

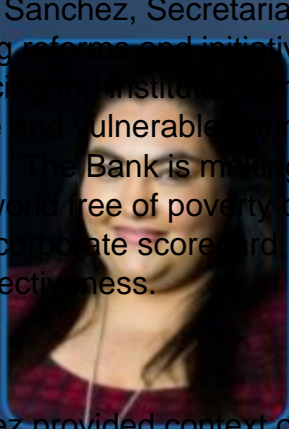


Advancing health advocacy: Insights from CiSPHA on IDA 21 replenishment

On June 27, 2024, the African Civil Society Platform for Health (CiSPHA) hosted a regional webinar focused on the upcoming World Bank International Development Association (IDA) 21st replenishment, set for December 2024. The webinar highlighted the World Bank Group's efforts to address poverty and promote sustainability through ongoing reforms. It emphasized the crucial role of civil society in the IDA 21 replenishment process, advocating for collaborative approaches to achieve comprehensive development outcomes. Discussions also underscored IDA's significant role in supporting Africa's development, emphasizing the need for investments in pandemic preparedness, resilience, and holistic health strategies. The webinar concluded by stressing the importance of sustained engagement between civil society and global financial institutions to influence policies and foster dialogue for effective development outcomes.

Insights from the World Bank and IDA 21 replenishment

Xochitl Sanchez, Secretariat Director at the Action Health Advocacy Partnership, provided insights into the ongoing reforms and initiatives of the World Bank Group. She highlighted significant changes aimed at enhancing the institution, emphasizing their importance in tackling global challenges, especially in low-income and vulnerable countries. Sanchez underscored the World Bank's commitment to transformation, stating, "The Bank is making reforms in an effort to become a better Bank," and emphasized its new vision for "a world free of poverty on a livable planet." Key initiatives in this reform agenda include implementing a new corporate scorecard, launching global challenge programs, and enhancing operational efficiency and effectiveness.



Sanchez provided context on IDA, which is the largest source of external concessional financing for low-income and vulnerable countries. She referenced a recent World Bank report, 'The Great Reversal,' which found that average per capita income in half of IDA countries has been growing more slowly than those of wealthy countries, and highlighted the severe challenges these countries face, including high rates of hunger, malnutrition, and maternal mortality. [You can read the GFO write-up on the report and how the [debt burden is affecting health](#)].

Reflecting on the Spring Meetings held in April, Sanchez described key events and forums that took place, including the IDA Global Forum. This event engaged partners in the process of the IDA 21 replenishment package, a cycle that occurs every three years. "The IDA 21 replenishment comes at a time in which the World Bank is looking to implement a number of reforms," she noted. Sanchez detailed the overarching theme of the IDA 21 proposal: "ending poverty on a livable planet, acting with urgency and ambition." The framework encompasses five focus areas—people, planet, prosperity, digitalization, and infrastructure—and four lenses: gender equality, better jobs, better lives for people in fragility, conflict and violence, and private investment.

Sanchez emphasized the importance of engaging civil society and other stakeholders in the decision-making process. She noted that "there has not been robust engagement" throughout the IDA replenishment cycle, leading her coalition and others to call for the World Bank to take a "whole of country approach." This approach would involve not only top government officials but also civil society and parliamentarians.

Highlighting one of the flagship events at the Spring Meetings, Sanchez mentioned a significant announcement by World Bank President Ajay Banga: "a commitment to support countries in delivering quality, affordable health services to 1.5 billion people by 2030." While she welcomed this commitment, Sanchez expressed a desire for even more ambitious goals.

Timeline and opportunities for IDA 21 replenishment

The upcoming IDA 21 replenishment marks a pivotal moment for shaping the future of global development, particularly in health, nutrition, and pandemic preparedness. Stakeholders have several key events and opportunities to engage and advocate for essential policy commitments:

- July 8: West African Regional IDA Forum in Benin (Hybrid)
- July 15: Middle East and North Africa (Virtual)
- July 24: Europe and Central Asia in Bosnia & Herzegovina (Hybrid)
- October 22: World Bank Annual Meetings in DC
- December: IDA 21 Replenishment Pledging Conference in DC


By actively engaging in these events and leveraging advocacy opportunities, stakeholders can ensure that critical areas receive the attention and funding they deserve.

