



2022 End of Year Statement to AfHEA Membership

Dear Colleagues,

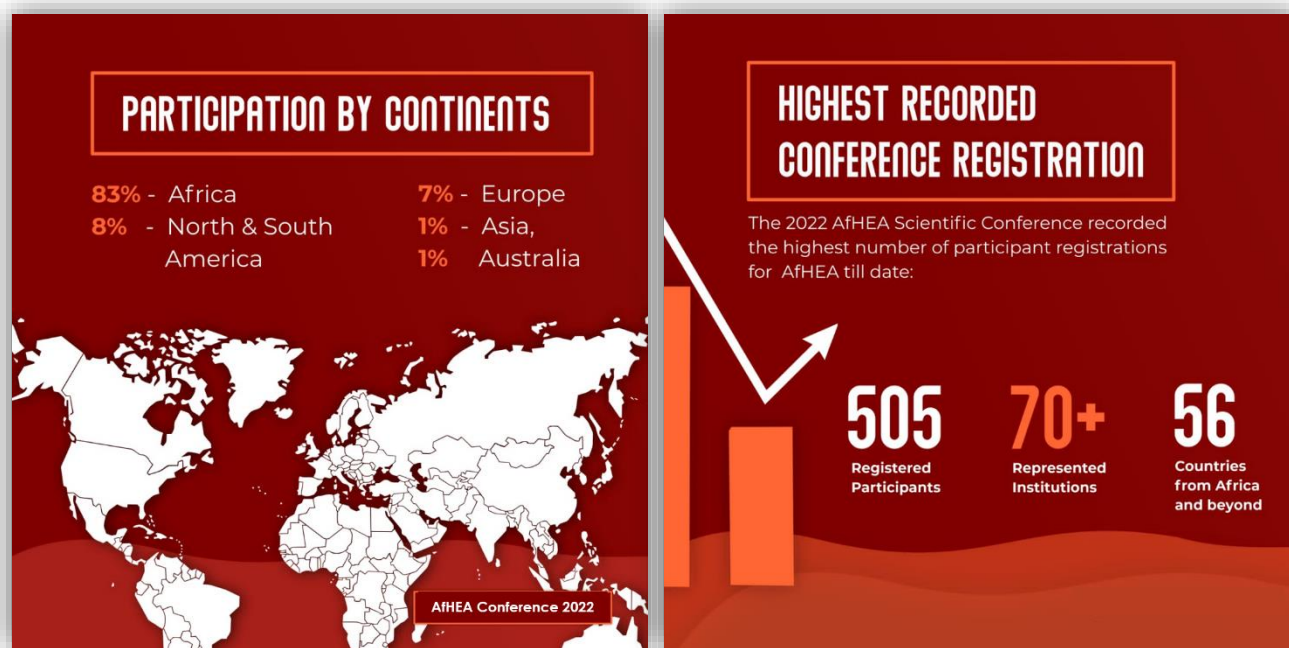
On behalf of the Board and Executive Committee of the African Health Economics & Policy Association (AfHEA), I would like to extend to you compliments of the season and wish you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year in 2023! It is our pleasure once again to bring you the report card on AfHEA's work in the past year and the planned activities for the coming year.

Activities undertaken in 2022

During the year, AfHEA was able to record the following achievements:

i. Successfully held our first fully-virtual conference

AfHEA held its first-ever fully-virtual conference from March 7-11. The 6th conference was widely regarded as successful by our conference delegates and attracted more than 500 participants drawn from 56 countries from Africa and beyond. The figure below shows the distribution of the participants by continent:





The conference program was rich with 58 different sessions consisting of plenary, parallel and poster sessions. In addition, the conference had a virtual networking event which the participants enjoyed to their fullest.

ii. Participation in national and regional meetings/events/webinars/workshops:

In 2022, AfHEA participated in and organized the following events:

1. Workshop on strategic purchasing in Tanzania

AfHEA facilitated a capacity strengthening workshop strategic purchasing and communicating research to policymakers in Tanzania in August 2022.

2. Webinar on communicating research to policy makers

In partnership with the African Health Observatory Platform (AHOP), a webinar on communicating research to policymakers was held on August 18, 2022. The webinar aimed to provide expert information on strategies for communicating research findings to policymakers to increase uptake in policy-making decisions.

