

ABCHealth News Update

May 2026

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Note from the CEO

As we move through the first half of 2026, the healthcare landscape across Africa continues to evolve rapidly, shaped by innovation, collaboration, and renewed urgency around health security. Across the continent, critical stakeholders including governments, private sector leaders, development partners, and entrepreneurs are responding to emerging health challenges while also building systems that are more resilient, inclusive, and future-ready.

Recent public health developments have once again highlighted the importance of preparedness and coordinated action. The ongoing Ebola outbreak linked to the Bundibugyo strain in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda has raised significant concerns across the region, with health authorities intensifying surveillance, cross-border coordination, and emergency response efforts. At the same time, the recent Hantavirus outbreak connected to international travel routes off the West African coast has reinforced the reality that infectious disease threats remain a global challenge requiring collective vigilance and strong health systems. These developments serve as a reminder of lessons learned from previous Ebola outbreaks and the COVID-19 pandemic: Africa must continue investing in resilient healthcare infrastructure, disease surveillance, digital health systems, and local innovation that can respond rapidly to emerging threats.

Against this backdrop, ABCHealth has continued to deepen its commitment to building sustainable health systems through entrepreneurship, innovation, and cross-sector collaboration. One of the Coalition's major highlights between January and May 2026 has been the expansion and continued implementation of the ABCHealth Academy for Health Entrepreneurs (AAHE). The Academy has evolved into a truly pan-African platform designed to nurture the next generation of health innovators capable of developing scalable and impactful solutions for the continent's healthcare challenges.

In February, ABCHealth formally inducted the 2026 Cohort of the Academy, welcoming entrepreneurs from across Anglophone and Francophone Africa into a transformative programme focused on enterprise development, innovation, and leadership. The expansion into bilingual learning tracks marked an important milestone in strengthening regional collaboration and broadening access to entrepreneurial support across the continent.

In the first half of the year, the Ideation Stage offered focused learning from experts across health, tech, finance, policy, and business development. These sessions built strong foundations for creating resilient and scalable health ventures. The Academy has now moved into a more action-driven phase as applications open for the Accelerate/Startup and Growth stages. This next phase helps ventures sharpen product-market fit, navigate regulations, strengthen business models, and access mentorship and funding for scale.

Beyond the Academy, we continue to drive key conversations on digital health and sustainable healthcare financing. Upcoming sessions at major events in Toronto, Cairo, and Lagos highlight our commitment to shifting digital health solutions from pilots to system-wide adoption.

As we look ahead to the rest of 2026, our focus stays on collaboration, innovation, and building stronger health systems. We remain grateful to our members, partners, and stakeholders whose support keeps driving impact across the continent.



Mories Atoki (Dr.)
Chief Executive Officer

Join the Coalition and Fix Africa's Health

The African Business Coalition for Health (ABCHealth) is a not-for-profit established to bring together businesses, philanthropists and development institutions that will collectively seek greater private sector contributions to improve health outcomes and save lives in Africa. You too can take action - [join](#) the Coalition today and let us work together to fix Africa's health.

We are social! Follow and engage with us across our media platforms



Another Ebola Outbreak – Is Africa Prepared?

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared an Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo a public health emergency of international concern. The agency said the outbreak in DR Congo does not meet the criteria of a pandemic emergency; but it warned it could potentially be "a much larger outbreak" than what is currently being detected and reported, with significant risk of local and regional spread.

The current strain of Ebola is caused by the Bundibugyo virus for which there are no approved drugs or vaccines. Early symptoms include fever, muscle pain, fatigue, headache and sore throat, and are followed by vomiting, diarrhea a rash and bleeding. To date, the virus had spread beyond DR Congo, with two confirmed cases reported in neighbouring Uganda.

Jean Kaseya, Director General of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, warned that in the absence of vaccines and effective medicines people should follow public health measures.

The WHO said the ongoing security situation and humanitarian crisis in DR Congo, combined with high population mobility, the urban location of the hotspot, and the large number of informal healthcare facilities in the region increased the risk of spread.

There is no proven cure for Ebola, with the average fatality rate is around 50%.

What is Ebola and How Does it Spread?

Ebola is caused by a family of viruses known as Orthoebolaviruses (previously referred to simply as Ebolaviruses). It was first discovered in 1976 and typically results in outbreaks in parts of Africa. The disease has a high fatality rate (ranging from 25% to 90% in past outbreaks), though survival chances significantly improve with early medical care and aggressive supportive treatment.



