



## **Science Diplomacy side event during United Nations General Assembly (UNGA80)**

### **Advancing Global Health for the UN Pact for the Future**

**Date: Wednesday, 24 September 2025 | Time: 13:15 - 14:30 EDT.**

**Conference Room 5, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

**405 East, 42<sup>nd</sup> St, New York, NY 10017**

## **CONCEPT NOTE**

### **Background**

As the world approaches the adoption of the UN Pact for the Future, which will frame the post-SDG agenda, the international community faces a pivotal moment to embed health research and innovation as essential components of global governance. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate-induced health risks, and the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have underscored the need for integrated and well-financed health systems grounded in science, data, and inclusion.

At the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) held in Seville in June 2025, delegates emphasised the importance of science, technology, and innovation (STI) as critical enablers for achieving the SDGs and shaping a sustainable post-2030 agenda. One of the strongest calls from FfD4 was the need to mobilise long-term capital through innovative financing instruments including green bonds, health impact investments, and partnerships with capital markets to bridge the R&D and health systems financing gap, particularly across low- and middle-income countries.

Against this backdrop, Africa's scientific leadership must be amplified on the global stage. Institutions such as the **East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC)** in collaboration with **Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS)** are already demonstrating how regional coordination, local capacity-building, and policy-relevant research can address cross-border health challenges. However, African institutions still face systemic constraints, including fragmented data ecosystems, insufficient investment in research infrastructure, and limited participation in global health priority-setting processes.

This Science Diplomacy side event convened during the UNGA80 at United Nations Headquarters will present a bold and inclusive health research agenda for the Pact for the Future as part of advancing global health. It will explore how to strengthen scientific leadership, research ecosystems, data infrastructure, and sustainable financing, particularly in Africa, while aligning with the priorities of multilateral institutions, regional communities, and post-SDG development frameworks.



## Objectives

- Define actionable priorities for embedding health research in the implementation phase of the UN Pact for the Future.
- Showcase African leadership in shaping global health research strategies, including through national and regional institutions such as MUHAS and ECSA-HC.
- Identify scalable models for financing health R&D through capital markets and public-private partnerships.
- Promote science-policy platforms to ensure that evidence-based solutions inform decision-making across the UN system and national contexts.
- Strengthen momentum behind a post-SDG global health research compact, grounded in equity, data access, and inclusive governance.

## Key Themes

- **Africa's Health Research Leadership:** Spotlight on ECSA-HC and MUHAS and regional/national innovation hubs as models for South-South collaboration and systems strengthening.
- **Data Infrastructure and Digital Sovereignty:** Building trusted, interoperable, and regionally governed systems for health surveillance, genomic research, and real-time evidence translation. Leveraging blended finance, and sovereign investment platforms to unlock domestic and global funding.
- **Science and Policy Synergies:** Enhancing UN mechanisms, such as the WHO Science Council and STI Multistakeholder Forum, to better link science with diplomacy and policy frameworks.
- **Post-SDG Alignment:** Translating the lessons of FfD4 and regional strategies into a forward-looking research agenda that supports people, planet, and prosperity.

## Expected Outcomes

- A set of policy and investment recommendations to inform implementation of the UN Pact for the Future with a focus on health R&D.
- Increased recognition of national and regional institutions like MUHAS, ECSA-HC as key actors in shaping global health research and governance.
- Identification of collaborative mechanisms to establish and fund data infrastructures across Africa and other underserved regions.
- Commitment to launching a Global Health Research Compact as a follow-up mechanism to advance the Pact's science, equity, and resilience goals.



## Format and Participants

This side event will take place in-person at the UN Headquarters, New York, as part of the Science Diplomacy. The format will include moderated panel discussions and interactive segments, bringing together:

- UN agencies and Permanent Missions
- Regional health communities
- Public and private research institutions
- Philanthropic and civil society stakeholders
- National health ministries and science councils

## Provisional Agenda

- a) **Opening Remarks and Scene-Setting** - Aligning the Pact for the Future with a Health R&D Vision
- b) **Session 1: African Science Leadership in Global Health Research** - Regional institutions and voices driving inclusive and sustainable research ecosystems
- c) **Session 2: From Data to Action, Financing Health R&D in the Post-SDG Era** - Strengthening digital health, data governance, health financing through multi-lateral platforms and research infrastructures
- d) **Session 3: A Pact for Science-Informed Health Policy** - Bridging global policymaking and local implementation through evidence
- e) **Closing Session:** Strategic directions and Key Note Remarks from the Guest of Honor