We are at a pivotal moment in human history and health. COVID-19 has caused over 4.5 million direct deaths worldwide. Millions more have died from disrupted health services. Across Sub-Saharan Africa, the pandemic has revealed an underlying fragility. Fundamental health systems needed to deliver routine care and surge for emergencies are overwhelmed, especially at the community level. This leads to a lack of access to basic healthcare, economic insecurities, and inequities.

What is the Africa Frontline First (AFF) Initiative?

AFF is a collaborative initiative that supports the scaling and strengthening of integrated and sustainable community health delivery in Sub-Saharan Africa. The initiative is founded on the belief that a robust community health infrastructure is essential to the delivery of effective, efficient, and equitable care.

Why does AFF focus on community health?

History shows that community health programs save lives, especially when part of an integrated health system. During the 2014 West African Ebola outbreak, community health workers played a vital role in beating back the disease. Ethiopia’s community health worker program helped the country reduce under-five mortality by 67% and maternal mortality by 71% in the run-up to the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. Most recently, the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response found that community health was a hallmark of more successful COVID-19 responses and declared it critical for preventing future pandemics.

Despite its proven value, the financing gap for community health in Sub-Saharan Africa has widened from USD $2 billion to $4.4 billion annually between 2015 and 2020, contributing to millions of preventable deaths.

“The legacy of COVID-19 must be robust and resilient primary healthcare systems with community health workers as the backbone for its delivery. Together, we can build the coalitions of actors required to make bold reforms and build back better for the COVID-19 response, and beyond.”

- H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
Former President of Liberia

Africa Frontline First Initiative

Working toward health, health security, and economic recovery across Sub-Saharan Africa
“[Community health workers] can truly be the nexus between universal health coverage and health security, as they can improve access and uptake of health services, sanitation and hygiene, and primary healthcare to the community and improve overall health outcomes.”

- DR. JOHN NKENGASONG
AFRICA CDC DIRECTOR

**Across the globe, community health workers improve health outcomes by:**

- Delivering lifesaving care door-to-door, often in remote communities
- Boosting health-seeking behaviors and promoting healthy practices
- Increasing individual and community awareness and action
- Preventing, detecting, and responding to pandemics and diseases like malaria, TB, and HIV/AIDS
- Connecting communities to the public health system

**What will AFF do?**

Through unique partnerships between governments, donors, implementers, and technical allies, AFF will support 10 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to build high-functioning, resilient, country-led community health service delivery. These systems will include an expanded and institutionalized workforce of 200,000 community health workers across the 10 countries by 2030. Anchored within the local context and health reform journey of each participating country, this support will:

- **Reduce morbidity and mortality**: Advance prevention, vaccination, testing, and treatment to reduce the impact of COVID-19, malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS; and support maternal and child health.

- **Advance health security**: Bolster integrated digital disease surveillance in the community health workforce to monitor, quickly detect, and respond to emergent infectious disease threats.

- **Accelerate economic recovery**: Build a compensated workforce of trained, supplied, digitally-equipped, and supervised community health workers—especially women—who contribute to the formal economy.

**How will AFF reach these goals?**

AFF works across three pillars:

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<th>FINANCING</th>
<th>POLITICAL WILL</th>
<th>COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT</th>
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<td>Advocate, design, and support implementation of sustainable funding mechanisms that enable transformed financing.</td>
<td>Cultivate regional political will and champions to support accelerating community health reforms, including domestic financing.</td>
<td>Foster country peer learning to optimize country-led community health performance supported by technical partners.</td>
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**Join AFF Today**

Under the leadership of H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the key partners of AFF are currently the Financing Alliance for Health, Community Health Impact Coalition, Community Health Acceleration Partnership, and Last Mile Health. Additional partners are welcome to join this important work as advocates, funders, implementers, and more. Together we can build a healthier and more secure future.

To join AFF or learn more, contact Joyce Kabiru at [jkabiru@financingalliance.org](mailto:jkabiru@financingalliance.org)