

2025

ANNUAL REPORT



Advancing
women's health
in Africa

Message from the Leadership

Dear COWHA Members, Strategic Partners, and Stakeholders,

As we reflect on 2025, we do so with deep pride and renewed resolve. This year marked a pivotal moment in COWHA's evolution, from a growing Coalition into a recognized continental convener and trusted policy partner for women's health in Africa. Across countries, sectors, and communities, COWHA's African-led collaboration translated policy commitments into tangible progress for women, adolescents, and newborns, by influencing continental and national policy dialogue and strengthening coordinated action at country level.

Guided by our vision of equitable healthcare and optimal well-being for all women and girls in Africa, 2025 was a year of consolidation and action. We strengthened governance structures, institutionalized our advisory leadership, deepened policy engagement, and amplified evidence-based advocacy across sexual and reproductive health (SRH), maternal and newborn health (MNH) and women's cancers. These efforts reinforced COWHA's role as a credible platform for aligning policy, evidence, and advocacy in support of women's health priorities.

This progress was achieved amid a complex and evolving global health landscape. Constrained financing, shifting donor priorities, and persistent inequities tested health systems and institutional resilience across the continent. In response, COWHA sharpened its strategic focus, prioritizing domestic resource mobilization, African-owned data and evidence, policy coherence, and inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships. These challenges reaffirmed a core conviction: sustainable progress in women's health must be African-led, data-driven, and anchored in collective action.

Looking Ahead: Strategic Direction for 2026–2028

Building on this foundation, COWHA now moves decisively from consolidation to scale. As we enter the 2026–2028 strategic period, our focus shifts toward deepening continental influence while strengthening country-level impact, accelerating the translation of policy commitments into measurable and sustainable improvements in the health and well-being of women and girls.

Over the next three years, COWHA will strengthen its position as a leading continental voice on women's health policy, financing, and accountability. We will intensify advocacy for sustainable domestic investment, advance African-owned evidence and data ecosystems, and support governments to integrate women's health priorities into national development agendas, universal health coverage frameworks, and economic planning processes. Engagement with continental and regional institutions, including the African Union, Africa CDC, and Ministries of Health, will remain central to this strategy.

Operationally, we will strengthen our Technical Working Groups (TWGs) as engines for policy influence, innovation, and implementation, while expanding strategic partnerships that unlock resources, expertise, and multi-country collaboration. We will continue to elevate community and adolescent voices to ensure that lived experience informs policy design, financing decisions, and service delivery models.

On behalf of the leadership of COWHA, I extend my deepest gratitude to our members, strategic partners, advisors, and Secretariat for your unwavering commitment to this mission. Together, we are advancing a future where women's health is recognized and invested in as a cornerstone of Africa's equity, resilience, and sustainable development.

Warm regards,

Mrs. Mokgadi Mashishi
Chairperson, COWHA



Key Milestones & Achievements of 2025

Our Journey to Impact: Building the Foundation for Change

In 2025, the Secretariat reinforced the Coalition's institutional backbone while expanding its reach and membership, forging strategic partnerships, and deepening policy and community engagement. Through strategic partnerships, reinforced governance structures, and deeper engagement across policy, research, media, and communities, the Coalition was positioned for sustained growth and long-term impact. These efforts demonstrated COWHA's commitment to evidence-based advocacy, African-led solutions, and measurable progress in advancing women's health across the continent.

1. Institutional Strengthening and Coalition Growth

- **Welcomed MSD as a Premium Member and Oversight Board Member**



"MSD is delighted to join COWHA. We are committed to applying our expertise in healthcare innovation, evidence-driven solutions, and strategic partnerships to support COWHA's advocacy, strengthen health systems, and improve the health and well-being of women and girls across Africa."



Vuyo Mjekula

Director: External Affairs (Policy & Market Access), sub-Saharan Africa, MSD

- **We formalized FP2030 as a strategic partner, enhancing regional and national advocacy capacity on SRHR and family planning.**



The addition of FP2030 and MSD strengthened the Coalition, bringing global credibility and technical expertise that enhances COWHA's policy influence and accelerates progress for women's health at scale across the continent.

"I am pleased to join the COWHA, an organization that plays a vital role in uniting diverse stakeholders to advance women's health across the continent. Through FP2030's global partnership, data, and accountability mechanisms, I look forward to supporting COWHA's evidence-based advocacy and policy engagement, and contributing to the development of more equitable, responsive, and sustainable health systems, with a focus on advancing sexual and reproductive health."



