

REGIONAL WEBINAR

THEME; UNDERSTANDING WHAT WAS SIGNED; UNPACKING THE AMERICA FIRST GLOBAL HEALTH STRATEGY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

PLATFORM; ZOOM.

DATE; 31ST AUGUST, 2026.

TIME; 2:00 PM (EAT) | 1:00 PM (SAST)

1.0 Background.

Since September 2025, the United States has replaced decades of multilateral, grant-based health cooperation with the America First Global Health Strategy (AFGHS), a framework of bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and Bilateral Global Health Agreements (BGHAs) with African countries tying US health financing to fiscal, data and regulatory conditions. As of July 2026, 34 such agreements have been signed globally, largely with limited public disclosure and minimal engagement of national parliaments or broader stakeholders. SEATINI, EQUINET and AHAKI have raised six key areas of concern regarding these agreements with regional organisations. They relate to six interlocking problems for ESA that raise concerns over health equity, health sovereignty and Africa's rightful benefit from its own health, genetic, and data resources, viz:

1. Undermining of African jurisdiction on public health, requiring national regulators to defer to US FDA approvals without reference to national law, or regional/continental or multilateral treaty frameworks.
2. Bilateral fragmentation of African continental positions, transparency and African unity in diplomacy, as, for example, raised in the African Group's collective position at the WHO IGWG on the Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS) Annex.
3. Asymmetric data and pathogen extraction, such as in pathogen obligations that remain in force for 25 years, and post-termination data-access of up to 10 years, while the financial window is 5 years, without duties for revenue contributions to African states.
4. Erosion of national data sovereignty, with data-sharing provisions are difficult to reconcile with the data-protection statutes of every major ESA jurisdiction.
5. The conditioning of health support on trade, minerals and geopolitics, such as non-health concessions on strategic minerals access.
6. Forfeited industrial and benefit-sharing dividends and precedents for future health negotiations, such as in prioritising the purchase of externally produced commodities over investment in African productive capacity.

These concerns, and the evidence underpinning them, are set out in full in the SEATINI, EQUINET and AHAKI working paper titled "Beyond the Headlines; Reclaiming health equity and sovereignty from the America First Health Deals," available at [LINK](#). Speakers and participants will have access to the full working paper ahead of the webinar.

Cognizant of the above, led by SEATINI, and with EQUINET and AHAKI for this first regional webinar in a series, this webinar under the theme "*Understanding What Was Signed: Unpacking the America First Global Health Strategy and its Implications for African Countries*" seeks to understand from a technical lens the content of the AFGHS and its implications for Africa's health systems and policy priorities. Subsequent webinars will address legal, public health, diplomacy and other relevant dimensions at dates and times to be announced. This first webinar will convene diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, public health practitioners, professional bodies, civil society actors, researchers and development partners, to unpack the AFGHS contents and their cost, benefits and implications from a technical lens, and to propose options to protect African health policy priorities, including as negotiated in global platforms.

2.1 Overall Objective.

To strengthen the understanding of African policymakers, civil society actors and citizens on the substantive content and implications of the America First Global Health Strategy bilateral agreements, and to foster a coordinated regional response that safeguards health financing sovereignty, data governance and Africa's broader structural transformation agenda.

2.2 Specific Objectives.

The regional webinar specifically seeks to;

1. Unpack the terms and conditionalities contained in signed AFGHS bilateral MoUs.
2. Interrogate the implications of AFGHS conditionalities for Africa's health policy priorities, policy space and diplomacy (See the background [SEATINI](#), [EQUINET](#) and [AHAKI](#) working paper).
3. Inform and generate a shared position and agenda between public sector, professional and civil society in the region on the key issues, including for engagement and diplomacy towards equitable, health promoting, transparent and regionally coordinated negotiation and diplomacy.

2.3 Expected Outcomes.

1. Policymakers, professionals and civil society in Africa have an informed understanding of the substantive terms of the AFGHS bilateral agreements and their implications.
2. Public sector, professional and civil society in the region have identified key issues for engagement and diplomacy towards health equity promoting, transparent and regionally coordinated negotiation and diplomacy.
3. The information shared in the webinar is used to update the background working document and in ongoing national and regional engagement.

3.0 Program (Duration; 90 Minutes).

TIME (EAT)	SESSION	RESPONSIBILITY
2:00 - 2:05 PM (5 mins)	Welcome and Housekeeping. <i>Moderator</i>	Mr. Herbert Kafeero, Deputy Executive Director, SEATINI
2:05 - 2:20 PM (15 mins)	Opening Remarks. <i>Framing why this conversation matters for Africa's health sovereignty and structural transformation agenda.</i> <i>Briefing on the Working Paper</i>	Ms. Jane Nalunga, Executive Director, Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI)
2:20 - 2:55 PM (35 mins)	Panel Discussion. <i>Implications of AFGHS for Africa's Health Financing Sovereignty, Data Governance and Structural Transformation</i>	- Senator Okiya Andrew Omtatah Okoiti, Senator for Busia County, Parliament of Kenya. - Prof. Emmanuel M. Makasa, Wits-SADC Regional Collaboration Centre for Surgical

		Healthcare Improvement (WITSSURG) • Dr. Novat Twungubumwe – Acting Executive Secretary, East African Health Research Commission (EAHRC).
2:55 - 3:25 PM (30 mins)	Open Floor on key issues 1. Issues raised on the implications for Health policy priorities in the region 2. Options and opportunities for responses <i>Questions, Reactions and Discussion</i>	Moderator and Participants.
3:25 - 3:30 PM (5 mins)	Closing Remarks, note of updating the working paper and future webinars in the series	SEATINI.