



IMPACT REPORT 2024

We Convene. We Enable. We Advocate.





Executive Summary

SPEAK UP AFRICA 2024 IN REVIEW

2024 was a year of bold action, strengthened partnerships, and transformative impact at Speak Up Africa. We held a malaria awareness campaign that reached over 1.5 million people during the Africa Cup of Nations, bolstered by private sector partnerships with Canal+ and renowned artist Didi B. We helped drive major policy wins, including Côte d'Ivoire's ratification of the African Medicines Agency treaty and Senegal's attainment of WHO Maturity Level 3 pharmaceutical certification.

Through initiatives like ***Voix EssentiELLEs*** and the ***African Women in Digital Health*** program, we strengthened women's leadership and gender equity in health policy and digital health strategies. Our champions from scientists to youth leaders—were recognized during our annual Speak Up Africa Day for innovations in malaria, NTDs, and digital health.

Our journey this year was guided by one clear belief: Africa's challenges demand African solutions, courageous leadership, and united action.

2024: Sustaining Momentum, Scaling Impact

Building on the foundation laid through policy change, capacity building, and local leadership, this year marked a decisive step forward in translating strategies into impact, scaling successful models, and fostering inclusive partnerships. Our advocacy and partnerships with public, private and development sectors contributed to significant changes in policy, health budget shifts and thriving leadership and innovation in public health by women and youth.



Driving Policy and Systemic Change

Côte d'Ivoire ratified the African Medicines Agency Treaty, a landmark step toward harmonized, quality-assured access to medicines across Africa.

Senegal achieved WHO Maturity Level 3 certification and is now better positioned to strengthen pharmaceutical regulation, attract investment, and build global trust in its health systems.

A high-level event celebrating local health innovation and women leaders hosted in **Benin** in partnership with **VIA-ME** catalyzed the creation of the **Research and Innovation Agency of Benin (ABRI)** and the **PRISE platform**, securing long-term investment in scientific research and innovation.

At the World Water Forum in Indonesia, **Speak Up Africa** championed innovative approaches to managing sanitation challenges, emphasizing the need to think beyond traditional solutions. We advocated for fair and sustainable access to sanitation, positioned it as a critical investment area, and called for resilient infrastructure tailored to the unique realities of African communities.



Mobilizing Resources and Investment in Public Health

The **Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative (ZMBLI)**, active in 5 countries, mobilized **over US\$6 million** in private sector support from 2021 to 2024, and our strategic private sector partnership with **Canal+ Benin** and a campaign during the **Africa Cup of Nations**, amplified malaria awareness to more than **1.5 million people**.

Benin's national malaria budget has seen significant growth — increasing from **US\$4.1 million in 2023 to US\$4.9 million in 2024, a 20% rise** that reflects the impact of sustained advocacy and multi-sectoral coordination. Furthermore, a **28.5% increase has already been secured for 2025**, bringing the budget to **US\$6.3 million**, thanks to continued efforts throughout 2024.



Strengthening Local Leadership and Advocacy

Now active in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal, **Voix EssentiELLEs** supported 39 grassroots organizations and built strong national networks in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso. Through leadership training and creative campaigns, young women's voices were amplified on global stages, including the **Youth Health Summit (Berlin)** and the **18th International Conference on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change**. And in national dialogues they spoke strongly against gender-based violence and participated in key campaigns during the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation.

- Co-led with **Africa CDC**, the **African Women in Digital Health (AWiDH) initiative** launched the first **African Women in Digital Health Mentorship Program**, an African initiative designed to empower and support emerging female leaders in the digital health space across Africa. Through **Teaming Up: African LeadHERs and Speak Up Afric'Art LINGEER**, Speak Up Africa brought sports, culture, and advocacy together, building visibility for African women changemakers in public health.
- The **Africa Young Innovators for Health Award** celebrated youth-driven health solutions tackling neonatal mortality, access to essential medications, and more, amplifying the significance of African voices in health and making the case for investment in homegrown innovation.



Speak Up Africa Day 2024 – «Thinking Outside the Box»

This celebration of African innovation and science leadership, Speak Up Africa Day 2024 brought together health leaders, policymakers, and creatives to spotlight bold, community-led solutions. From using sports and culture to drive health equity, to pioneering digital health innovations and grassroots advocacy, honorees – Amadou Gallo Fall, Dr. Michael Charles, Farida Tiemtore, Dr. Socé Fall, and Oumou Kalsoum Diallo – were feted for their contribution to malaria elimination, digital health, gender equity, and addressing neglected tropical diseases.



