



## GLOBAL SOLUTIONS FOR AFRICAN HEALTH FINANCING:

AHFIA'S INSIGHTS FROM THE WORLD BANK  
SPRING MEETINGS 2025



Last week, the AHFIA team attended the 2025 World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington, D.C., where we joined global leaders and technical experts to explore pressing macroeconomic challenges and emerging opportunities in development and health financing.

The discussions were timely and insightful, with three key macroeconomic themes standing out that will shape our efforts to strengthen health financing across Africa:

1. **Debt fragility is deepening, driven by a challenging global macroeconomic environment. However, stakeholders are actively testing new approaches to support countries.** For example:

- **Debt swaps:** The World Bank is taking a more proactive role in debt-for-development initiatives, recently facilitating swaps in Côte d'Ivoire and Benin, guaranteed by the World Bank and the International Development Association (IDA), respectively.



- **Debt reduction:** The World Bank is working to revitalize a debt reduction trust fund to purchase commercial debt at discounted rates, easing repayment burdens for eligible countries.
- **Debt research and advisory:** The late Pope supported a Jubilee Commission to investigate the root causes and social impacts of excessive debt and recommend pathways to sustainable debt levels.

- **Debt restructuring:** Several countries are on the brink of default and will require further debt restructuring. Lessons from Sri Lanka's recent financial crisis highlight the importance of acting early and ensuring cross-government and multilateral coordination in the restructuring process
- **Debt forgiveness:** Although still primarily driven by religious advocacy groups, calls for broad-based debt forgiveness are regaining momentum in global policy discussions.



2. **Domestic resource mobilization remains challenging in many low-income countries despite years of technical support from multilateral institutions. However, there is growing recognition that the private sector could play a catalytic role in unlocking domestic resources, particularly in health financing, if the right enabling conditions are in place. Key factors to support meaningful private sector engagement include:**
  - **Stable and predictable fiscal policies** that reduce investment risk
  - **Clear regulatory frameworks** that define roles, responsibilities, and incentives
  - **Public-private dialogue platforms** to ensure alignment of priorities and build trust
  - **Improved data systems and transparency** to inform investment decisions and track impact
3. **Bilateral donor priorities are shifting towards three key areas, driven by the evolving United States Government's funding patterns. Countries that align with these strategic interests may find new windows of opportunity for financing. These areas include:**
  - Counterterrorism.

- Access to natural resources, including minerals
- Pandemic preparedness and biosecurity.

Zooming in from the macroeconomic perspective, our conversations on the state of health and health financing surfaced key realities which we aim to interrogate further in our work:

- i. **Fragmentation in health and health financing:** A growing number of parallel initiatives risk duplication, potentially weakening impact, particularly amid declining donor funding for health. Greater convergence and coordination are essential to align efforts and drive improved outcomes.
- ii. **Rethinking how we tie financing to health outcomes:** The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the limitations of per capita spending as a performance metric. In many cases, countries with lower spending reported better outcomes. Moving forward, we need to shift the focus of our measurement efforts to centre outcomes rather than the amount of money spent.

We return from the Spring Meetings energized to build on these insights, support debt-for-health innovations, advance more practical financing models, and work with governments to craft sustainable, locally tailored health financing strategies.

We sincerely thank all our partners and colleagues who shared their expertise with us. We look forward to continuing these critical conversations.