- Stakeholders should actively engage with their respective IDA Deputies, World Bank Executive Directors (EDs), and country leaders. Sharing recommendations and insights on human capital priorities can influence the policy commitments and financial pledges for IDA 21.
- Advocate for country's leadership to support the non-paper initiated by Brazil. This non-paper outlines critical priorities and recommendations for the IDA 21 replenishment and gaining widespread support can strengthen the push for these initiatives.
- Direct communication with the IDA team and World Bank Country Directors can provide valuable insights and strengthen advocacy efforts. Establishing these connections can help ensure that the specific needs and recommendations of a country or region are considered in the IDA 21 framework.

Strengthening resilience and development: Insights from Aggrey Aluso on Africa's path forward

During a keynote address, the critical need for enhanced pandemic preparedness and resilience in Africa was underscored. Aggrey Aluso, Director of the Africa Region at the Pandemic Action Network (PAN), provided crucial insights into the challenges and opportunities facing the continent. Aluso emphasized the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach to resilience, particularly in addressing interconnected challenges such as health crises, climate change, and developmental issues.

"The Resilience Action Network Africa is emerging as a pivotal hub for integrated advocacy across various thematic areas broadly related to resilience issues," Aluso explained. He stressed the necessity for synergy, stating, "There is a compelling need for what has come to be known as an all-of-society, all-of-government approach. Our efforts will achieve maximum impact only when pursued in interconnected and deliberately synergized ways."

A portrait of Aggrey Aluso, a man with short dark hair and a beard, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt. The portrait is set against a dark blue background.

AGGREY ALUSO

Director, Africa Region at Pandemic Action Network

A significant part of the discussion focused on IDA replenishment and its critical role in Africa's development. Aluso highlighted the importance of IDA, noting, "IDA is one of the most consequential sources of multilateral development financing. Seventy-five percent of its mobilized funds go to African countries, with eight out of the top ten borrowers being African nations." This heavy reliance on IDA underscores its pivotal role in supporting the continent's development initiatives.

Reflecting on the nexus between health and economic development, Aluso cited a profound observation from Dr. Halfdan Mahler, former WHO Director-General: "Health is a fundamental human right and should be available to all. It should be the primary objective of economic development, not merely a secondary means." Aluso emphasized, "COVID-19 has painfully shown us that neglecting health as a strategic investment leads to failure in all dimensions, including economic."

Aluso also addressed the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in advocating for improved health and development financing. He highlighted the challenges posed by simultaneous global replenishment efforts from entities like the African Development Fund, GAVI, and WHO, stressing, "CSOs play a critical role in the IDA replenishment process. We must leverage African leaders' demands for better financing and ensure robust replenishment does not compromise other vital funding sources."

The discussion underscored the importance of strategic investment in health and resilience, efficient resource utilization, and enhanced governance. As Aluso aptly summarized, "We must optimize our resources, both domestic and from sources like IDA, to ensure sustainable development and readiness for future challenges."

Enhancing civil society engagement with global financial institutions: Insights from Rosemary Mburu

Rosemary Mburu, Executive Director of WACI Health, underscored the importance of ongoing engagement between CSOs and major financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). She emphasized the need for CSOs to leverage World Bank and IMF financing through continuous dialogue and participation. Mburu highlighted the Civil Society Policy Forum (CSPF) at the World Bank and IMF as pivotal. This forum, integral to their Spring and Annual Meetings, provides CSOs with a dedicated platform to present their concerns, priorities, and proposals. She encouraged CSOs to utilize this opportunity to influence policy and foster dialogue on critical issues.

The CSPF organizes sessions and side events during the World Bank and IMF meetings, with the call for proposals for the upcoming Annual Meetings recently announced. CSOs have less than two months to submit proposals, and Mburu, part of the CSPF working group, emphasized the importance of robust, collaborative submissions. Proposals stand a better chance of acceptance when they involve partnerships among multiple organizations or coalitions.



Mburu advised CSOs to align their proposals with World Bank and IMF policies, focusing on accountability, transparency, and debt policies. Proposals should target areas where the institutions can make impactful contributions or improvements. Detailed information and submission guidelines are available on the [CSPF's website](#).

Highlighting the importance of transparency and accountability in effective engagement, Mburu called for increased community and CSO involvement in World Bank and IMF processes. Despite some institutional rigidity in engagement policies, she stressed the need for persistent advocacy to promote more inclusive practices.

[Read More](#)