This new strain - the Bundibugyo virus - is dangerous because it causes a severe hemorrhagic fever with a high fatality rate (typically 25% to 40%) and has no approved vaccines or specific antiviral treatments.

Because it is a rare strain, early identification is often delayed, allowing it to spread rapidly through close contact with infected bodily fluids.

The high risk associated with this strain is driven by several critical factors including:

No Targeted Therapeutics: While there are FDA-



approved treatments and vaccines for the common Zaire Ebola strain, these do not work for Bundibugyo, leaving patients reliant only on early supportive care (like IV fluids and symptom management).

Severe Hemorrhagic Fever: The virus damages blood vessels and vital organs, leading to extreme internal and external bleeding, massive fluid loss from vomiting and diarrhea, organ dysfunction, and fatal shock.

Delayed Diagnosis: Initial symptoms (fever, body aches, headaches) mimic other common tropical illnesses, causing delays in detection. By the time severe hemorrhagic symptoms present, it is often far advanced.

High Transmission Risk: The virus spreads aggressively through direct contact with blood, feces, vomit, or contaminated surfaces. Healthcare workers and family members face the highest risk of infection when caring for the sick without adequate personal protective equipment.

The Risk to Africa

Bundibugyo's emergence in parts of Central and East Africa has raised serious concerns among global health experts, especially because there is currently no approved vaccine or targeted treatment for the strain. Recent reports from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda indicate hundreds of suspected cases and rising deaths, with health authorities warning that the virus may have circulated undetected for weeks before confirmation.

Although Ebola is generally less transmissible than COVID-19, the experience of the coronavirus pandemic showed how quickly weak surveillance systems, delayed response efforts, misinformation, and cross-border movement can allow infectious diseases to spiral into major global emergencies. The 2014–2016 West African Ebola crisis also demonstrated how fragile healthcare systems in Africa can become overwhelmed when outbreaks are not contained early enough.

If the Bundibugyo virus develops into a full-blown outbreak across Africa, the human and social consequences could be devastating. Many African countries still face limited healthcare infrastructure, shortages of medical personnel, and inadequate disease surveillance systems. Current reports already highlight shortages of protective equipment, medicines, testing capacity, and emergency response logistics in affected regions. In conflict-prone and highly mobile regions, such as mining communities and border towns, the virus could spread rapidly

through unsafe burials, overcrowded health facilities, and population displacement. Lessons from COVID-19 showed that fear and misinformation can also worsen outbreaks by discouraging people from seeking treatment or cooperating with public health authorities. Previous Ebola outbreaks equally left long-term effects such as stigma, social exclusion, and psychological trauma in affected communities.

The economic implications for Africa could be severe if the outbreak escalates. During the COVID-19 pandemic, African economies suffered major declines in trade, tourism, foreign investment, aviation, and productivity. Similarly, the 2014 Ebola outbreak caused widespread economic disruption across West Africa, affecting businesses, agriculture, transport systems, and investor confidence.

A prolonged Bundibugyo outbreak could force governments to impose travel restrictions, divert public funds toward emergency healthcare, and disrupt regional supply chains and mining activities that are vital to several African economies. Countries already struggling with inflation, debt burdens, and unemployment may experience deeper economic instability, reduced GDP growth, and increased poverty levels. Beyond the immediate health crisis, such an outbreak could weaken Africa's long-term development prospects and further strain already fragile public health systems.



What Africa's Governments Must Do

African governments must respond to the new Bundibugyo Ebola strain with speed, coordination, and transparency to prevent isolated cases from escalating into a continental health emergency. One of the most critical priorities is strengthening disease surveillance and early detection systems. Governments should immediately increase screening at borders, airports, and high-risk communities while expanding laboratory testing capacity and rapid-response teams.

Public communication and healthcare preparedness are equally essential. Governments must launch aggressive public awareness campaigns in local languages to educate citizens about symptoms, prevention methods, and the importance of seeking treatment early.

Africa must build long-term resilience against future outbreaks. Ultimately, the success of Africa's response will depend on political will, regional solidarity, public trust, and rapid action before the virus gains wider momentum.

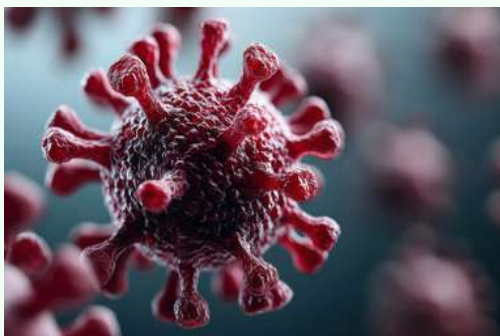
Tackling Hantavirus

The recent outbreak of Hantavirus has once again drawn global attention to the growing threat of zoonotic diseases and the urgent need for stronger public health preparedness. Hantavirus is a rare but highly dangerous viral infection primarily transmitted to humans through contact with infected rodents, particularly through exposure to their urine, droppings, or saliva. The current outbreak originated aboard the Dutch cruise ship MV Hondius where several passengers developed severe respiratory illness during their voyage.

