

Press release

Nairobi, April 30, 2026

WHS Regional Meeting 2026 Sets Implementation Agenda for Africa's Health Systems

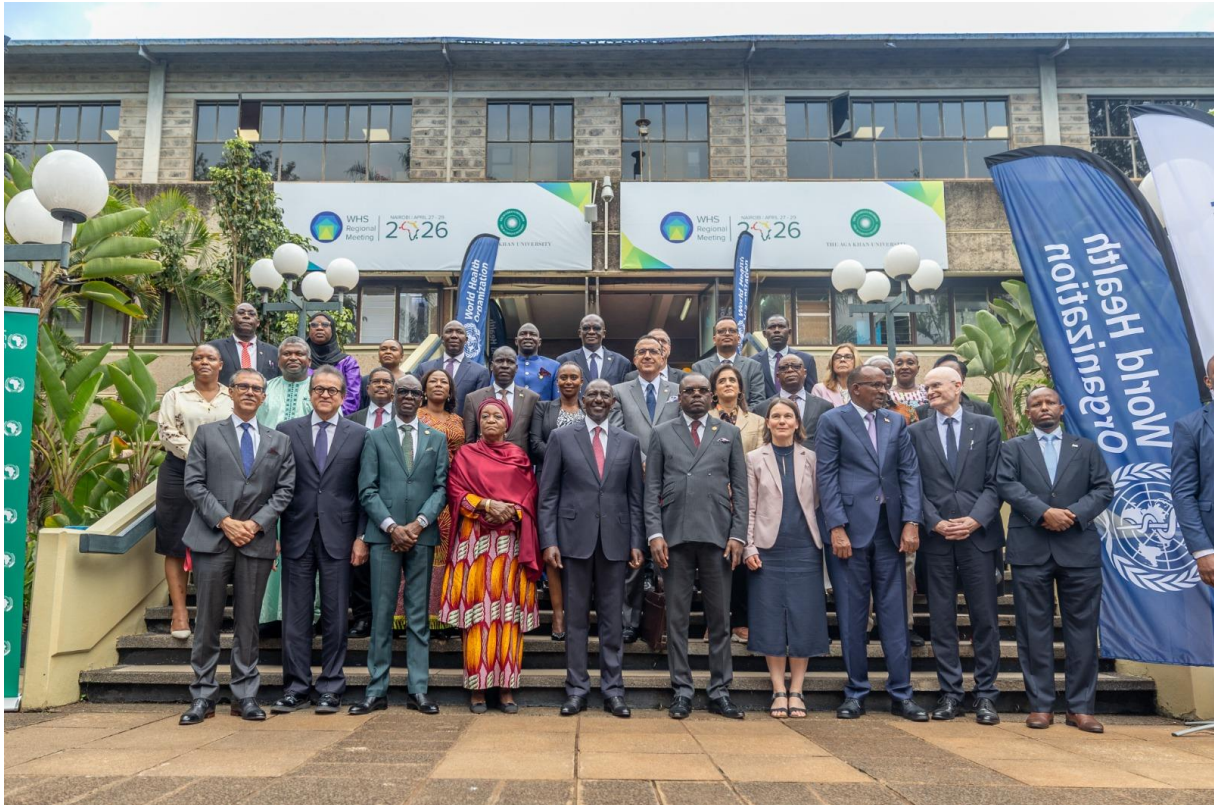


Photo credit: The Aga Khan University

The [World Health Summit \(WHS\) Regional Meeting 2026](#) concluded yesterday in Nairobi with a strengthened consensus among African health leaders to accelerate the shift from health policy dialogue to implementation-focused health systems transformation across the continent.

Hosted by Aga Khan University and held from April 27–29 at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), the meeting brought together more than 3,000 participants from over 80 countries from Africa and beyond, including Ministers of Health, global health institutions, multilateral agencies, private sector leaders, researchers, and youth representatives.

The 2026 convening marked a clear pivot point in the WHS Regional Meeting agenda, with stakeholders aligning around the need to move beyond fragmented interventions toward coordinated, scalable, and accountable health systems delivery models.

Under the theme “Reimagining Africa’s Health Systems: Innovation, Integration, and Interdependence,” discussions highlighted persistent structural constraints, including under-resourced primary healthcare systems, uneven access to care, workforce shortages, and fragmented financing mechanisms, while advancing practical pathways to address them at scale.