3. Virtual scientific writing/capacity training workshop

AfHEA held a virtual scientific writing/capacity training workshop for Francophone early-career researchers from September 8 to 16, 2022. The one-week training equipped about 30 participants with skills in scientific writing to contribute significantly to scientific knowledge generation and sharing in Africa.

4. Workshop in Addis Ababa with Africa CDC and SPARC

AfHEA co-organized a workshop in collaboration with Africa CDC and Strategic Purchasing Africa Resource Center (SPARC) in Addis Ababa, from September 13 to 15, 2022. The aim of the workshop was to identify and develop a framework for sustainable capacity strengthening in health economics and health financing in Africa.

5. ECOVA Project Webinar with Africa CDC and UNECA

Held a webinar titled "Guaranteeing equitable access to vaccines in Africa: Is Africa ready for vaccine production?" on November 30, 2022. The webinar is part of [ECOVA project](#) implemented in partnership with Africa CDC and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

6. Abstracts Peer Review of Early career researchers

As part of our capacity-strengthening activities, AfHEA offered to peer-review abstracts of early career researchers interested in submitting their abstracts for the 2023 IHEA Congress. Authors who submitted their abstracts received useful



comments that enabled them to submit stronger abstracts and increase their chances of being accepted for the IHEA conference.

7. Support to HEAC inaugural conference

AfHEA also supported the Health Economics Association of Cameroon (HEAC) with funding towards their inaugural conference themed “Towards Universal Health Coverage in Cameroon: The Role of Health Economics Policy and Management Research” held from November 7-11, 2022. Our Executive Director, Prof. Ataguba, also gave a keynote address at the conference titled “Methodological considerations for assessing financial risk protection in a developing country context.”.

8. WHO-AFRO supported publications

Additionally, WHO-AFRO sponsored AfHEA to publish 8 papers as part of the special issue for Frontiers in Health Services Journal (<https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/25528/towards-equitable-health-systems-for-universal-health-coverage-uhc-in-sub-saharan-africa#articles>).

iii. Forging of partnerships with other institutions

During the year, AfHEA entered into (or renewed) partnership agreements with various institutions including: SPARC, UNECA, and Africa CDC. Other partnerships are also in the pipeline and will be activated in the coming year.

iv. Development of a new membership strategic plan

A new membership strategic plan was developed and approved by the Board of Trustees. The aim of the membership plan is to increase the number and quality of AfHEA's members as well as enhance the value of AfHEA to its members.

v. Redeveloped website

We redesigned our website in English (<https://afhea.org/en/>) and French (<https://afhea.org/fr/>) to increase AfHEA's visibility and enhance users' experience.

vi. Membership management

To improve engagement with our members, the redesigned website has a membership management platform that will make it easier for us to, among other things, track our



members, send reminders for membership dues payment, and generate reports as and when needed.

vii. Successfully concluded the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)-funded institutional support grant

The 5-year grant investment worth USD 1.1 million was successfully completed and closed out on August 14, 2022. The overall objective of the investment grant was to provide institutional support to AfHEA to perform its functions effectively across the African continent. At the close of the investment, this objective had been achieved.

viii. AfHEA's new and ongoing projects

1. The Economics of Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Interventions in Ghana and Senegal (EcASaRH) project

The EcASaRH project, funded by the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC), kick-started in April 2019 and is expected to end in 2023. The project is currently at an advanced stage, with most activities completed. In Ghana, the costing analysis of priority interventions was completed, and a stakeholders' validation workshop was organized in September 2022. These activities are also being completed in Senegal.

2. Investment cases for transformative results project- phase 2

In 2021 year, AfHEA was contracted by UNFPA to assist in providing technical research support on the "Investment cases for transformative results" project. The aim of the project is to develop strong investment cases argument to support advocacy for investing in reducing maternal mortality, support advocacy for the UHC agenda on family planning, ending female genital mutilation and ending gender-based violence. This project was successfully implemented in five African countries, namely, Botswana, Kenya, Madagascar, Namibia and South Sudan. The project ended in July 2021. Following the successful completion of the project, UNFPA contacted AfHEA again to extend the project to 10 more countries. Preliminary discussions of the second phase of the project have been undertaken and the work is expected to start in early 2023.

3. Public Financial Management (PFM) project

The WHO-AFRO awarded AfHEA a grant to conduct PFM case studies in 4 countries: Uganda, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, and Senegal. The case studies were completed, and a synthesis report was developed. The validation of the reports in the countries is outstanding but will be completed in 2023.