As of mid-May 2026, health authorities have confirmed at least nine cases and three deaths connected to the outbreak, with additional suspected infections still under investigation. WHO officials have warned that more cases may emerge due to the virus's long incubation period, although they maintain that the overall public risk remains low and far below pandemic-level concern.

Despite the relatively limited number of confirmed infections, the outbreak has already created significant ripple effects across the global economy, tourism industry, and supply chains with several countries introducing quarantine protocols, travel advisories, and heightened health screening measures for passengers arriving from affected regions. Financial markets have also reacted cautiously

In addition, disruptions to transportation logistics and border health checks have slowed portions of the global supply chain, particularly in sectors dependent on international mobility and maritime trade. While the outbreak has not yet reached pandemic proportions, governments and businesses remain concerned about the economic implications of prolonged quarantines, workforce shortages, and consumer panic if cases continue to spread across borders. The situation has once again demonstrated how infectious disease outbreaks can rapidly affect



global commerce, healthcare spending, investor confidence, and international travel systems.

Across Africa, public health authorities are closely monitoring the outbreak and simultaneously strengthening preparedness systems to prevent potential spread onto the continent. The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has emphasized coordinated surveillance, rapid information sharing, and early detection strategies among member states. Governments across the continent are also using the outbreak as an opportunity to reassess emergency preparedness systems established during the COVID-19 pandemic, including laboratory testing capacity, disease surveillance networks, emergency communication systems, and stockpiles of protective medical equipment.

Public health experts across the continent have stressed that Africa's experience with outbreaks such as Ebola and COVID-19 has improved regional coordination and response readiness, but they also acknowledge that gaps in funding, healthcare infrastructure, and disease monitoring still present major challenges.

To reduce the spread of hantavirus, health experts continue to emphasize preventive measures focused largely on avoiding contact with rodents and contaminated environments. Individuals are advised to maintain proper hygiene, seal food containers securely, eliminate rodent nesting areas around homes and workplaces, and disinfect potentially contaminated surfaces rather than sweeping them dry, which may release infectious particles into the air. Governments must also strengthen disease surveillance systems, invest in laboratory research, improve emergency healthcare infrastructure, and promote cross-border collaboration to respond rapidly to emerging infectious diseases.

For Africa in particular, the current hantavirus outbreak serves as another critical reminder that pandemic preparedness can no longer be treated as a temporary emergency measure but rather as a permanent pillar of national development and security. Strengthening healthcare systems, investing in scientific research, improving sanitation, and enhancing regional cooperation will be essential if the continent is to effectively confront future outbreaks and protect its growing population from emerging global health threats.



Health News



Another Disruption to Africa's Pharma Supply Chain

The Iran-US war in the Middle East rages on and taking a toll on global systems and in Africa, where there is a huge dependence on imports, supply chain disruptions have impacted on more than oil – the healthcare sector is reeling and lives are at stake.



Yes, Africa's Health Workforce is Expanding, But...

Africa is producing more health workers than ever before, yet millions of people still lack access to care; hundreds of thousands of health professionals are unable to find jobs; and many of them are migrating, blaming poor conditions and broken systems.



Incubation Hubs: Driving Health Entrepreneurship in Africa

Africa is producing more health workers than ever before, yet millions of people still lack access to care; hundreds of thousands of trained health professionals are unable to find jobs; and many of them are migrating, blaming poor conditions and broken healthcare systems.



How a Research Lab in Senegal Cracked Hantavirus

The Institut Pasteur de Dakar takes center stage as scientists, working through the night using sophisticated lab equipment and powerful computers, delivered results awaited by health officials worldwide showcasing Africa's potential in advancing global health.



WHX Lagos

Hospital Investment & Buyer Leadership Forum

THEME

Transforming Health Care Delivery Through Collaborative Innovation: Leveraging Partnerships, Investment, and Technology to Enhance Clinical Outcomes and Healthcare Efficiency

3rd June 2026

10:00am WAT

Landmark Centre, Lagos



ABCHealth





'Eye Can See' Impacts 37,951 Beneficiaries



23,447 optical cases, 797 surgeries and over 13,525 eye glasses – that is the level of impact Seplat's 'Eye Can See' in conjunction with NNPC has had on local communities since its inception.

