



Advancing CSO Advocacy for Health Financing Consolidating Progress and Shaping the Future of JLA

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Background

Current macroeconomic challenges, high and evolving disease burdens, and a reliance on external funds demand an urgent acceleration of domestic health financing across Africa. While the 2001 Abuja Declaration set an ambitious target for governments to allocate at least 15% of their annual budget to improve the health sector, domestic resources for health remain insufficient. This hinders the fight against high burden diseases, jeopardises and puts at risk the sustainability of hard-won gains, and leaves millions without access to essential care. Overall health expenditure has significantly increased over time, but funding from domestic sources has not increased commensurately. Therefore, while Africa celebrates considerable strides in health outcomes, inadequate domestic investments limit the flexibility of national health systems to address pandemics, NCDs, other emerging threats and threatens to dim the continent's ability to sustain healthcare advancements. As a result, new preventable diseases continue to claim lives, pushing millions into poverty due to crippling healthcare costs. Africa's future hinges on the health of its people, yet the continent continues to record high numbers of deaths and suffering. To build a sustainable future, the African Union has again committed to prioritizing domestic health sector investments through the 2019 Africa Leadership Meeting declaration. Meeting the ALM commitments will save millions more lives, break the cycle of poverty by protecting families from financial ruin occasioned by high out of pocket spending, and drive economic development.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play a vital role in advocating for increased health financing in Africa. They shape policies, monitor implementation, and provide evidence-based recommendations to improve outcomes. CSOs champion the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by advocating for improved resource allocation, prioritization, and utilization for essential health programs, including community health, primary healthcare, maternal and child health, TB, HIV/AIDS, and malaria. Their efforts facilitate public participation, research, program monitoring and evaluation, and social accountability, leading to more effective health resource allocation and use. However, Africa's health financing landscape remains challenged by factors like duplication of coordination structures, poor policy development and implementation, reliance on donor funding, and misappropriation of resources. To address these obstacles, CSOs are scaling up their health financing advocacy through the Joint Learning Agenda (JLA). Led by WACI Health and Impact Santé Afrique, the JLA receives support from the Global Financing Facility (GFF), the Global Fund, the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health, Gavi, and UHC 2030 and national partners.

In its initial phase, the JLA successfully trained 40 participants across 20 countries in health financing advocacy, building a pool of experts to improve health initiatives at various levels. Additionally, it expanded the knowledge base of 400 civil society representatives in health financing, fostering a ripple effect in advocacy efforts. Through the second phase, participants applied their skills practically through customized capacity building, technical assistance, and grants.

The JLA is set to contribute to advancing sustainable funding for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Africa, with its success underlined by the following key achievements from an independent evaluation:

- Enhanced advocacy capability in UHC and health financing at individual, civil society, national and regional levels.
- Formation of a dynamic and skilled group of health financing advocates across the 20 countries.
- Stronger and new UHC coalitions across the 20 countries, resulting in more effective increased number of advocacy activities.
- An established regional Community of Practice (CoP) of grassroots Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and country coalitions working on UHC.

The country experts and CSO partners have used these skills to engage in advocacy processes at country level and to build strategic partnerships with a number of regional partners. They have engaged in national dialogues which have led to key results, including mobilizing and creating space for civil society to accelerate the implementation of health financing strategies, securing high-level commitments for better domestic health financing, and conducting thorough assessments leading to national health financing reforms.

Despite the JLA's success in training and empowering CSOs, several challenges persist. These include:

- Inadequate Financing: Securing sustainable funding remains a hurdle for CSOs, limiting their ability to sustain advocacy efforts and implement initiatives.
- Misaligned Partner Objectives: Ensuring alignment between partner objectives and country-owned advocacy plans would be crucial for effective collaboration and avoids duplication of efforts.
- Limited Data Linkages: Bridging the gap between CSO processes and national, regional, and global health financing indicators would be essential to demonstrate the impact of advocacy not only on improved health financing but also on achieving UHC goals.

