



ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE FINANCING FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND IMMUNISATION IN GHANA

*A position statement of a multi-stakeholder academic symposium convened by the University of Health and Allied Sciences (UHAS), Hope for Future Generations and Global Health Advocacy Incubator, in Ho, Ghana
September 2026*

Preamble

The leadership and faculty of the University of Health and Allied Sciences (UHAS), Hope for Future Generations and the Global Health Advocacy Incubator, along with representatives from the University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University for Development Studies, the National Health Insurance Authority, the National Vaccine Institute and the WHO Country Office for Ghana, gathered in Ho, Volta Region, for the Academic Symposium on Sustainable Financing for Primary Health Care in Ghana. Held under the theme “Advancing Sustainable Financing for Primary Healthcare in Ghana: From Academic Research to Policy Making” on June 18, 2026, this Position Statement aims to inform and engage the Government of Ghana and Development Partners. It documents shared conclusions and urges policy decision-makers to take urgent, coordinated and sustained action to ensure sustainable domestic financing for primary health care and immunization in Ghana.

Assessment and Observations on Primary Healthcare and Immunisation Financing in Ghana

Ghana's health budget has averaged between 6% and 11% of the national budget over the years, falling short of the Abuja Declaration target of 15%. This funding gap has led to initiatives such as the introduction of the Free Primary Healthcare (FPHC) policy and the Ghana Medical Trust Fund. Additionally, NHIS uncapping, rising medical loss ratios and the domestic vaccine manufacturing drive through the National Vaccine Institute boost prospects for universal health coverage. However, domestic financing mechanisms are needed to implement and sustain these policy initiatives effectively.

Ghana's immunisation program, mainly financed by Gavi and partners, is expected to transition to full self-financing by January 2030. There is increasing pressure to enhance domestic resource mobilisation, prioritise fiscal spending, and secure sustainable financing for primary healthcare, especially for health commodities and immunisation.

Therefore, innovative, evidence-based and cost-effective financing is essential to maintain progress in primary healthcare and immunisation.

Recognising primary health care as the foundation of Ghana's health system and as key to Universal Health Coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Academic Symposium on Sustainable Health Financing focused on health financing, immunisation economics, resource mobilisation and strategies for financing primary health care and immunisation. It aimed to translate evidence into actionable recommendations.

Proposals for the Government on Sustainable Financing for Primary Healthcare, including immunisation in Ghana

The participants in the Academic Symposium hereby make the following recommendations to Government:

Strengthen Domestic Resource Mobilisation

1. Explicitly and visibly embed immunisation financing within the Free Primary Healthcare framework to track funding disbursement and hold the Government accountable.
2. Establish ring-fenced budget lines for vaccine and commodity procurement and for immunisation programme operational costs within the Ministry of Health budget to enable parliamentary oversight.
3. Allocate a specific portion of excise-tax revenues from tobacco, alcohol and extractive industries (mining and petroleum) royalties to fund primary health care and immunisation, leveraging the revenue increases shown by the 2023 Excise Duty Amendment Act.
4. Expand the National Health Insurance Scheme by implementing a uniform, salary-based premium contribution for all formal-sector workers to enhance funding for Primary Healthcare.
5. Explore domestic-financing instruments such as a solidarity levy on airline tickets, vaccine and health bonds, and social or development-impact bonds to support Primary Healthcare and Immunisation Financing.
6. Ensure the effective implementation of the sustainability-focused Gavi transition roadmap by 2030 to fully finance the immunisation program.

Strengthen Governance, Efficiency, and Accountability of the National Health Insurance Scheme

7. Accelerate measures to close the estimated GHS 600 million-plus in annual National Health Insurance Scheme claims leakage through digital verification, risk-based auditing, and continued progress toward an 80:20 direct-care-to-administration ratio by 2030.
8. Revive and strengthen pooled and framework procurement of essential medicines and commodities on the National Health Insurance Scheme medicines list.

Leverage Partnership with the International Community

9. Engage the World Health Organisation, Gavi, and other United Nations and development-partner agencies on “health-for-debt” and “health-for-development” swap arrangements that convert a defined portion of Ghana's external debt obligations into ring-fenced domestic health-financing commitments.
10. Request that development-partner technical assistance extend beyond vaccine procurement and service delivery and prioritise building domestic institutional and technical capacity over direct commodity financing.

Strengthen Legal and Policy Enforcement

11. Enforce the existing mandatory NHIS enrolment law through administrative linkages with driver's licence renewal, school admission, and employment onboarding, along with effective public education rather than compulsion alone, to increase scheme revenue.
Increase funding for continuous public health promotion and behaviour-change communication to reduce the long-term expenses of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) on health budgets and enhance public backing for preventive health financing.

Closing Declaration

In closing, we reaffirm our commitment to engaging the government on these recommendations. We will create a multi-stakeholder community for collaboration among academics, government, international partners and civil society on research, advocacy and progress review on Ghana's domestic financing for Primary Healthcare and Immunisation. We are also open to collaborating with policymakers to implement these recommendations. Agenda 2030 offers Ghana an opportunity to strengthen its Primary Health Care financing. We commit to advocating for policies that strengthen and sustain Ghana's primary healthcare and immunisation system.

This position statement is hereby adopted in September, 2026 on behalf of the participating stakeholders of the Academic Symposium on Advancing Sustainable Financing for Primary Health Care in Ghana.

Signed by



For the University of Health and Allied Sciences and participating academics
Professor Lydia Aziato, Vice-Chancellor



On behalf of Civil Society Partners

Cecilia Senoo, Executive Director, Hope for Future Generations



On behalf of Global Health Advocacy Incubator

Mr Stephen Atasige, Country Coordinator, Global Health Advocacy Incubator

List of Represented Institutions

- i. University of Ghana (School of Public Health)
- ii. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), School of Public Health
- iii. University of Cape Coast
- iv. University For Development Studies (School of Public Health)
- v. University of Environment and Sustainable Studies
- vi. WHO Ghana Country Office
- vii. National Vaccine Institute
- viii. National Health Insurance Authority
- ix. Expanded Program for Immunisation (EPI)
- x. Media