Dr. Sheila Macharia

Managing Director FP 2030 East and Southern Africa Regional Hub

2. Established the Advisory Council

COWHA formally established its Advisory Council, welcoming three distinguished leaders whose expertise significantly strengthened the Coalition's strategic and technical guidance:



Prof. Anne Kihara

Former President, The International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO)



Dr. Githinji Gitahi

Group CEO, AMREF Health Africa



Mrs. Clare Omatseye

Vice President, Africa Healthcare Federation (AHF)

Through its bi-annual meetings, the Advisory Council supports the Coalition's strategic direction, identifying key priorities and initiatives to strengthen its influence, partnerships, and impact across the continent.

3. Leadership Transition for Strategic Continuity and Growth

COWHA's Technical Working Groups (TWGs) underwent structured leadership transitions, enabling new Chairs to leverage their respective expertise to guide each TWG into its next phase of strategic focus, innovation, and impact.

SRH & MNH TWG:

Incoming Chair



Dr. Evans Mathebula

Senior Regional Manager Medical, Clinical and Scientific Affairs in Africa Abbott Rapid Diagnostics

Outgoing Chair



Dr. Gathari Ndirangu

Chief of Party Jhpiego

Cancers & NCDs TWG:

Incoming Chair



Jacqueline Karachi
Head of Sales, HID, EEMEA,
QIAGEN

Outgoing Chair

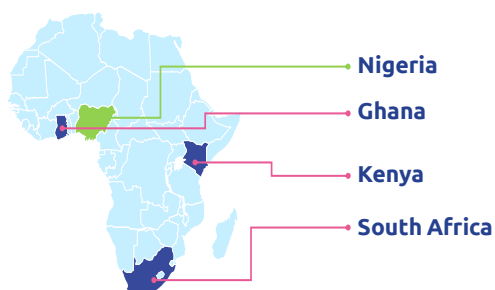


Paula Nieuwoudt
Sales Manager
BD

Both TWGs convened quarterly as strategic platforms to advance COWHA's health priorities, strengthening inter-ministerial collaboration, enabling knowledge exchange, coordinating multi-country initiatives, and advancing evidence-based interventions with measurable continental impact.

4. Geographic Expansion and Regional Partnerships

Building on the momentum from the high-level roundtable hosted in Abuja during the AHB Symposium in July and the strategic relationships formed with the Ministry of Health, Nigeria, COWHA expanded into the country, establishing a strategic hub for West African engagement. This milestone enhanced the Coalition's ability to strengthen health systems, drive multi sector collaboration, amplify women's voices in health policy, and mobilise sustainable investment in women's health across the region.



5. Global Recognition and Visibility

COWHA's technical expertise and advocacy received international acclaim, with its abstracts selected from a highly competitive pool for presentation at the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) and the Africa CDC Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA). These recognitions highlight the Coalition's growing credibility, thought leadership, and influence in women's health across the continent. They reflect a year of strategic consolidation, leaving the Coalition exceptionally well-positioned to scale its influence, deepen partnerships, and accelerate impact under the 2026–2028 Strategic Framework.



CPHIA, October 2025 | Durban, South Africa



COWHA at FIGO Congress, October 2025 | Cape Town, South Africa

6. Annual General Meeting and High-Level Networking

COWHA convened its second Annual General Meeting (AGM), bringing together over 40 members, strategic partners, and Advisory Council representatives to reflect on progress and define the Coalition's future direction. The AGM strengthened collective accountability through a review of 2025 achievements, reaffirmed African-led leadership in women's health, and shaped strategic priorities for the 2026–2028 period.

Key outcomes included:

- Strong alignment around African-owned women's health priorities and programmatic leadership.

- Deepened collaboration between development partners and private-sector actors to accelerate impact across cancer care, reproductive, and maternal health.

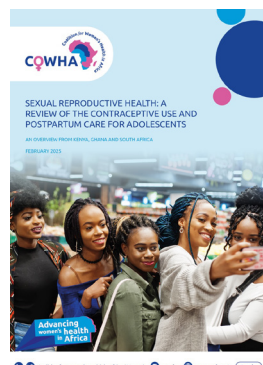
The AGM concluded with a high-level networking session featuring remarks from the Chief Guest, Hon. Gathoni Wamuchomba, Member of Parliament for Githunguri, Kiambu County, who emphasized decisive leadership, accountability, and coordinated advocacy as critical levers for translating policy commitments into measurable health outcomes.



Our Achievements In 2025 Across The “3 Core Pillars”

Pillar 1 – Knowledge & Research

1. Dissemination of Evidence - Based Research



Sexual and Reproductive Health: A Review of Contraceptive Use and Postpartum Care for Adolescents in Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa

[Click to read more](#)

Key Findings and Strategic Insights

- Expand adolescent-friendly contraceptive services to prevent early pregnancies, reduce maternal health risks, and lower vulnerability to HIV/STIs.
- Strengthen adolescent-focused postpartum and post-abortion care to improve recovery and long-term health outcomes.
- Adopt multi-sectoral reforms across policy, health workforce, supply chains, community engagement, and data systems for sustainable impact.