Key Insights and Priorities for 2025

As we look ahead, we remain anchored in the lessons and achievements of 2024. We commit to:

- Increasing investment in local leadership, focusing on women and youth leaders by scaling up Voix EssentiELLEs.
- Build on the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative private sector and media partnerships with Ecobank and Canal+ for increasing sustainable health financing.
- Integrate gender-transformative approaches across all programming and advance gender inclusivity in national digital health strategies of African member states.
- Continue amplifying African voices through evidence-based storytelling and regional collaboration.

We urge our partners to stand with us in advancing health equity, local innovation, and resilient systems that work for all essential pillars of the Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063.

Contents Page

Message from the Executive Director, Yacine Djibo

8

Who We Are

10

What We Do

10

Our Values

11

Our Reach

12

Four Years of Impact: Catalyzing Change Across
Africa (2020–2024)

13

2024: Sustaining Momentum, Scaling Impact

16

Key Insights and Priorities for 2025

33

Our Partners and Donors

35

Our Team of Experts

36

Our Board

37



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,

Yacine Djibo

As we reflect on 2024, I am proud of the tremendous growth of Speak Up Africa as an African voice driving sustainable change in health, development and leadership across the continent. Driven by deep commitment to community health and well-being, we continue to take bold, transformative steps to solving Africa's urgent healthcare challenges.

Our malaria awareness campaign reached over 1.5 million during the Africa Cup of Nations through press coverage and the addition of international artist Didi B as a Zero Malaria F.C champion. Our strategic partnership signed with Canal+ in Benin strengthened the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign, highlighting the growing private sector, civil society organizations and media network collaboration to advance malaria awareness and action.

Our high-level advocacy in collaboration with civil society and grassroots organizations contributed to the ratification of the African Medicines Agency (AMA) treaty by Côte d'Ivoire. The AMA treaty is a critical policy framework that will improve oversight and harmonize regulatory process in Africa, ensuring easier access to quality, safe and effective medicines. In Senegal, we supported efforts that led to the country achieving the WHO Maturity Level 3 (ML3) classification for pharmaceutical regulation – an internationally recognised standard that paves the way for a stronger, more competitive pharmaceutical sector.

Through initiatives like Voix EssentiELLEs, we amplified women's decision-making power in shaping health policies and programs in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso — driving change for women and their communities. Through the African Women in Digital Health (AWiDH) program, we advanced the inclusion of women leaders in

digital health by developing gender mainstreaming guidelines to support African member states to incorporate gender aligned digital health strategies.

Our champions, including scientists, parliamentarians, and youth leaders, stepped forward to redefine leadership in African health systems, advocating for health systems improvement through well-financed African-led research. Their innovations in tackling malaria and NTDs and gender inclusion in digital health were recognized during Speak Up Africa Day. Our advocacy and technical support contributed to increased domestic resource mobilization for public health in Benin where budget allocations for malaria elimination were quadrupled between 2022 and 2025.

None of our achievements would be possible without the support of government ministries, local organizations, and communities who work alongside us and provide insightful leadership in advancing health equity and dignity for all. We are also grateful to our dedicated partners and donors. Your trust and shared commitment remain central to our impact.

Going forward, we will continue to enhance the role of women and youth in digital health, an emerging frontier in finding health solutions on the continent. We will also support African experts in gaining recognition for their contribution to global health R&D, increasing their voice on regional and international platforms and securing sustainable financing for health R&D. We also aim to expand regional coalitions to amplify the significance of African solutions to African challenges and broaden partnerships with the private sector in support of public health.

In alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063 for socioeconomic development, we remain committed to promoting healthy lives for all, transforming economies through improved public health and sanitation, and enhancing capacities for health R&D and local medicine production.

We invite all who share our vision to join forces with us as now more than ever, Africa needs bold voices, courageous leadership, and unified action!

Sincerely,

Yacine Djibo
Executive Director

WHO WE ARE

Speak Up Africa is an African-led, Senegal-based organization working with leaders and changemakers in Africa and beyond to solve Africa's pressing sustainable development challenges.

