Paper 4. The policy implications of country income classification and transition for health systems and finance in Africa

**Overview:** Over the coming decade, many low-income countries are anticipated to reach lower-middle-income status as a result of rising national incomes. With this transition, the role of development assistance for health in financing health systems will change and the importance of domestic health finance will grow. This transition will have important implications for how health services in LMICs are financed and delivered. Specific questions include: How can countries raise and allocate the necessary resources to the health sector? How can countries ensure that health investments are efficient and targeted to the highest priority interventions to sustain progress in improving health outcomes? How can Ministries of Health work with key stakeholders – including the financial sector and international partners – to ensure sustainable financing for health? Using the lessons learned and recommendations from Ghana and Kenya, we will discuss the policy implications of graduation for health policy, health finance, and the achievement of a grand convergence in health in Africa.

**Session Objectives:**

* To outline the health policy implications for Ghana and Kenya of the rebasing of GDP and consequent move to lower-middle-income status, including implications for health finance
* To discuss the broader health policy implications of transitions from development assistance for health for the ministries of health and finance in Africa
* To discuss the promising policy pathways to achieve a Grand Convergence in Africa

**Key Findings:** Through the AfHEA and CIH research, together with engagements led by AfHEA and the CIH with policy-makers from the Ministries of Health and Finance in Ghana and Kenya, we have identified priority opportunities for health policy in regards to ensuring adequate investment in the health sector to achieve convergence. These include: resource mobilization strategies and opportunities for efficiency gains to increase fiscal space for health; identification of high-impact and priority interventions and delivery platforms for focused health investments; recommendations for donor agencies on strategic health investments to achieve convergence; and opportunities for engagement between governments, donors, and other health sector stakeholders to ensure health gains are maintained as sources of health finance shift within countries.

**Presenters:** Representatives of the Ministry of Health, Ghana, and Ministry of Health, Kenya