This report now serves as a core advocacy and policy reference tool for national and regional stakeholders.

2. Position Paper on Domestic Financing for Women’s Health

Published in September 2025, the paper calls on African governments to embed women’s health priorities into national budgets, framing it as an economic investment critical for productivity, health equity, and system resilience.



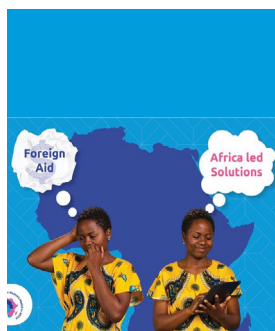
Key Evidence Highlights

- Africa accounts for 70% of global maternal deaths, yet domestic financing is insufficient.
- Every \$1 in family planning saves ~\$4 in maternal and newborn care.
- Closing the gender health gap could unlock \$1 trillion annually in productivity

Core Policy Recommendations

- Allocate ≥15% of national budgets to health with prioritization for women's health.
- Adopt innovative financing mechanisms (health levies, targeted sin taxes).
- Expand public-private partnerships for access, efficiency, and accountability.
- Strengthen local production of contraceptives and essential medicines.
- Scale digital health and telemedicine solutions for women and girls.
- Institutionalize accountability through citizen-led budget monitoring and transparent reporting.

3. Knowledge Piece:



Co-authored an opinion piece with Organon responding to halted USAID funding, advocating urgent domestic and innovative financing to sustain progress in women's health.

[Click to read more](#)

Pillar 2- Dialogue, Advocacy & Awareness

1. COWHA Webinar and High-Level Roundtable Session Highlights and Reports

COWHA's webinars and strategic roundtables are core mechanisms for advancing Pillar 1 (Knowledge & Research) and Pillar 2 (Dialogue, Advocacy & Awareness). These platforms convene policymakers, technical experts, civil society, development partners and the private sector to exchange insights, identify system gaps, mobilize stakeholders, and shape policy and financing agendas for women's health.

• Webinar 1:

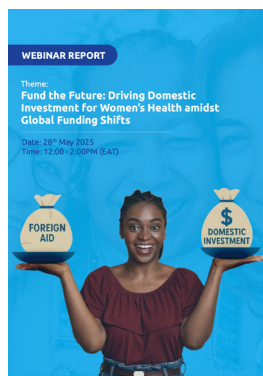
A capacity-building webinar focused on impact-driven proposal development and strategic donor engagement. Led by Sham Musyoki, Public Health Specialist at MSI Kenya, the session equipped participants with practical tools to navigate competitive funding environments and strengthen the sustainability and measurable impact of women's health programs.



Mastering Grant Writing for Women's Health Initiatives | 18 March 2025

[Click to read more](#)

• Webinar 2:



Fund the Future – Driving Domestic Investment for Women's Health amidst Global Funding Shifts | 28 May 2025

[Click to read more](#)

Objective: Address sustainable financing of women's health in Africa amid declining donor support.

Key Recommendations and Insights

- **Increase and optimize health financing:** Move toward the 15% Abuja target, adopt innovative funding tools, and reduce out-of-pocket costs through expanded social protection.
- **Integrate gender and UHC priorities:** Institutionalize gender-responsive budgeting and embed women's health services into UHC packages.
- **Strengthen systems and partnerships:** Improve financial tracking with interoperable data, leverage pooled procurement, and foster public-private collaborations across diagnostics, supply chains, and digital health.
- **Engage communities:** Co-design contextually relevant solutions with local populations to ensure effectiveness and sustainability.

• Roundtable 1:



Investing in Her Future:
Sustainable and Innovative
Financing for Women's SRHR in
a Changing Global Landscape |
17 July 2025 Abuja, Nigeria

[Click to read more](#)

Objective: Identify resilient, African-led financing solutions for SRHR amid declining donor funding.

Distinguished Panelists:



Key Strategic Priorities Identified:

- **Mobilize and optimize financing:** Promote innovative, gender-responsive mechanisms (health bonds, levies, sin taxes, PPPs) while strengthening domestic resource mobilization (DRM) and strategic purchasing.
- **Integrate SRHR into planning and policy:** Embed SRHR into national economic, fiscal, and UHC strategies, advancing targeted, evidence-based policy reforms.
- **Foster ownership and collaboration:** Drive local ownership, community investment, multi-stakeholder coordination, and sustained political commitment.