Speak Up Africa is dedicated to supporting African leaders and citizens to take an active role in identifying and developing solutions to tackle the challenges facing our continent. Speak Up Africa's aspiration is to be unparalleled in lifting African actors to drive equitable and sustainable change towards healthy and thriving African societies. Driven by the conviction that women and youth will drive the next wave of social and economic development in Africa, Speak Up Africa is here to unleash the untapped potential of the continent's women and youth.

WHAT WE DO

Everything we do is designed to tackle the pressing sustainable development challenges facing our continent. We work on different thematic areas, but not in silos. We understand that our ability to tackle specific diseases or challenges depends on strong health systems and, ultimately, universal health coverage. This belief drives all of our work and cuts across all of our issues.

We Convene. Because there is power in numbers and in diversity, we bring together stakeholders from all walks of life to increase the relevance of the issues affecting our continent, generate commitments and foster immediate action.

We enable. We equip our partners with technical and financial resources so that they are better able to influence positive change and provide platforms for their voices to be amplified.

We advocate. We work with leaders within government, the private sector, civil society organizations, media and global donors and organizations to drive long-lasting policy change.

OUR VALUES



I- Inclusion

We believe that all stakeholders must be engaged in the dialogue of change in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

D- Diligence

We are a team of energetic and industrious individuals dedicated to contributing meaningfully to the development of Africa.

E- Excellence

We are goal-focused individuals with specialized expertise and complementary skills who collaborate, innovate and produce consistently superior results.

A- Accountability

It is our responsibility to ensure that us Africans are leading on the development issues that impact our continent.

S- Sustainability

We ensure sustainability of programs by embedding them within the country's national strategies and plans.

OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

- We work across countries, cultures and contexts. We make connections and spur dialogue to achieve common goals.
- We intimately know and understand African contexts and can tap into local ingenuity.
- We lift our partners up. We advocate with those who need support and provide platforms so they can make their voices heard.
- We are an organization founded and led by women. We are vibrant, energetic and dedicated Africans who know how to create impact.

OUR REACH



WEST AFRICA

Headquartered in Dakar, Senegal, our solid relationships with key decision makers, uniquely qualify us to drive policy change and advocacy across the region.



FRANCOPHONE AFRICA

We are committed to enabling coordinated actions between French speaking African countries.



AFRICA

Working across the African continent, we catalyze systemic change for public health and sustainable development.



GLOBAL

We amplify and enable African voices globally to participate in developing the architecture needed to drive sustainable change.



(2020-2024)

Catalyzing Change Across Africa

Speak Up Africa has expanded its reach and deepened its impact across Africa to prevent malaria, address neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), improve sanitation, and advance global health research and development (GHRD). Our advocacy and partnerships have laid a strong foundation for local leadership and collective action to drive progress.

We adapted and scaled advocacy models to better reflect local contexts and realities. This work accelerated progress against malaria and NTDs, strengthened sanitation systems, and increased investment in health research. Together with governments, civil society organizations, champions, and the private sector, we contributed to meaningful changes in policies, institutional capacity, and regional collaboration. Our efforts have mobilized local resources, strengthened civil society's role in health decision-making, and supported locally driven solutions.



Policy and Systems Change

Our advocacy helped shape policy and regulatory frameworks at national and continental levels. Our work with partners contributed to the adoption of the African Sanitation Policy Guidelines by AU Member States, and three national frameworks in Niger, Senegal, and Burkina Faso. These frameworks, including Niger's revised National Sanitation Policy, accelerate access to better water and sanitation for millions. In 2024, we celebrated a milestone as Côte d'Ivoire ratified the African Medicines Agency (AMA) Treaty, advancing health sovereignty and regulatory harmonization across Africa.

Malaria Elimination and Resource Mobilization

The Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign, launched in Senegal, has grown into a continental movement, active in 30 countries. The campaign's business arm, the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative (ZMBLI), mobilized over US\$6 million in financial and in-kind contributions from 59 private sector companies. In Benin, sustained advocacy led the government to nearly quadruple its national budget for malaria control, showcasing the impact of collective action in mobilizing domestic resources.

