



Who We Are

AFRICA HEALTH RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE (AHRIDA) IS A PAN-AFRICAN ADVOCACY MOVEMENT LAUNCHED IN 2025 TO CHAMPION AFRICAN-LED HEALTH INNOVATIONS AND RESEARCH TO TRANSFORM THE CONTINENT.

Hosted by Amref Health Africa, the Alliance brings together three advocacy coalitions from East, South and West Africa that have spearheaded advocacy for a sustainable health research and innovation ecosystem that ensures access to world class global health solutions to the continent's health and socioeconomic priorities. Collectively, the **Coalition for Health Research and Development (CHReD)** based in Kenya, the **South African Health Technologies**

Advocacy Coalition (SAHTAC), and **Speak Up Africa** based in Senegal, have raised awareness of the need to invest in sustainable **Research Development & Innovation for health; driven policy change to support innovation and equitable access to health solutions;** and promoted an **enabling environment for RD&I and access to lifesaving health technologies in Africa** since 2011.

AHRIDAs Mission

The Alliance's mission is to accelerate the development of and equitable access to African-led, health innovations by driving resource mobilization, enhancing local research, development and innovation capacity, and multisectoral collaboration. To drive this mission, the Alliance is focusing on advocacy for increased commitments for domestic and **Official Development Assistance (ODA)** funding for health HRD&I that addresses Africa's health research gaps and human development needs; and the increased uptake of health innovations, both existing and under development, which meet priority health needs for African populations.



Resource Mobilization

Sub-Saharan Africa, home to **11%** of the global population, bears a disproportionate **24%** of the world's disease burden, yet contributes only **2%** to global research. This imbalance is starkly evident in the healthcare sector, with Africa importing up to **90%** of its medicines and **99%** of its vaccines. Investing in Africa-led health research, development, and innovation (RD&I) will not only strengthen resilient and equitable national health systems with contextually appropriate solutions but also foster the growth of knowledge-based economies, transforming Africa into a thriving and prosperous continent. To realize this, there must be increased commitments towards domestic funding for health RD&I, ODA for health innovation, and intentional investment towards in addressing Africa's priority health research gaps.



Innovation Uptake

The uptake of African-developed health products and vaccines faces significant challenges including lengthy and fragmented regulatory approval processes that hinder timely market access; lack of trust in locally produced health products, stemming from historical reliance on imported medicines and vaccines, as well as concerns about the quality and efficacy of locally manufactured products.

Furthermore, challenges to accessing markets due to competitive procurement systems favour established international suppliers and discourage local manufacturers. Addressing these challenges requires financial and systemic support to local researchers to drive product discovery and development; harmonized regulatory frameworks and assurance of quality and consistency of locally produced health products across the continent; support to local manufacturers in achieving WHO and other pre-qualifications; robust engagement of communities and healthcare stakeholders in the promotion of African-developed solutions; and market access policies that prioritize local products in national and regional procurement.

1. <https://africacdc.org/news-item/addressing-regulatory-challenges-to-advance-local-manufacturing-in-africa/>
2. <https://africacdc.org/news-item/addressing-regulatory-challenges-to-advance-local-manufacturing-in-africa/>

Our approach

The Alliance's advocacy is focused on providing expert analysis and generating evidence to enhance the understanding of Africa's HRD&I landscape among governments, funding agencies, and research organizations. By advocating for a well-functioning and integrated regulatory system for medical products, we aim to ensure health security and foster a knowledge economy in African countries. We will work with national and regional health stakeholders to make a compelling case for investment in Africa's HRD&I landscape to African governments, emphasizing its essential role in building a knowledge economy that delivers health security and long-term prosperity. Working closely with African researchers and research institutions, we will elevate awareness of their role in driving the Africa HRD&I and global health agenda. Additionally, we will advocate for policy changes that leverage Africa's unique genetic resources and position the Africa-wide market for locally developed and manufactured health products. Through these efforts, we aim to contribute to **building a thriving African health innovation ecosystem that addresses local needs through African-led solutions.**

Capacity for HRD&I

Africa accounts for less than 3% of global clinical trials and barely 1% of global research output, leading to low impact on the international stage (World Economic Forum, 2024; Selemani et al., 2024).

There is also a shortage of trained researchers, coupled with limited career development opportunities and competitive remuneration. This drives a significant "brain drain," with over 30% of African-trained scientists leaving the continent (African Academy of Sciences, 2020).

Inconsistent and complex regulatory policies across countries hinder collaborative research and slow down approval processes (Nabyonga-Orem, Asamani & Makanga, 2021).

Gender disparity is also pronounced, with women significantly underrepresented in leadership roles, have lower research output, and face challenges in accessing funding. This reflects systemic biases and cultural barriers (Diab et al., 2023; Jackson et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2019).

Contacts

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