It is therefore important to build on what JLA has achieved, address challenges and build stronger collaboration and advocacy with other stakeholders in the region. To do this, it is prudent that we take stock of what has been achieved, understand how change in this space happens, and identify the support that CSOs need to achieve further impact in the region and the next steps for this network. It is also critical that CSOs understand partner perspectives to help the latter meet their accountability objectives while supporting CSOs more comprehensively.

Workshop objectives

Considering the high demand from JLA participants, and following recommendations from the independent evaluation, JLA partners will convene all country trainers in a workshop to review progress, share knowledge, and discuss challenges and opportunities, to further consolidate and amplify civil society advocacy for health financing and UHC in the region. More specifically, the workshop aims at gathering actionable inputs from diverse stakeholders to effectively plan and launch the next phase of support in advancing CSO advocacy for health financing and contributing to increased domestic resource mobilization (DRM) for UHC.

Specific Objectives:

1	Harvest JLA Successes and Challenges: Take stock and draw lessons from the key successes and challenges in advancing CSO advocacy for health financing in the region by the JLA program.
2	Collaborate on DRM and Advocacy Strategies: Share and analyze successful advocacy campaigns, resource mobilization approaches, and existing platforms relevant to JLA goals and recommend future CSO advocacy mechanisms for health financing and DRM strategies aligned with country contexts
3	Shape the JLA's opportunities in the Global Health Financing agenda and "Future of Global Health Initiatives" Trajectory: Understand stakeholders' perspectives on the JLA's role in a changing global health landscape, considering sustainability, learning, partnership models, and potential funding opportunities and translate agreed outputs and outcomes into next steps.
4	Mobilize Stakeholder Commitment: Secure tangible commitments from participants towards collaborating on and supporting the JLA's next phase, including technical expertise, capacity building, coordination/collaboration and advocacy efforts, ensuring the next phase effectiveness and sustainability.

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Format and Participants:

Workshop Format: Hybrid (in-person and virtual) comprising of Trainers from JLA (= 30~40 in person), Technical and financial partners, Participants from National Health Financing Dialogues and key identified stakeholders.

Core Participants: Country resource persons (JLA trainers) (in-person), CSOs on invite, Technical and Development Partners

Total No. of In-person Participants: 60

Virtual Participants (number to be confirmed):

- JLA-trained organizations, GHAI resource persons, P4H focal points selected countries
- Partner CSOs leading Health Financing Dialogues in non-JLA countries
- Regional Health financing advocacy & accountability experts
- Potential future partners & relevant initiatives/platforms

Agenda

Time	Day 1: Drawing Lessons from the Key Successes and Challenges in advancing CSO Advocacy for Health Financing	Facilitator / Presenter
9:00	Opening Session	Session facilitator: Regina
	Welcome Participants (10 mins)	Rosemary Mburu and Olivia Ngou
	Team building & Introductions (20 mins)	Facilitator
	Remarks from partners (20 mins) 1. Global Financing Facility 2. Global Fund	Kirsten Zindel Shu-Shu Tekle-Haimanot
	Setting the Scene : Evolution of the African Continent's Health Financing ecosystem to effectively meet the needs of her population today and tomorrow (15 mins)	Kalipso Chalkidou (Global Fund)
	Framing presentation: High level findings and lessons from the JLA Appreciative Enquiry Evaluation (25 mins)	Alexandra Rinaldi, ISA
10:30	Break	
11:00	What does success look like? How does change happen?	Session facilitator: Chris Alando
	This session will focus on key examples from the region of significant positive shifts/changes in the health financing landscape and a few of the processes that led to these. 4 Key presentations: Each Presentation 10 mins	
	1.The Road from 300 to 700 Billion Kwacha – (What lessons can we learn from the Malawi CSO Advocacy mechanism that led to increased allocation for health, resources for CSOs and commitments on social protection.)	Maziko Matemba
	2. Case Study on CSO led Immunization Budget Advocacy (IBA) in Nigeria, Ghana and Madagascar- Alignment with IBA GAVI objectives, Key Lessons and Results Achieved so far.	GHAI