Elevating Sanitation on the Global Agenda

At the 9th World Water Forum held in Dakar, sanitation took center stage for the first time in the Forum's history. Our advocacy contributed to the creation of the Sanitation Village a landmark innovation designed to raise the profile of sanitation and hygiene. Over the course of the week, 11 thematic sessions brought together more than 700 participants, spotlighting critical issues across the sanitation value chain. This strong turnout signaled growing momentum and multi-stakeholder commitment to advancing sanitation solutions. With 27 exhibitors and over 1,000 visitors, the Village became a vibrant hub for knowledge exchange, showcasing how sanitation systems can transform waste into value.

Gender Equity and Leadership

Through the African Women in Digital Health (AWiDH) initiative, we advanced women's leadership and addressed gender disparities in digital health by developing continent-wide gender mainstreaming guidelines and piloting a mentorship program. Voix EssentiELLES provided flexible funding, targeted capacity building, and network

access to 60 women-led organizations and five national networks working on issues such as malaria, HIV, gender-based violence, and climate resilience. In partnership with the Basketball Africa League, the second edition of “Teaming Up: African LeadHERs meet BAL4HER” paired 20 young African female athletes with industry executives, creating pathways for leadership and public health advocacy.

Innovation and Research Capacity

Our partnerships with local actors led to the establishment of the Research and Innovation Agency of Benin (ABRI), dedicated to securing sustainable funding for scientific research and health innovation. The Africa Young Innovators for Health Award celebrated young entrepreneurs transforming ideas into solutions, while our media collaborations amplified African voices in health research, building trust and attracting investment in homegrown innovation.

Our Collective Impact in Numbers (2020–2024)



Through these efforts, we have established ourselves as a catalyst for change, working alongside communities, governments, and partners to advance sustainable development across Africa. Building on this momentum, we remain focused on enabling local leaders, scaling proven models, and galvanizing collective action to tackle health challenges in Africa.



2024

Sustaining Momentum, Scaling Impact

In 2024, building on years of progress, we strengthened our commitment to advancing public health and development across Africa, by translating strategies into impact, scaling successful models, and fostering inclusive partnerships.

DRIVING POLICY AND SYSTEMIC CHANGE

In Côte d'Ivoire, Speak Up Africa partnered with Conscience et Vie (COVIE) and the National Federation of Health Organizations of Côte d'Ivoire (FENOSCI), an umbrella body uniting over 300 NGOs, foundations, and networks, to advance continental health policies nationally. This strategic, stakeholder-driven advocacy unlocked significant policy shifts with long-lasting impact.

On February 14, Côte d'Ivoire became the 29th country to ratify the African Medicines Agency (AMA) Treaty — a milestone achieved through a targeted campaign that mobilized grassroots momentum and national commitment to improve access to safe, effective, and affordable medicines across Africa.

Charlène Kouadio, human rights and advocacy officer at COVIE, said:

“ *The mission of the African Medicines Agency is to provide access to good quality medicines. The Agency will ensure the strengthening of medicines regulation, including the quality, safety and effectiveness of medicines on the African continent, contributing to the reduction of mortality due to counterfeit medicines.*

In Senegal, our advocacy played a key role in the country achieving WHO Maturity Level 3 certification. Through support for the FDA Act, advancing the National Pharmacopeia Policy, and advocating for legislative updates, Senegal is better positioned to strengthen pharmaceutical regulation, attract investment, and build trust in its health systems.

In Benin, our partnership with VIA-ME culminated in a high-level scientific event that reinforced national momentum for health innovation. The meeting resulted in renewed commitments to long-term investment in research and development, building on initiatives such as the creation of the Research and Innovation Agency of Benin (ABRI) and the

PRISE platform. A highlight of the event was the recognition of three women entrepreneurs in health research and development, who received awards for their outstanding contributions underscoring the vital role of women in driving innovation.

Globally, we elevated Africa's priorities at the World Water Forum in Indonesia by championing fair and sustainable access to sanitation, promoting sanitation as an investment class, and calling for resilient infrastructure. We also underscored the urgent need to think beyond conventional approaches when it comes to managing sanitation encouraging bold, adaptive solutions that meet the evolving demands of urban growth, climate change, and equity.

These achievements underscore the critical role of local champions, civil society, and sustained engagement in driving policy change. Yet, with delays in AMA's full operationalization, continued advocacy and multi-sectoral collaboration remain essential.

MOBILIZING RESOURCES AND INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Our partnerships and advocacy continued to drive increased domestic resource allocation and private sector involvement, key indicators of sustainable progress.



