

## **SIDE EVENT PROPOSAL FOR ARFSD-11**

### **Community Health and Nutrition: Empowering Community Health Workforce to accelerate progress towards SDGs 3 & 8**

**Lead Organizers:** Ministry of Health (MoH), UNICEF, World Vision

**Partners:** Africa Development Bank, African Union, Africa CDC, Makerere University School of Public Health

**Date & Format:** April 8, 2025 | Hybrid (Physical & Virtual)

#### **RATIONALE & OBJECTIVE**

Over 40% of Africa's population lives in extreme poverty, compounded by inadequate healthcare, limited employment opportunities, and underfunded health systems. The African Union projects 1.3 billion young people in Africa by 2050, creating both challenges and opportunities. Community Health Workers (CHWs) are critical in addressing maternal and child mortality by bringing life-saving healthcare closer to communities. Investing in CHWs yields a >10:1 return, with the potential to prevent 2.3 million maternal and child deaths annually.

**Objective:** Explore a three-pronged approach to strengthening the PHC system and accelerating SDGs 3 & 8:

1. **Entrepreneurial Opportunities for CHWs:** Enabling dignified work in both private and public sectors.
2. **Recognized & Gainful Employment:** Recruiting, training, equipping, and remunerating CHWs to promote health & nutrition.
3. **Enabling Environment & Ecosystem:** Gender-transformative policies and sustainable financing for CHWs.

#### **SESSION STRUCTURE (90 MINUTES)**

- **Opening Remarks (5 min):** MoH Uganda
- **Keynote (15 min):** Unleashing CHW Potential in Africa
- **Community Health Worker Experience (5 min)**
- **Q&A (5 min)**
- **Speakers:**
  - **Africa CDC:** Continental coordination on CHWs (5 min)
  - **UNICEF/World Vision:** CHW success stories (Uganda, Rwanda, Ghana, Ethiopia) (10 min)
- **Panel Discussion (25 min):** Entrepreneurial & gainful employment for CHWs
  - **Panelists:** MoH (Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia), UNICEF, World Vision, AfDB, AU
  - **Topics:** Policy & financing, private sector engagement, CHW role in UHC & SDGs, sustainable investments, partnerships, lessons from successful models.
- **Q&A & Audience Engagement (10 min) Closing Remarks (10 min):** Strengthening CHW collaboration for UHC & SDGs, commitments from UNECA & AU, Call to Action.

**INVITEES** MoH representatives, UNICEF (Regional & HQ), World Vision, USAID, MasterCard Foundation, Global Fund, World Bank, Living Goods, BRAC, Malaria Consortium, Partners in Nutrition & WASH, AU-NEPAD, African continental bodies.