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11:00	Q&A on first two presentations (15 mins)	Facilitator
	3. Advocating for increased domestic investments in health in the region through Parliament - Excerpts from the work done in the South, East and West African Region by the Parliamentarians Taskforce on DRM	Daniel Molekele- Co-Chair, Parliamentarian Taskforce on DRM for Health in Africa
	4. Achievements and challenges at the subnational level: The process of getting subnational county budgets increased and what remains to be done	Reena Atuma- Population Reference Bureau
	Q & A on presentations 3&4: 15 mins	Facilitator
	Plenary Discussion on Challenges and Lessons learnt in Advocacy for Health Financing (20mins)	Facilitator
12:30	Break	
13:30	Collaboration on DRM Advocacy Strategies: Sharing of the different models of support health financing advocacy and the overall landscape.	Session Facilitator: Regina
	Market place exhibition - 5 different stations, with 10 mins spent by different participants at each station on a rotational basis. Participants should keep in mind the questions that will be discussed in plenary later: • How have CSOs supported by the JLA interacted with these models? • What have you seen that was new to you and that you think could strengthen your work?	Presenters for each stand

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Time	Day 1: Drawing Lessons from the Key Successes and Challenges in advancing CSO Advocacy for Health Financing	Facilitator / Presenter
13:30	Poster Presentation of the following different Engagement Models • ALM High level National Health Financing Dialogues (Shu-Shu plus CSO representatives from Burundi, Rwanda, Zambia, Kenya) • Global Health Advocacy Incubator • P4H • IBP • Future of Global Health Initiatives (Each Station has a Poster with an identified presenter. The Posters to include the process, outcomes, challenges, achievements and summarize commitments made from the different Engagement Models.) (1 Hour: facilitator calls for rotations every 10 minutes so that all participants see all stands) Plenary discussion: How have CSOs supported by the JLA interacted with these models? What have you seen that was new to you and that you think could strengthen your work? (30mins)	
15:00	Break	
15:30 - 17:00	What does success look like in terms of partnership, and alignment and coordination? Group work - participants sit at their tables to discuss two questions: • How can we better coordinate, align, learn from the different models of support for CSO- led health financing advocacy? How can other mechanisms and processes better involve CSOs? (20 mins) • How can we better monitor, track and document results of different CSO led Health financing Advocacy models for impact? (20mins) Plenary discussion: group feedback (45 mins)	Session facilitator: Matt (Facilitator informs participants when they should move to the second question).

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Time	Day 2: Shaping the JLA Opportunities in the Global Health Financing Agenda. How do we move forward as a network?	Facilitator / Presenter
9:00	Identifying challenges and opportunities for future Health Financing Advocacy in the region Group Work Part A : Each table works on a specific topic to identify challenges and opportunities (e.g capacity building; Collaborations & networking; funding for advocacy, Technical Assistance, Tools & Platforms) (One hour) Group Work Part B: What is needed to address the challenges and build on the opportunities? What types of support does civil society need? (One hour) (Groups will be formed around the tables in the room, set up as cabaret/bistro).	Facilitator: Chris
10:30	Working Tea Break	
11:30	Report Back from Groups at Plenary	Facilitator: Regina
	Summary Of Key Outcomes from Group Work	Group leads
12:30	Break	
13:30	CSO -Closed Door Session	Rosemary, Olivia
	Future of CSO engagement in Health Financing Advocacy at Country and Regional Levels 1. Priority Areas of CSO work in Health Financing 2. What support do CSOs need in this space Prepare clear “asks” to present after the break.	Assisted by Chris, Regina, Matt
15:00	Break	

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15:30	Future of the CSO-led Advocacy for Health Financing - Mobilizing Stakeholder Commitments going forward	Facilitator: Regina
	i) How can CSOs advance increased investments for Health Financing in the region? ii) How can Development Partners better support CSO-led Advocacy for Health Financing now and into the future? (20 mins) Discussion (40 mins)	Presentation from previous session
	Closing Remarks (30 mins)	WACI Health, ISA, Global Fund, GFF