Benin's national malaria budget has experienced significant and sustained growth a powerful testament to the impact of continued advocacy and multi-sectoral coordination. The budget increased by 140% between 2022 and 2023, rising from US\$1.8 million to US\$4.3

million, followed by a 20% increase in 2024, from US\$4.1 million to US\$4.9 million. A further 28.5% increase has been secured for 2025, bringing the budget to US\$6.3 million a direct result of intensified advocacy efforts carried out during 2024. This growth reflects the growing recognition of advocacy's impact in driving national commitment.

The Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative (ZMBLI), launched in 2020 with Ecobank and the Ministry of Health in Benin, expanded to Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal, and Uganda. By 2024, ZMBLI had mobilized US\$6 million in private sector contributions, engaged 10 champions, and awarded nine companies for their leadership.

Spotlight on Ecobank



Ecobank Group, present in 35 African countries, has consistently committed to social impact initiatives. Through ZMBLI, Ecobank provided US\$1 million in catalytic, matched funding, strengthening multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms in Benin and Uganda. These efforts mobilized nearly US\$6 million, provided malaria prevention kits and treatments, and supported awareness campaigns that reached millions.

Yves Mayilamene, Group Executive of Human Resources at Ecobank, noted:



The private sector must play a major role in helping to end malaria by providing essential funding, broader awareness, and political advocacy.



Spotlight on Canal+



Canal+, operating in 25 African countries, has contributed over US\$1.5 million through media support and direct donations to malaria control efforts between 2021 and 2024. In 2024, Canal+ Benin and Speak Up Africa signed a strategic partnership agreement to intensify awareness and prevention efforts. The Africa Cup of Nations campaign generated nearly US\$37 million in public relations value, amplifying malaria as a solvable challenge. This case exemplifies the power of private sector-media collaboration to shift public perceptions and catalyze systemic change.



Spotlight on James Wallen – Health Advocacy Advisor, Speak Up Africa



James Wallen's commitment to the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign is personal and strategic:



My wake-up call to the severity of malaria came in 2014 during the Ebola outbreak. A flat mate fell ill with what seemed like 'just malaria,' but it turned life-threatening. That experience showed me how normalized malaria has become. Zero Malaria is possible, and I am all in to make it a reality.

Under James's leadership, Speak Up Africa and partners mobilized nearly US\$6 million in private sector support through ZMBLI, engaged over 100 business leaders, and facilitated national coordination structures in Benin and Uganda. His story underscores the urgency of sustained investment, multi-sector collaboration, and innovative financing to end malaria.



STRENGTHENING LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

In 2024, we increased investments in local leadership, focusing on empowering women and youth advocates.

The African Women in Digital Health (AWiDH) movement, co-led by Speak Up Africa and Africa CDC, delivered the continent's first gender-inclusive digital health guidelines and launched the African Digital Health Equity Roadmap (ADHER). The inaugural AWiDH mentorship program equipped five women leaders with essential skills, expanding networks and enhancing investment readiness.

Dr. Victory Ifeanyichukwu of Medvax Health reflected on her experience:



Initially, we planned to operate as an e-pharmacy. However, my mentor helped us rethink our approach and refine our minimum viable product (MVP).

In partnership with the Basketball Africa League, “**Teaming Up: African LeadHERs meet BAL4HER**” paired 10 young female athletes with industry leaders, advancing women's leadership and advocacy. This momentum culminated in the Speak Up Africa'Art LINGEER exhibition, showcasing women's contributions across sectors and reinforcing commitment to gender equity and inclusion.



Spotlight: VIA-ME

In Benin, VIA-ME organized a high-level scientific event celebrating local innovation and women's leadership in health. This milestone helped establish ABRI and PRISE, creating sustainable structures for research funding and private sector engagement in health R&D. VIA-ME's efforts illustrate the impact of empowering local actors to drive systemic change.

Featured Initiatives

Delivering on Women's Inclusion in Public Health Leadership



As the first phase of the Voix Essentielles initiative ended in 2024, we celebrated its achievements in supporting women and youth across Africa. Launched in July 2021 with technical and financial support from the CHANEL Foundation and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund), the Voix Essentielles network brings together 39 organizations in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal. The network is developing capacities of grassroots community organizations to advocate for women's inclusion in public health leadership.