Impact: Informed COWHA's policy advocacy and expansion into West Africa, reinforcing its leadership in African-led SRHR financing solutions.

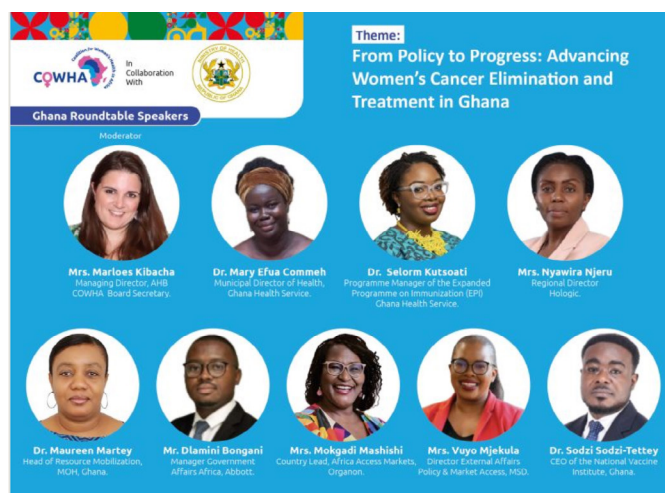
• Roundtable 2:



From Policy to Progress:
Advancing Women's Cancer
Elimination and Treatment
in Ghana | 8 December 2025,
Accra, Ghana | Co-Convenor:
Ministry of Health, Ghana

[Click to read more](#)

Distinguished Speakers :



Key Strategic Priorities Identified:

- **Strengthen integrated and sustainable services:** Enhance efficiency through integrated service delivery and secure financing to ensure continuity.
- **Engage communities and coordinate sectors:** Increase awareness and uptake through community engagement and harmonize efforts via multisectoral collaboration.

Outcome: Developed a national roadmap for women's cancer prevention and treatment, reinforcing cross-sector partnerships and enabling sustainable service expansion.

2. Community Voices & Storytelling:

Grassroots Storytelling to amplify community and adolescent perspectives and generate evidence to inform policy and program design.

Featured Episodes and Outcomes:

- **Community Health Promoters: The Unsung Heroes:** Highlighted stockouts, limited tools, registration barriers, and communication gaps.
Outcome: Highlighted the need for systemic support to strengthen frontline service delivery.



- **Adolescent Girls and Barriers to SRHR Access:** Explored early pregnancy, stigma, mental health challenges, and fear of disclosure.
Outcome: Highlighted adolescent-responsive policies and improved access to SRHR services.



- **Cancer Screening Gaps (Nairobi, August 2025):** Highlighted high costs, low awareness, stigma, and late detection.
Outcome: Strengthened advocacy to integrate cancer screening into primary care and expand community outreach.



Strategic Impact: These narratives grounded COWHA's advocacy and financing priorities in lived realities, strengthening community-centered health system reforms.

3. Fireside Chats and Expert Dialogues:

- **Fireside Chat 1:**
From Production to Access – Bridging the Last Mile in Adolescent Contraceptive Use

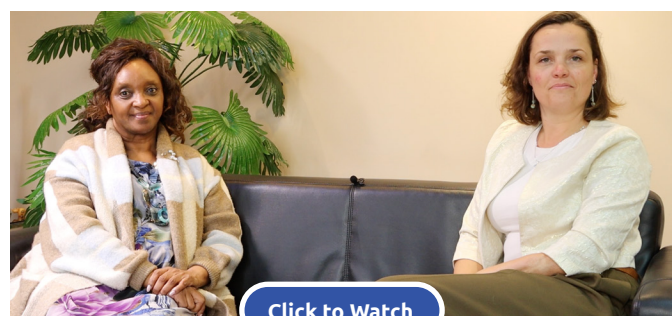
Hosted by Elizabeth Kyalo, Project Associate at AHB, with insights from Mrs. Mokgadi Mashishi, Chair of COWHA and Country Lead at Africa Access Markets, Organon. The session explored policy, affordability, and cultural barriers to contraception access.



Outcome: Highlighted the critical role of multi-sectoral partnerships in enabling informed reproductive choices.

- **Fireside Chat 2:**
Maternal Mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa

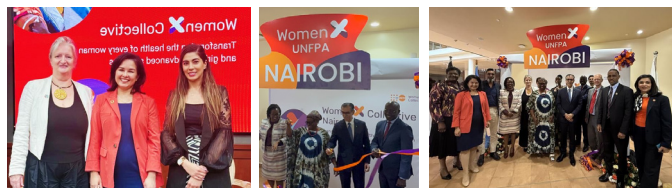
Hosted by Esther Ruiter, Head of Growth & Strategy at AHB, with Prof. Anne Beatrice Kihara, Immediate Past President of FIGO. The discussion focused on health system strengthening, skilled workforce support, and dignified maternal care.