'Eye Can See' initiative was designed to impact the health and wellbeing of host communities by providing free access to essential eye care services, including screenings, reading glasses and cataract surgeries. Beneficiaries are also screened for other health challenges like high blood pressure and diabetes, amongst others, and provided with professional counselling, drugs and referrals for patients as needed.

The 2026 edition of the initiative held in Owerri, the Imo State Capital in March over the course of three days and attracted large turnout of men, women, and children from across the State and neighbouring communities with an average of 700 people being screened per day.

According to the Director, External Affairs and Social Performance, Seplat Energy Plc, Mrs. Chioma Afe, cost of eye care, which is currently out of reach for many, makes it an imperative for the NNPC/Seplat JV to sustain the programme and drive penetration; thus, impacting a wide array of persons in the communities from the inception of the intervention health programme in 2017.

This initiative aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 on Good Health and Well-Being, and underscores Seplat's broader commitment to delivering sustainable, high-impact social investments

Beneficiaries expressed delight at the opportunity including Dr Fred Nnamdi, Lolo Igolo Njemanze, and Chief Ernest Onyeneke, commending Seplat and NNPC for life-changing initiative which was provided at no cost to communities. The testimonies speak for themselves - Lolo Njemanze had not had sight in her right eye for two years but after the free surgery, sight was restored to the eye. In like manner, Dr. Nnamdi had little expectation for the restoration of his sight but after the surgery, he had reason to be thankful as he confirmed that he could see with both eyes.

Communities are being positively impacted by Seplat, a socially responsible organization and this was expressed by Chief Onyeneke, a community leader describing Seplat as an entity that watches out for the underprivileged and underserved.



Nigeria's First Comprehensive Digital Health EcoSystem Launches



On Thursday, 7 May 2026, the Private Sector Health Alliance of Nigeria (PSHAN), in partnership with Live Capital (Live Labs), officially launched Vivo Health at the Civic Centre, Victoria Island, Lagos. The launch marked the debut of Nigeria's first comprehensive digital health information and services ecosystem, a centralised platform connecting patients, providers, pharmacies, insurers, suppliers, government agencies, and philanthropic organisations in one verified hub.

Vivo Health brings together a range of integrated capabilities including a verified provider finder with geo-location, AI-powered telecare and health support, real-time emergency services coordination, a healthcare marketplace, integrated microinsurance and health wallet functionality, a philanthropy hub for diaspora giving, and a data and analytics layer for policymakers and administrators, among others. A Health Verification Number (HVN) ties the experience together, enabling seamless identity verification across the platform.

The launch event brought together healthcare leaders, technology innovators, corporate executives, and development partners for a fireside chat and panel discussion that examined Nigeria's most pressing healthcare challenges, reinforcing a shared conviction that innovation, collaboration, and private sector participation are essential to transforming healthcare delivery in Nigeria.

Vivo Health marks an important step towards strengthening healthcare delivery in Nigeria, with solutions designed to improve access and efficiency across all areas of healthcare. PSHAN invites you to join the waitlist www.vivohealth.app and be among the first to experience it.

Follow @getvivohealth on Instagram for more updates.

Nigeria's First Comprehensive Digital Health EcoSystem Launches



MTN Foundation's Y'ello Doctor was launched in 2014 and its design as a vehicle providing free primary healthcare services that incorporates consultations, medications, treatment, female hygiene & ante-natal care has recorded tremendous success.

With close to a million beneficiaries across Nigeria's geo-political zones, rural communities hosting the underserved population have access to from medical screening, diagnosis, consultations, treatment, and drug prescription, as well as referral services.

This initiative is critical because for many families in rural Nigeria, access to healthcare once meant travelling long distances or going without treatment entirely. Through the MTN Foundation's Y'ello Doctor initiative, brightly branded mobile clinics now bring doctors, medicines, screenings, and health education directly into underserved communities across the country.

The initiative has become especially meaningful for women, children, and elderly residents who previously struggled to access basic care. In some villages, beneficiaries received medical attention for the first time in their lives. Mobile clinic teams also distribute maternal health kits, provide referrals, and support vaccination campaigns, helping to bridge the healthcare gap between urban and rural Nigeria.



The Africa Health-Tech Accelerator 2026 is a 6-month, equity-free program designed to identify, support and accelerate early-stage digital health and AI startups in Africa.

Endorsed by the Africa CDC and launched at the Africa Health ExCon, the program provides seed funding, mentorship, and access to key investors. Applications are open until June 14, 2026.