CASE STUDY:

Farida Tiemtoré

Co-founder of Les Héroïnes du Faso (The Heroines of Faso), Voix EssentiELLEs grantee

Women and girls in Burkina Faso face many challenges, including high rates of child marriage, gender-based violence, early pregnancy and barriers to staying in school. Access to health care is inequitable, and due to conflict and insecurity, the UN estimates that one in five people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Farida and her colleagues were determined to make a difference in the lives of women and girls. Les Héroïnes du Faso (the Heroines of Faso) blog was born, becoming a platform to showcase successful women of all ages achieving success independently in Burkina Faso.



I said to myself, 'Why not create something on the internet to enable people to get the right information? Straightaway, the blog let me connect with girls and with female role models. I wanted these role models to share their experience to support other girls and women.'

Farida Tiemtoré, Co-founder of Les Héroïnes du Faso

Farida and her colleagues launched La Caravane des Héroïnes du Faso, an outreach project in six communities to educate young people about sexual and reproductive health and rights. The initiative enables girls and young women to access



confidential HIV and sexually transmitted infection (STI) tests and to protect themselves against coercion or sexual violence.

Thanks to Farida and her team, young women are learning of places to advise them on their sexual and reproductive health needs and choices.

Les Héroïnes du Faso was established with the support of Voix EssentiELLEs, a grant and capacity development fund for women and girls' community-based organizations, groups and networks, and their leaders, to strengthen participation of women and girls in decision-making processes and spaces that influence health policies and programs.

Bringing Gender Equity to Decision-making spaces



Young women leaders from diverse networks contributed to critical global conversations, highlighting the power of youth participation, especially young women and those with disabilities, in decision-making processes that drive meaningful change. Participants from Voix EssentiELLeS contributed to the Youth Health Summit, on the sidelines of the World Health Summit in Berlin, 2024, and the 18th International Conference on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change. Participants at both events engaged with practitioners and policymakers to explore innovative solutions for funding public health and climate adaptation, underscoring the importance of community-driven and youth-led approaches.



In Abidjan, the Voix EssentiELLeS initiative facilitated dialogues and collaborations, turning words into action in the fight against gender-based violence and for gender equality. This strategic convening highlighted the critical role of platforms and dialogue spaces in amplifying the voices of women and girls in decision-making. The International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation was another milestone, celebrating the heroes and champions dedicated to ending this harmful practice.

Through gender-transformative leadership training and digital campaigns, young female basketball players were enabled to take a stand against violence and promote positive masculinity. At the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA), Voix EssentiELLEs and the Her Voice Fund shared their strategies for amplifying the voices of women and girls in health policies.

As the first phase ended in 2024, Voix EssentiELLEs clearly laid a strong foundation for women's empowerment, innovation, and meaningful dialogue on women's roles in driving change across Africa.

VoixEssentiELLEs by 2024

- **3** focus countries
- **39** women's and girls' grassroots organizations
- **\$800,000** disbursed as small grants to women and girls grassroot organizations.
- **22** grassroots organizations participated in Global Fund country dialogue processes (8 in Senegal, 11 in Burkina Faso and 3 in Côte d'Ivoire).
- Creation of **2** Voix EssentiELLEs networks in Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, with the process also underway in Senegal.



Supporting youth leadership in health research and innovation



Africa Young Innovators for Health Award - Supporting youth leadership in health research and innovation

In 2024, the Africa Young Innovators for Health Award, a flagship program by Speak Up Africa in partnership with the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA), concluded its second edition with remarkable achievements. Launched in 2021, this award offers pioneering young health entrepreneurs across Africa financial and technical support to bring their game-changing business ideas to life..

Since the program's inception in 2021, outstanding young innovators have been celebrated, and in 2024 three winners received \$90,000 combined funding to support their health innovations. They also benefited from a comprehensive three-month business mentorship program, media training, expert advice on intellectual property protection, and access to a vast network of supporters and partners in the healthcare and digital sectors.