The meeting emphasized that future progress will depend not only on policy alignment, but on measurable execution at country level, with stronger accountability mechanisms to track implementation outcomes.

Reflecting on this shift, Prof. Lukoye Atwoli, International President of the WHS Regional Meeting 2026, stated:

“The central outcome of the Summit was a strong push toward health sovereignty across the continent—emphasizing the need for African countries to expand local manufacturing of health products, increase domestic health financing, build resilient systems capable of responding to shocks, and ensure that policies and legislation are driven by local priorities rather than external dependencies. We must move decisively from commitment to implementation, ensuring that innovation, partnerships, and investment are translated into coordinated action and deliver measurable, equitable transformation in health systems and outcomes across the continent.”

Speaking during the meeting, Prof. Axel R. Pries, President of the World Health Summit, underscored the urgency of cross-sectoral collaboration to drive progress in health:

“Health is a strategic investment in resilience, stability, and sustainable development. This is what the World Health Summit stands for: bringing sectors and regions together to advance innovation and strengthen health systems. The WHS Regional Meeting 2026 sent a strong signal in this direction by connecting regional priorities with the global health agenda. The momentum generated in Nairobi will be crucial for the upcoming discussions around the World Health Assembly in Geneva this May and the World Health Summit 2026 in Berlin.”

Reinforcing the importance of global and regional alignment, Dr. Mohammed Janabi, World Health Organization Regional Director for Africa, emphasized:

“For WHO, this Summit reinforces our direction. Our focus is supporting countries to strengthen their primary healthcare, mobilize sustainable domestic financing, responsibly harnessing digital innovation, and build systems that are resilient to shocks, whether from pandemics, climate change, or economic pressures. Africa is ready to lead, but leadership must be matched with trust, long-term investments and very genuine partnership like what we have now with the World Health Summit.”

Highlighting continental coordination and health security priorities, H.E. Dr. Jean Kaseya, Director General of Africa CDC, noted:

“This meeting marks a clear shift for Africa, from fragmentation to integration, from vulnerability to sovereignty, and from vision to execution. The Africa Health Security and

Sovereignty agenda provides the blueprint for this transformation, and our collective responsibility now is to deliver, together, at scale.”

A defining outcome of the 2026 meeting was a renewed commitment to implementation-oriented collaboration across countries and institutions. Participants converged on the need to align health investments, digital innovation, and workforce strategies within coherent national and regional systems rather than isolated programs.

Key areas of convergence included:

- Accelerating adoption of integrated, people-centred primary healthcare systems as the foundation of Universal Health Coverage (UHC)
- Strengthening regional coordination mechanisms for health security and emergency preparedness
- Expanding digital health infrastructure and data-driven decision-making systems, including responsible use of AI
- Advancing sustainable health financing approaches that reduce fragmentation and improve efficiency
- Investing in health workforce capacity, retention, and leadership pipelines
- Strengthening youth, community, and civil society participation in health system governance

The outcomes of the Nairobi meeting are expected to directly inform the agenda for the [World Health Summit 2026](#) and the next [WHS Regional Meeting in 2027 in Hong Kong](#), with a sharpened focus on execution, scalability, and measurable impact. Future priorities will centre on strengthening cross-border health coordination, unlocking sustainable financing for universal health coverage, and scaling proven innovations that can be embedded within national health systems.

About the World Health Summit

The World Health Summit is the leading platform for global health. Founded in 2009, it brings together leaders and changemakers from politics, science, the private sector, and civil society to set the agenda for a healthier future. The annual Summit is held every October in Berlin, organized by the WHS Foundation GmbH, a 100% subsidiary of Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin. The Summits are complemented each year by a WHS Regional Meeting held in a different part of the world, where regional health priorities take center stage.

About the Aga Khan University (AKU)

Aga Khan University is a private, not-for-profit institution committed to improving quality of life in the developing world through excellence in education, research, and health care delivery. With campuses and programs across Africa, South Asia, and the United Kingdom, AKU plays a leading role in advancing health systems strengthening, training health professionals, and generating evidence to inform policy and practice. The University is a key contributor to regional and global health innovation and capacity building.

Press Contact

World Health Summit

Communications Team

Email: communications@worldhealthsummit.org

Web: www.worldhealthsummit.org