Outcome: Reinforcing the need for coordinated, evidence-based interventions to reduce maternal deaths and improve outcomes for mothers and newborns.

4. High Level Events – COWHA participated in 2025

UNFPA WomenX Collective Nairobi Hub Launch Nairobi, Kenya | 9 June 2025



COWHA proudly joined the high-profile launch of the UNFPA WomenX Collective Nairobi Hub, a transformative platform positioning Kenya as a continental epicenter for women's health innovation and impact. The event convened global and African leaders, including Dr. Natalia Kanem (UNFPA Executive Director), Dr. Sulaiman Shahabuddin (President, Aga Khan University), Dr. Mazyanga Lucy Mazaba (Regional Director, Africa CDC), and Amb. Philip Thigo (Government of Kenya), highlighting the Hub's strategic importance in mobilizing capital, fostering cross-sector partnerships, and accelerating solutions for women and girls across Africa.

Key Highlights:

- Shifted the global fertility discourse toward reproductive agency, equity, and choice rather than population targets.
- Elevated the importance of menopausal health and life-course approaches within SRHR agendas.
- Officially launched the Nairobi Hub with a goal to mobilize USD 100 million for women's health innovation.

Recommendations:

- Integrate reproductive agency, including menopause, into national SRHR and health financing frameworks.
- Leverage blended finance and cross-sector partnerships to scale and sustain women-led health innovations.

National Cancer Summit 2025, Nairobi, Kenya | 27–30 July 2025



The National Cancer Summit 2025, themed “Uniting Our Voices and Taking Action,” convened national, county, and global leaders including Prime Cabinet Secretary Hon. Musalia Mudavadi, Health Cabinet Secretary Hon. Aden Duale, senior Ministry of Health officials, county leaders, civil society, private sector innovators, and international partners. The summit highlighted the urgent challenge that 70–80% of cancer cases in Kenya are diagnosed at late stages, and focused on strengthening early detection, expanding preventive services, and fostering cross-sector partnerships to ensure equitable access to care.

Key Highlights:

- Prioritized early detection and screening for breast and cervical cancer.
- Advanced national consensus on integrating HPV vaccination for girls aged 9–14.
- Highlighted decentralization of cancer services and adoption of digital innovations, including AI diagnostics.

Recommendations:

- Accelerate county-level rollout of cervical and breast cancer screening services.
- Align cancer financing and digital health investments with UHC implementation.
- Strengthen multi-sector collaboration between government, civil society, and private sector innovators to scale preventive, people-centered cancer solutions.

White Ribbon Alliance – #InHerLifetime National Forum Nairobi, Kenya | 1 August 2025 | Nairobi, Kenya



The National Forum presented findings from over 97,000 girls across 44 counties, revealing persistent barriers to quality, respectful, and equitable healthcare. COWHA, represented by Elizabeth Kyalo, Project Associate, played a key role in disseminating the findings and engaging in high-level policy dialogue, ensuring that the voices of girls and women informed national and county-level decision-making.

Key Highlights:

- Amplified lived experiences of girls and women across all counties
- Identified dignity, respectful maternity care, mental health, and financial autonomy as core priorities
- Reinforced the importance of community voices in health system accountability

Recommendations:

- Institutionalize dignity and respectful care standards across public and private health facilities
- Integrate social and economic empowerment considerations into women's health programming

Nation Media Foundation & FP2030 Roundtable and #NXTHER2025 Summit, Kenya | 21–22 August 2025



As the world approaches Beijing+30, COWHA joined the Women's Health Roundtable and #NXTHER2025 Summit, which convened policymakers, media leaders, civil society, and development partners to reinforce that advancing women's reproductive health is both a moral imperative and a development priority.

Key Highlights:

- Positioned women's health and SRHR as central to economic resilience and sustainable development.
- Highlighted youth and intergenerational leadership as critical drivers of systems change and family planning advocacy.

- Mobilized cross-sector champions and emphasized innovative funding and evidence-based approaches to expand access to reproductive health services.

Recommendations:

- Ensure sustained political commitment and financing for SRHR and family planning programs.
- Strengthen strategic cross-sector partnerships to scale high-impact women's health innovations.
- Institutionalize intergenerational leadership and media engagement to drive accountability and systemic change.