Among the notable winners, Teneola Adedeji from Nigeria shone brightly with her on-demand platform offering a convenient solution to fragmented access to essential medications. Moses Ochora from Uganda was recognized for Photo-Kabada, a hybrid, remotely monitored phototherapy device developed to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with neonatal jaundice in low and middle-income countries. Additionally, Nura Izath of Uganda was celebrated for her innovation to combat neonatal mortality caused by hypothermia, the Autothermo, and Muhammad Abdullahi from Nigeria was recognized for his Trash 4 Health Initiative – a social enterprise transforming plastic waste into essential medications for diseases like diabetes and hypertension.

The Africa Young Innovators for Health Award underscores the importance of supporting youth leadership in health research and innovation. By enabling young innovators, we are not only fostering creativity and dedication but also driving tangible solutions to some of Africa's most pressing health challenges. This program is a testament

to the potential of young leaders to drive positive change and improve health outcomes across the continent.

Africa Young Innovators for Health Award by 2024

- **7** groundbreaking innovations recognized
- **3** female innovators benefited from the Women Innovators Incubator, a dedicated program to address gender imbalance
- **\$180,000** disbursed to the Award winners and participants in the Incubator
- **10** high level mentors engaged with our innovators for a 3 month one-on-one business mentorship program.



Speak Up Africa Day – Where Bold Ideas Meet Action



Africa's health challenges demand fresh thinking, fearless leadership, and united action. To drive this, Speak Up Africa launched its first Speak Up Africa Day in 2024, where changemakers, policymakers, and innovators unite to celebrate bold solutions, forge powerful partnerships, and accelerate progress toward a thriving continent.

The 2024 Speak Up Africa Day theme, "Thinking Outside the Box," challenged stakeholders to break from conventional perspectives of the public health systems and embrace creative, scalable, and inclusive approaches to Africa's most pressing health issues. Under this theme, Africa's brightest minds in public health converged to turn bold ideas into actionable solutions through policies and community action, proving that the continent's challenges demand its most creative answers.



The event showcased the remarkable achievements and inspiring stories of transforming Africa's health using sports and culture as a platform for health equity, sparking global partnerships, eliminating

diseases, mobilizing grassroots advocacy to change policies, providing scientific leadership in addressing overlooked diseases, and gender transformative digital innovation to improve health outcomes.



Amadou Gallo Fall

President, Basketball Africa League

Honored for: «Teaming Up: African LeadHERs meet BAL4HER» initiative creating mentorship pathways for women in sports leadership.

Impact: Bridging gender gaps in male-dominated fields while expanding health advocacy through sports networks.



Dr. Michael Charles

CEO, RBM Partnership to End Malaria

Honored for: Leading RBM Partnership to End Malaria, and advancing malaria elimination efforts through inclusive, multi-sector partnerships.

Impact: His leadership has supported health systems in over 20 African countries and fostered greater alignment among key partners in the global fight against malaria.



Farida Tieantore

Advocate, Voix EssentiELLeS & Global Fund Youth Council

Honored for: Amplifying youth and women's voices in health policy, particularly around malaria and HIV.

Impact: Her campaigns have influenced legislative changes on gender-based violence in Burkina Faso while mentoring a new generation of advocates.



Dr. Soci Ibrahima Fall

Director, WHO NTD Program

Honored for: Decades of pioneering work advancing global health and neglected tropical diseases

Impact: His community-driven strategies have expanded access to care for millions in underserved regions, transforming the delivery of health services across a range of diseases.



Ousman Kalsoum Diallo

IT Manager, Senegalese Ministry of Health

Honored for: Pioneering the African Women in Digital Health (AWiDH) initiative.

Impact: Creating career pathways for women in health tech while digitizing Senegal's health systems.



Key Insights and Priorities for 2025

Several key lessons have emerged in 2024 to guide our work going forward. Our experience has reinforced the importance of local leadership. The power of country-led advocacy, exemplified by the successful ratification of the African Medicines Agency treaty in Côte d'Ivoire, highlighted the effectiveness of community-driven approaches in advancing health policy and systems change.

Our partnerships with private sector leaders, including Ecobank and Canal+, brought in valuable resources, perspectives, and credibility. These collaborations have demonstrated that when different sectors come together, we can unlock new opportunities to drive health advocacy and awareness, mobilize resources, and amplify impact.



We also witnessed how culture and sports can play a powerful role in reframing public health issues. Through platforms like BAL4HER and Speak Up Afric'Art, we could connect with broader audiences and engage new champions, making public health narratives more accessible and relatable.

