizens. Political leadership is needed to prioritize domestic financing to meet their citizens' health expectations, while reorienting external aid to follow Africa-led priorities and mechanisms. Workforce development, especially the expansion of pre-service training, optimizing deployment, and leveraging the African Diaspora are important areas of focus. To get back on track towards truly Universal Health Coverage, community-based primary health and hospital systems development must be integrated with strengthened public health systems for prevention and response to disease outbreaks.

The Panel highlighted the urgency of enhancing local production, developing at-scale and sustainable value chains for pharmaceuticals, health products, nutrition products, devices and related technologies; regulatory reforms and realizing the value of a continental health services market, particularly by reviving a mandate for healthcare in the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCTA). Expanding private sector investments and fostering digital and analytic ecosystems would improve access and quality of health care.



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With the FHera initiative now activated, the panel and working groups will develop programs in the identified priority areas and engage in relevant consultations and policy dialogue, to make recommendations and provide options as a “brain trust” for leaders in the continent.

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