FIGO World Congress 2025, Cape Town, South Africa | 5–9 October 2025



At the XXV FIGO World Congress of Gynecology and Obstetrics- a global convening of more than 5,000 delegates from over 130 countries- Esther Ruiter, Head of Growth and Partnerships at AHB, and Natasha Gilani, Project Manager at COWHA, represented Africa on the global stage, advancing advocacy efforts and elevating key African priorities in women's health.

Key Highlights

- World Postpartum Haemorrhage Day: FIGO, WHO, and ICM declared 5 October 2025 and released consolidated guidelines for prevention and management of PPH, a leading cause of maternal death.
- Global evidence platform: Sessions advanced dialogue on maternal and newborn health, SRHR, cancer care, and digital health innovations.
- African expertise showcased: COWHA's award-winning e-posters highlighted impactful work in Cancers + NCDs and SRH + MNH, reinforcing Africa's global contribution.

Recommendations:

- Scale maternal care: Integrate PPH guidelines into national maternal health strategies.
- Strengthen leadership: Elevate African representation in global forums to shape policy, financing, and service delivery.
- Leverage innovation: Use research and digital solutions to drive equitable health system improvements.

Africa Health Tech Summit (AHTS), Kigali, Rwanda | 13–15 October 2025



The summit convened continental leaders to advance the translation of digital health innovation into scalable solutions across African health systems. COWHA actively engaged in dialogue on implementation and the design of gender-responsive digital health solutions, emphasizing the integration of women's needs and trust in technology deployment.

Key Highlights:

- Prioritized the transition from pilot projects to scalable, sustainable digital health solutions
- Highlighted the importance of interoperable data systems in ensuring continuity and quality of care

Recommendations:

- Invest in interoperable, gender-responsive digital health infrastructure
- Design digital health solutions centered on women's needs, accessibility, and trust

Quarterly Health Policy Advisory Committee (HPAC) Meeting – Ministry of Health Nairobi, Kenya | 2025



The quarterly HPAC meeting provided a platform for evidence-based policy dialogue with the Ministry of Health, where COWHA actively contributed to integrating women's health priorities into national strategy discussions, reinforcing the alignment of gender-responsive health policies with Kenya's UHC agenda.

Key Highlights:

- Strengthened alignment between women's health priorities and Kenya's UHC agenda
- Reinforced multi-sectoral collaboration in national health planning

Recommendations:

- Institutionalize women's health indicators within UHC monitoring frameworks
- Strengthen data-driven accountability across national and county levels

International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA), Durban, South Africa | 23–25 October 2025



Esther Ruiter, Head of Growth & Strategy, COWHA presented an abstract on cervical cancer prevention and treatment in Sub-Saharan Africa, contributing to continental knowledge exchange and policy dialogue

Key Highlights:

- Showcased evidence on policy gaps and disparities in cervical cancer control
- Elevated COWHA's role as a continental knowledge and advocacy leader

Recommendations:

- Translate regional evidence into harmonized cervical cancer policies
- Strengthen cross-country collaboration on cancer prevention and treatment

Nairobi Health Scientific Conference, Nairobi, Kenya | 5–7 November 2025



The 2nd Nairobi Health Scientific Conference brought together county leaders, policymakers, researchers, and health innovators to advance UHC and strengthen resilient, equitable health systems. Natasha Gilani represented COWHA at the event, engaging with stakeholders on strategies to enhance equitable healthcare delivery.

Key Highlights:

- Shared evidence-based approaches to advance UHC at county level.
- Strengthened partnerships between policymakers and researchers.
- Highlighted innovation and multi-sector collaboration as enablers of equitable health systems.

Recommendations:

- Scale proven innovations to strengthen UHC implementation.
- Foster sustained research-policy collaboration.
- Expand multi-sector partnerships to accelerate health system improvements.

County First Ladies' Association Strategic Plan Launch (2026–2028), Nairobi, Kenya | 18 November 2025



COWHA participated in the launch of the County First Ladies' Association (CFLA) Strategic Plan 2026–2028, actively engaging with public partners to co-create solutions for pressing challenges facing women and girls across the continent. The event was graced by the Chief Guest, Her Excellency First Lady Hon. Rachel Ruto, and reinforced COWHA's role as a continental advocate for women's health and empowerment, while elevating adolescent SRH as a multisectoral development priority.

Key Highlights:

- Elevated adolescent SRH as a multisectoral development priority
- Reinforced County Leadership in addressing teenage pregnancy

Recommendations:

- Scale county-led adolescent-friendly SRH services
- Strengthen coordination between county governments and national policy actors

G20 Social Summit On the sidelines of the G20 Social Summit | 18 November 2025

The event convened global and regional health leaders, policymakers, donors, innovators, researchers, and civil society to accelerate cervical cancer elimination across Africa and other LMICs.

