



2023 End of Year Statement to AfHEA Membership

Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

With warm regards from the Board and Executive Committee of the African Health Economics & Policy Association (AfHEA), I extend to you heartfelt compliments of the season and convey wishes for a Joyful and Prosperous New Year in 2024! It is with great pleasure once again that we present to you the report card on AfHEA's work and achievements over the past year, along with insights into the planned activities for the upcoming year.

Activities undertaken in 2023

Throughout the year, AfHEA successfully undertook the following activities:

i. Participation in global and regional conferences

These conferences included:

1. **The International Health Economics Association (IHEA) Congress** held in Cape Town, South Africa from 8-12 July 2023. During this Congress, AfHEA together with partners organized a series of events including: an all-Africa informal event and discussion forum and 3 pre-Congress sessions titled:
 - Introduction to Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Training on July 8, 2023 (9:00 AM - 4:00 PM) in partnership with Africa CDC and KEMRI Wellcome Trust.
 - Sustainable Health Financing Capacity Strengthening in Africa on July 9, 2023 (8:30 AM - 12:00 PM) in partnership with Africa CDC and CHAI.
 - Assessing and Explaining Health Inequality and Equity in a Developing Country Context on July 9, 2023 (12:30 PM - 4:30 PM) in partnership with Africa CDC, CHAI, KEMRI, WHO-AFRO and UNAIDS.
 - AfHEA maintained great publicity throughout the IHEA Congress:





Participants seeking clarification from Prof. Ataguba during group work

- Following the Congress, AfHEA commenced a mentorship program for early career researchers aimed at facilitating them to meet the required publishing standards for their papers with the Social Science and Medicine journal (*SSM Health Systems*) special issue themed: **“Advancing Universal Health Coverage in African Countries: 15th World Congress on Health Economics.”** The mentorship program, benefitting 17 Early Career Researchers (ECRs), is slated to continue until 2024. The ECRs were paired with mentors and paper reviewers to ensure the publication of high-quality journal papers
2. **The International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA)** held in Lusaka, Zambia from 27-30 November 2023.
- During this conference, AfHEA in collaboration with Africa CDC and UNECA organized a side event titled **“Evaluating Policy, Legal and Governance Frameworks to Enhance African Research and Development Capacity: Feasibility of attaining the 60% Vaccine Manufacturing Goal in Africa.”** This side event was integral to the activities of the Equitable Access to Vaccines in Africa (ECOVA) project.



Panelists from UNECA and Africa CDC
(left) and questions from a participant (right) during the AfHEA's side event

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

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

1. ***Rwanda's National Dialogue on Health Financing*** held on November 2-3 in Kigali, Rwanda. Our Executive Director, Prof. Ataguba, played a key role in the national dialogue global partners including World Health Organization (WHO), African Union (AU), African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD), Global Fund, The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) during which he moderated several sessions.



AfHEA's Executive Director addressing a panel session on the first day of the Rwanda national dialogue

2. ***Capacity Strengthening Workshop and Training on the Costing of Sexual and Reproductive Health Interventions*** held on October 25 and 26 in Kigali, Rwanda.

In partnership with the College of Medicine and Health Sciences of the University of Rwanda, this training benefited 30 Early Career Researchers (ERCs) from 4 countries in East and West Africa, namely, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Rwanda and Senegal.

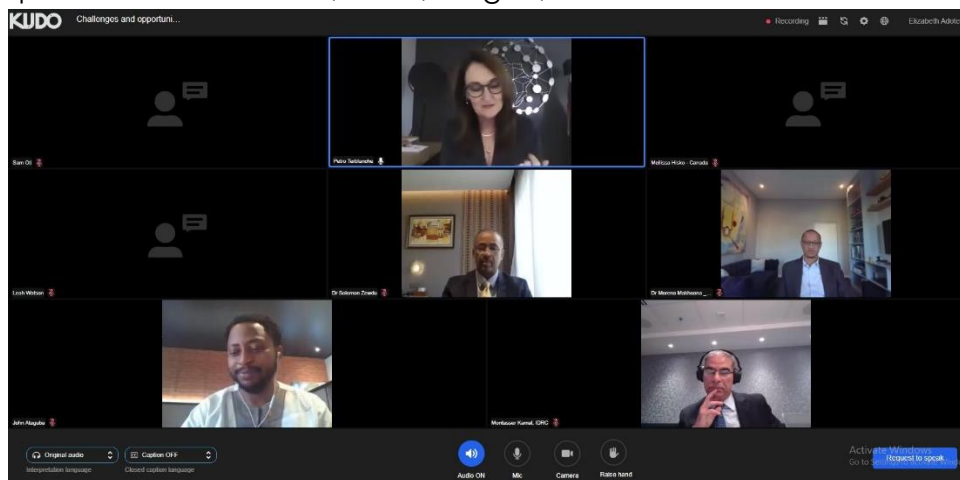


A section of participants from the Capacity Strengthening Workshop in Kigali

3. ***IDRC First Virtual Roundtable Meeting*** on October 25 on achieving equitable access to vaccines. In line with the ECOVA Project Rapid Assessment Report on the legal, governance and policy framework and research and development (R&D) for boosting vaccine manufacturing in Africa, AfHEA, represented by John Ataguba,



was invited to participate in this roundtable discussion to share insights alongside other experts from Africa CDC, WHO, Afrigen, Mastercard Foundation and Biovac.