To apply, you must have a MVP-ready product, committed co-founders and your solution must be ready to scale across African markets.

Submit your applications online through the official Africa HealthTech ExCon Accelerator Portal on the VC4A platform.

ABCHealth Outcome Reports

ABCHealth Podcasts

ABCHealth participates in high-level gatherings at national, regional, continental and global level where Coalition members exhibit thought leadership and showcase their contributions to the mandate of improving health outcomes across the continent. Read up on our outcome reports as we continue to advocate improved health outcomes across Africa.



ABCHealth 2026 Mental and Workplace Wellness Webinar



ABCHealth Session; WHX Leaders, Accra

ABCHealth's five part podcasts series themed; **'The Digital Tech Revolution Transforming Africa's Healthcare Sector'** focuses on how digital innovation is driving systemic change, the opportunities and risks ahead, and how various stakeholders can collaborate to scale sustainable solutions. Each podcast is each hosted by a seasoned moderator and featuring a mix of interviews, panel-style discussions, and real-life case studies from across the continent.

Tune in to listen to Part Two of the series where Ms. Katrina Prentice, Founder / Chairperson for Zak Health, spoke on; **'Leveraging AI Technology to Provide Affordable, World-Class Medical Care in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges'**.

She provided a nuanced understanding of how digital innovation is driving systemic change, the opportunities and risks ahead, and how various stakeholders can collaborate to scale sustainable solutions referencing how Zak Health is using innovative and novel health technologies to impact healthcare across Africa.



ABCHealth Academy

The ABCHealth Academy for Health Entrepreneurs is a flagship capacity-building platform driven by the private sector coalition and designed to address persistent skills and knowledge gaps among entrepreneurs and business leaders in both health and leadership sectors with particular focus on investment readiness, business management, and scalable service delivery.

The Academy, launched in 2025, has expanded with cohorts in Anglophone Africa and Francophone Africa, supports early-stage entrepreneurs at the ideation and early growth stages, through a structured, time-bound programme facilitated by seasoned African and global experts in business, investment, and sector-specific innovation.

Across its three stages - **Ideation, Accelerate and Growth**, the Academy applies a lifecycle-driven approach that links entrepreneurial capacity building with investment readiness, ecosystem connectivity, and policy relevance resulting in a pipeline that strengthens enterprise performance that contributes to broader health system resilience, private sector participation, and sustainable economic value creation across Africa. Please read through the 2025 Year Book for more details.



ABCHealth Virtual Healthtech Hub

ABCHealth's TechHub is a dynamic and interactive digital ecosystem that enhances networking among startups, experienced health entrepreneurs, industry professionals, healthcare providers, technology developers, and policymakers; as well as a safe space for acceleration support, an advisory desk and a launch pad for the next generation of health technology innovations.

The Hub has a number of objectives including:

- promoting collaboration through convening health stakeholders in various sectors including finance, logistics, policy
- leveraging the Coalition's global exposure and influence in order to solve critical health challenges
- entrenching responsibility and trust for early-stage health tech startups to access resources, mentorship, and funding opportunities to scale their solutions

The Hub also intersects with the ABCHealth Academy, positioning it as a platform where Africa's health value chain system can be virtually engaged, encouraging cross-functional health-focused solutions.

Scan to Sign Up



Key Upcoming Events



Africa HealthTech Summit, Toronto - May 2026

This high-level session is titled; **'Unlocking Digital Health Innovation: Strengthening Pathways from Pilot Initiatives to Sustainable System-Level Implementation through Strategic Partnerships and Innovative Financing'** exploring inter-continental collaboration



ABCHealth Session - Africa Health ExCon, Cairo - Jun 2026

Themed **'Re-imagining MedTech Innovation and Local Manufacturing: Strengthening Africa's Health Sovereignty through Technology-Driven Solutions'**, this session interrogates how AI can be structurally aligned to accelerate equitable access to quality healthcare across Africa.



ABCHealth Session - Africa Health ExCon, Cairo - Jun 2026

The ABCHealth-led session titled **'Unlocking Africa's Health Innovation and Investment Potential: Driving Equitable Access, Trade, and Sustainable Growth in Health and Pharma'** examines the intersection of capital, policy, and innovation



ABCHealth Hospital Investment & Buyer Leadership Forum / WHX, Lagos - Jun 2026

The ABCHealth-led Forum at the WHX Lagos 2026 convenes leading healthcare executives, investors, innovators, policymakers, and industry stakeholders to explore transformative healthcare delivery across the continent.