However, the year was not without challenges. Structural limitations such as reductions in Official Development Assistance (ODA), constrained fiscal space, and persistently low levels of direct funding to local organizations created significant hurdles for sustained progress. These constraints made it difficult to maintain momentum beyond peak advocacy moments, requiring ongoing commitment from local champions, consistent community engagement, and the continued use of dedicated platforms like Speak Up Africa Day to keep issues at the forefront. Delays in policy ratification reminded us that sustained, multi-stakeholder advocacy is essential to achieving long-term goals. Our efforts to mainstream gender equity initially faced fragmentation, underscoring the need for a more cohesive and intentional approach across all our initiatives.

These insights are shaping our priorities in 2025. We will deepen our investment in local leadership by expanding mentorship and capacity-building efforts, focusing on enabling women and youth leaders and advocates through the next phase of Voix EssentiELLEs. We will scale and adapt successful models, such as the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative, to tackle new health challenges, including neglected tropical diseases. Our commitment to strengthening partnerships will drive formalized, long-term collaborations with private sector actors, innovation hubs, and media institutions, ensuring the sustainability of our initiatives.

Our focus on evidence-based storytelling, grounded in insights from credible scientific voices, will highlight the impact of our advocacy and build a stronger case for broader support. We will fully integrate gender-transformative approaches into our work, ensuring that inclusivity and equity are embedded in every program and activity.

Our experiences and achievements in 2024 have laid a solid foundation for the future. By applying these lessons, addressing challenges head-on, and setting clear priorities, we will increase our meaningful contribution to transforming African health systems.

Our Partners and Donors

FUNDING PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS



STRATEGIC PARTNERS



Our Team of Experts

- **Ababacar Yague**
Administrative and Financial Director
- **Alexandra Assamoi**
Communication Officer – Voix EssentiELLES Project
- **Angelo Zogo Menye**
Creative Content Officer
- **Anta Gaye**
Administrative & Logistics Manager
- **Anta Mbodj Sarr**
Administrative & Logistics Manager
- **Assiatou Kama Niang**
Policy and Research Manager
- **Astou Fall Gassama**
Director of Programs
- **Awa Yanogo**
Program Officer
- **Aziz Thioye**
Accountant
- **Christiane Yelibi**
Coordinator of the Voix EssentiELLES Program
- **Edgard Kouassi**
Accountant
- **Elisabeth Dia**
Administrative & Logistics Manager SUA/OPCU
- **Fara Ndiaye**
Co-founder and Deputy Executive Director
- **Franz Okey**
Regional Advisor
- **James Wallen**
Health Advocacy Advisor
- **Khadidia Diakhaby**
Program Officer
- **Mælle Ba**
Communications and External Affairs Advisor
- **Mame Cheikh Mbaye**
Graphic Designer
- **Mamadou Ndiaye**
Accountant
- **Marieme Mbengue**
Administrative Assistant
- **Marième Ndiaye**
Administrative Assistant
- **Mbemba Badio**
Graphic Designer
- **Ndeye Codou Sy**
Human Resources Manager
- **Papa Djibril Faye**
Program Officer
- **Roxane Fian**
Advocacy and Communication Officer
- **Roukiattou Ouedraogo**
Regional Advisor
- **Siaka Traoré**
Chief Accountant
- **Yacine Djibo**
Founder and Executive Director
- **Yaye Sophiétou Diop**
Partnership and Development Director

Our Board

- **Yacine Barro Bourgault
(Board Chair)**
Director of the Small and Medium Business Segment for Emerging Markets in the Africa and Middle East region, Microsoft.
- **Adrien Diouf**
Advisor to the Secretary-General, Central Bank of West African States
- **Cecile Niang**
Manager, Finance, Competition and Investments, World Bank Group
- **Fara Ndiaye**
Co-Founder and Deputy Executive Director, Speak Up Africa
- **Magatte Diop**
Founder and President, Peacock Investments
- **Meg L. DeRonghe, J.D.**
Director, Strategy, Planning and Management and Chief of Staff, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Gates Foundation.
- **Yacine Djibo**
Founder and Executive Director, Speak Up Africa



2024 Exhibition LiNGER

BEHIND THE SCENE







18 Ave. Leopold Sedar Senghor - 8th Floor
BP 3837, Dakar, Senegal
+ 221 33 822 49 22 - www.speakupafrika.org