4. Equitable Access to the Covid-19 Vaccines in Africa (ECOVA) project

Implementation of the ECOVA project began during the year. An inception workshop was held in July 2022 in Addis Ababa. The implementation plan/matrix was developed which will guide the project's implementation by the three key partners: AfHEA, Africa CDC, and UNECA.

ix. Preparations for the 7th Scientific Conference

Following the successful holding of the 6th conference in March 2022, the Board of Trustees has now approved the holding of the 7th AfHEA conference in March 2024. Given the ease of covid-19 restrictions in most countries, the conference will be fully in-person and will be held in Kigali, Rwanda.

The main preparatory activities that have been completed so far are:

- Seeking approval from the Board of Trustees on the timing and venue for the conference.
- Preliminary meetings with Rwanda Convention Bureau, our conference planner.
- Setting up of a conference planning committee to steer the conference organization and planning.

x. Hiring of Accounts and Admin Assistant and transition to Officer

During the year, the Association brought on board a new staff member: the Accounts and Admin Assistant, Ms. Gloria Ekua Arthur to work directly with and subsequently transition into the role of Accounts and Admin Officer of the Secretariat in Accra.

xi. AfHEA's transition planning concluded

As the last step of AfHEA's transition process, the Board of Trustees, through the Nominations Committee, completed the selection of a new Executive Director for the association. The successful candidate, Prof. John Ataguba, officially took office on April 1, 2022.

Activities planned for 2023

In the year 2023, AfHEA will:

- i. Continue in earnest with the preparations for the 7th biennial conference.
- ii. Participate in IHEA 2023 Congress in Cape Town, South Africa. AfHEA has planned a series of events during the IHEA Congress including: two pre-Congress capacity-



building sessions (on Equity analysis and Health Technology Assessment), mentorship for early-career researchers and publishing select papers in a reputable peer-review journal, as well as a business and networking event for AfHEA members.

- iii. Conclude the PFM project.
- iv. Continue with the implementation of the ECOVA project.
- v. Start the implementation of the "Investment cases for transformative results project – phase 2" funded by UNFPA.
- vi. Deepen partnership with leading organizations on the continent including the KEMRI-Wellcome Trust in Kenya.
- vii. Roll out some exciting activities targeting early-career researchers for capacity building and enhancing career progression.

The Executive Director's vision for AfHEA in brief

Before concluding, let me take this opportunity to highlight what I plan for AfHEA briefly. Since taking over as the Executive Director of AfHEA, I have had the opportunity to engage widely with different stakeholders, seeking how best to serve AfHEA. It is important to note that AfHEA is unique because of its diverse membership spanning academics, researchers, policymakers, research institutions and think tanks. For the period of my directorship, with the support of my colleagues and the AfHEA's Board of Trustees, I hope to consolidate AfHEA's past achievements, continue to be responsive to the demands and needs of our members, and focus on the following (non-exhaustive):

- Deepen AfHEA's engagement with postgraduate health economics, health systems, and health policy students, including early-career researchers, through different dynamic activities
- Reactivate vibrant regional forums across the five regions in Africa for increased reach and impact
- Increase AfHEA's membership base, focusing on underrepresented groups, including women and non-English speaking members
- Encourage significant between-conference activities by leveraging digital technologies

Conclusion

I would like to sincerely thank all the members of AfHEA's Board, the Executive Committee, and the Secretariat who have continued to serve the Association with diligence this past year. Your contributions have kept AfHEA together as a great association.



Thanks to all AfHEA's members and partners for their commitment and encouraging support. Special thanks to the BMGF, IDRC, WHO-AFRO, and UNFPA for their financial support in the past years. Without any specific order, I thank Dr. Logan Brenzel (formerly with the BMGF), Dr. Marie-Gloriose Ingabire (with the IDRC), Drs. Juliet Nabyonga, Ogochukwu Chukwujekwu (with the WHO-AFRO), and Prof. Justice Nonvignon (with Africa CDC), who have remained AfHEA's trusted partners, supporting various AfHEA's activities. We look forward to working together in the coming year.

Lastly, heartfelt thanks to Dr. Chris Atim for nurturing the Association from infancy to where it is today. Your shoes remain too big to fill, and I will continue tapping into your wisdom as I steer this Association to greater heights.

We look forward to a greater 2023 for AfHEA.

Regards,

Prof. John Ataguba

AfHEA Executive Director

Contributions from: **Grace Njeri**, **Danny Achala** and **Elizabeth Adote**.