Roundtable participants including AfHEA Executive Director (bottom left)


4. ***Virtual Workshop on How to Publish in Academic Journals*** held on October 11.

AfHEA, in partnership with Elsevier Publisher UK, organized this workshop to equip participants with knowledge on how academic journals operate and the guidelines on how to get published and involved in the journals. The webinar attracted over 100 participants.

Speakers


Professor John Ataguba
Co-Editor-in-Chief, SSM – Health Systems
University of Manitoba, Canada


John is an economist, a professor and the Canada Research Chair in Health Economics at the University of Manitoba. He is also the executive director of the African Health Economics and Policy Association (AfHEA). He has about 20 years of experience in many areas, including policy advice to governments, technical support to countries, teaching health economics and health systems, and leadership. He has significant work experience in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria and South Africa.



Matthew Smaldon,
Executive Publisher
Elsevier, UK

Matthew has over 20 years experience working in academic publishing for international publishing companies. He is currently the Executive Publisher responsible for Elsevier's Health Studies portfolio of journals, which includes SSM - Health Systems and Social Science and Medicine.





Resource persons at the AfHEA-Elsevier Virtual Workshop

5. ***Joint AfHEA-WAHO stakeholders' workshop on ASRH*** held on September 11-14 in Cote d'Ivoire. AfHEA in collaboration with the West African Health Organization (WAHO) organized a stakeholders' workshop on Adolescent, Sexual, and



Reproductive Health Interventions (ASRH), in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. This dissemination workshop climaxed activities of the Economics of Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Interventions (EcASaRH) project. The workshop attracted over 35 participants, mainly policy makers, from 11 West African countries.



Group Photo with all the participants at the AfHEA-WAHO Workshop

6. ***Virtual webinar on equitable access to vaccines in Africa*** held on June 14 AfHEA, in partnership with Africa CDC and UNECA, organized a webinar titled "***A Rapid Assessment Review of Existing Policy, Legal and Governance Frameworks to Improve Research and Development Capacity and Infrastructure for Vaccine Production and Development in Africa.***"

iii. Concluded projects

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 was successfully concluded in September 2023. The project was implemented in Ghana and Senegal.

Public Financial Management (PFM) project

The WHO-AFRO awarded AfHEA a grant to conduct PFM case studies in 4 countries namely, Uganda, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, and Senegal. The case studies were completed, and a synthesis report was developed.

iv. Ongoing projects

1. Investment cases for transformative results project- phase 2

Building on the successful completion of the first phase of the project in July 2021, UNFPA approached AfHEA once again to extend the project to three (3) more



countries, namely Rwanda, Burundi and Mozambique. The project is actively underway, reflecting the continued collaboration and commitment to advancing transformative results in the targeted regions.

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

Implementation of the ECOVA project began in 2022, commencing with an inception workshop held in July 2022 in Addis Ababa. Subsequently, the technical implementation phase of the project commenced this current year, with ongoing efforts expected to extend throughout 2024. This underscores IDRC and AfHEA's steadfast commitment to address the critical issue of equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines across the African continent.

v. Preparations for the 7th Scientific Conference

After the resounding success of the sixth (6th) conference in March 2022, the Board of Trustees approved the planning of the seventh (7th) AfHEA conference scheduled for March 2024. However, the conference was rescheduled to 2025, allowing ample time for ample preparation. A number of preparatory activities have been completed so far and include:

- Holding preliminary discussions with the Head of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation, and Health Financing at the Ministry of Health of Rwanda.
- Preliminary meetings with Rwanda Convention Bureau, our conference planner.
- Setting up of a conference planning committee to steer the conference organization and planning.
- Setting up of the conference scientific committee to oversee the scientific aspects of the conference
- Signing an agreement with a conference management service provider.

Activities planned for 2024

In the year 2024, AfHEA will:

- i. Continue in earnest with the preparations for the seventh (7th) biennial conference.
- ii. Continue with the implementation of the ECOVA project and the investment cases project.
- iii. Undertake capacity-building activities for early-career researchers in a bid to enhance their skills and career progression.
- iv. Participate in regional and global activities including high-level meetings.
- v. Continue with efforts to secure additional projects and funding



- vi. Invite members to volunteer and make presentations on key topics of interest in our webinars
- vii. Increase AfHEA membership base especially focusing on new institutional members

Conclusion

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the esteemed members of AfHEA's Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee, and the Secretariat for your unwavering commitment and service to the Association with diligence this past year. Your collective contributions continue to propel AfHEA to greater heights of excellence.

A special note of appreciation goes to AfHEA's highly cherished members and partners for your commitment and encouraging support. We look forward to continue working together in the upcoming year.

Wishing you all a festive, merry season and a prosperous new year in 2024 with fulfillment of new milestones for all.

Sincerely,

Prof. John Ataguba
Executive Director
AfHEA

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