Key Highlights:

- Multi-sector stakeholders aligned on cervical cancer strategies
- Shared best practices for prevention, screening, and treatment
- Strengthened public-private partnerships for wider access

Recommendations

- Actionable recommendations to improve governance, financing, and implementation of cervical cancer programs
- Boosted stakeholder commitment to scale cervical cancer elimination initiatives

Pillar 3- Action

Community Education and Awareness – Collaboration with Cure Cervical Cancer



In Vihiga County, Western Kenya, COWHA and Cure Cervical Cancer (CCC) collaborated on an awareness campaign that educated 5,000+ women on breast cancer screening, HPV vaccination, and SRH through community sessions and outreach activities.

"I had heard about cervical cancer, but I didn't know testing could be done at home. The health worker explained everything, even breast self-examination and family planning choices. I felt respected and empowered to decide for myself."
Participant, Luanda South Ward, Kenya

"Nilikuwa nimesikia kuhusu saratani ya mlango wa kizazi, lakini sikuwa najua kwamba vipimo vinaweza kufanywa nyumbani. Mhudumu wa Afya ya Jamii alinieleza kila kitu, hata jinsi ya kuchunguza saratani ya matiti na chaguo la upangaji uzazi. Nilijihisi kuheshimiwa na kupata nguvu ya kuamua kwa nafsi yangu."
Mshiriki, Luanda South Ward, Kenya



Impact:

- Increased screening and vaccination uptake
- Strengthened community health awareness
- Developed a scalable model for community-driven awareness
- Comprehensive women's health education

Blood Donation Drive with Coalition of Blood in Africa (CoBA)



At Pumwani Maternity Hospital, Nairobi, COWHA partnered with CoBA to address Postpartum Hemorrhage, a leading cause of maternal mortality. The drive collected 40 pints of blood, potentially saving 120 mothers' lives.

Impact:

- Raised awareness on maternal health and emergency blood access
- Strengthened multi-sector collaboration for maternal health

Overall: These initiatives demonstrate COWHA's commitment to empowering women, saving lives, and reinforcing health systems through community-focused, evidence-driven interventions.

COWHA 2025 Strategic Impact Overview

Knowledge & Research	Dialogue, Advocacy & Awareness	Action
 7 high-impact knowledge reports	 2 webinars, 2 roundtables, 2 fireside chats	 5,000+ women reached via SRHR & cancer education
 Research & advocacy in 3 countries	 Participation in 20+ stakeholder convenings	 120+ lives supported through blood donation drives
 2 abstracts accepted at CPHIA & FIGO	 Engaged 30 members & strategic partners	

Risks, Challenges, and Lessons Learned

COWHA navigated a complex landscape marked by declining donor funding, policy-to-implementation gaps, fragmented health data systems, and uneven subnational capacity, which occasionally limited the scale and impact of interventions. Despite these funding and structural challenges, the Coalition made significant strides in advancing sustainable, high-impact solutions for women's health across Africa.

Key Lessons:

- 1. Domestic and innovative financing are critical for sustainability:** Integrating women's health into national budgets, while leveraging innovative mechanisms such as health bonds, sin taxes, mobile levies, and public-private partnerships, reduces vulnerability to fluctuating donor support and ensures continuity of services.
- 2. Community and adolescent engagement drives relevance and uptake:** Interventions co-designed with communities, adolescents, and frontline health workers respond effectively to lived realities and context-specific needs.
- 3. Integrated service delivery enhances efficiency and impact:** Combining prevention, screening, and treatment services, including HPV vaccination and cancer care, maximizes reach, optimizes resources, and improves patient outcomes.
- 4. Multi-sectoral coordination accelerates outcomes:** Collaboration across governments, private sector actors, civil society, and development partners fosters cohesive, scalable, and sustainable interventions.
- 5. Evidence must be translated into economic and development narratives:** Framing data in terms of societal and economic benefits strengthens advocacy, mobilizes resources, and sustains political and policy commitment.
- 6. Targeted, strategic interventions yield measurable gains:** Focused, evidence-informed initiatives such as school-based vaccination programs or integrated HIV/cancer services, can achieve rapid progress even in resource-constrained settings.
- 7. Subnational capacity and workforce development are essential:** Strengthening county-level systems, technical capacity, and frontline workforce support ensures national strategies translate into local impact.
- 8. Community-centered advocacy enhances sustainability:** Grounding policies, programs, and financing priorities in lived experiences ensures reforms are practical, inclusive, and culturally appropriate.

These lessons will inform COWHA's 2026–2028 strategy, reinforcing a commitment to evidence-driven advocacy, domestic resource mobilization, inclusive partnerships, and community-centered approaches that deliver measurable, sustainable improvements in the health and well-being of women and girls across Africa.

Impact Outcomes in 2025

1. Institutionalized Women's Health in National Policy & Governance Systems:

COWHA is embedded within national policymaking institutions and TWGs in Kenya and Ghana, structurally integrating women's health priorities into UHC, cancer control, and national financing frameworks. By providing continuous evidence and engaging in policy platforms, the Coalition has transformed women's health from isolated projects into sustained, system-wide reform.

2. Positioned the Private Sector as a Trusted Partner:

As Africa's only private sector-driven Coalition focusing solely on advancing women's health in Africa, COWHA aligns government, industry, and civil society through structured multi-sector platforms. Private sector actors now serve as strategic policy shaping partners, enabling coordinated and effective planning, implementation, and innovation in women's health.

3. Elevated African Evidence to Continental and Global Platforms:

By translating local research and community voices into actionable policy, COWHA ensures African data shape national, continental, and global decisions through desk-based research. With accepted abstracts at CPHIA and FIGO, the Coalition directly sheds light on policy gaps in cervical cancer elimination, SRHR financing, and maternal health. Participating in over 30 high-level forums, COWHA works with key stakeholders to influence policies that advance health outcomes across Africa.

4. Catalyzed Domestic Financing and Economic Framing of Women's Health:

COWHA consistently frames women's health as an economic and development priority. Through strategic initiatives such as the Fund the Future webinar, roundtables, and the family planning position paper, COWHA shared DRM strategies and gender-responsive budgeting that ensure government budgets will be spent on addressing women's health advancement. These efforts strengthen the case for sustained investment, linking women's health to productivity, resilience, and long-term economic growth.

5. Expanded Geographic and Regional Influence:

Strategic engagement across West Africa, alongside deepened presence in Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa, strengthened cross-

country collaboration and policy alignment. Regional dialogues explored sustainable financing, PPPs, integrated service delivery, and data-driven accountability. These conversations created shared momentum around long-term solutions and positioned women's health within broader systems and resilience planning.

6. Translated Advocacy into Measurable Community Impact:

Policy dialogue was matched with action on the ground. In partnership with strategic allies, more than 5,000 women received education on SRH and breast cancer. Community cancer awareness campaigns expanded access to information and services, while blood donation drives, including one at Pumwani Maternity that collected 40 pints of blood, contributed to saving 120 women pre-during and/or post-delivery. These results show that coordinated advocacy can both influence systems and deliver immediate, life-saving support to women and families.

Outlook 2026–2028: From Consolidation to Scale

As COWHA transitions from consolidation to scale, the 2026–2028 period will focus on strengthening systems, expanding reach, and deepening impact across Africa. Building on a solid governance foundation and growing continental influence, COWHA will prioritize scalable, African-led solutions that translate evidence into action and deliver measurable outcomes for women and girls.

A key milestone in this transition will be the COWHA Strategy Meeting scheduled for April 2026, following which the Coalition will co-create and finalize its 2026–2028 strategic roadmap, ensuring alignment with regional priorities, member expertise, and continental health agendas.

How to Get Involved

COWHA is a growing Coalition committed to advancing women's health across Africa. We invite stakeholders to be a part of our mission by:

- Becoming a member or strategic partner
- Contributing technical expertise, data and research
- Supporting advocacy, financing, and implementation initiatives

[Click to be a Member](#)

Acknowledgements

COWHA extends its heartfelt gratitude to all stakeholders whose support remains central to the Coalition's success:

1. **Members:** Thank you for your dedication, collaboration, and tireless commitment to advancing women's health across Africa. Your engagement drives COWHA's mission forward.
2. **Partners:** Your expertise, collaboration, and shared vision enable meaningful change and strengthen health systems where it is needed most.
3. **Secretariat:** Your hard work, resilience, and passion underpin every achievement of the Coalition. Your commitment ensures COWHA's programs deliver lasting impact.

Closing Remark: Together, we enter 2026 with purpose, momentum, and determination, building a future where all women and girls have access to the healthcare, support, and opportunities they deserve.

**With appreciation,
The Coalition for Women's Health in Africa**





The Coalition for Women's Health in Africa (COWHA) is a collective private health sector action platform working towards the advancement of women's health in Africa.

Coalition for Women's Health in Africa (COWHA)

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Members



Strategic Partners



Technical Partner



CONVENED BY:



COWHA is an initiative from AHB which also serves as the secretariat and research lead at the Coalition. This report is developed by the consultancy team of AHB.

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