

BILL GATES TO DIRECT MAJORITY OF \$200 BILLION PLEDGE TOWARD AFRICA'S FUTURE

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COMMITTS TO PARTNERING WITH GOVERNMENTS THAT PUT PEOPLE'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING FIRST

ADDIS ABABA (June 2, 2025) – In an address today in Nelson Mandela Hall at the African Union, Gates Foundation Chair Bill Gates urged African leaders to seize the moment to accelerate progress in health and development through innovation and partnership, despite current headwinds. He announced that the majority of the foundation's \$200 billion spend over the next 20 years will go to Africa with a focus on partnering with governments that prioritize the health and wellbeing of their people.

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“By unleashing human potential through health and education, every country in Africa should be on a path to prosperity – and that path is an exciting thing to be part of,” Gates said.

Following his address, Gates joined Dr. Paulin Basinga, the foundation’s Africa director, in a fireside chat to discuss Africa’s development agenda and the investments and partnerships needed to drive future progress.

Calls for collaboration and shared responsibility were delivered by prominent African leaders, including Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, director-general of the World Trade Organization, and Amina J. Mohammed, deputy secretary-general of the United Nations.

Renowned advocate for women and children, Mrs. Graça Machel, described the current situation as “a moment of crisis” and emphasized the importance of enduring partnerships in Africa’s development journey. “Mr Gates’ long-standing partnership with Africa reflects a deep understanding of these challenges and a respect for African leadership, ideas and innovation,” she said. “We are counting on Mr Gates’ steadfast commitment to continue walking this path of transformation alongside us.”

Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala emphasized that Africa’s health progress is a result of strong government leadership, resilient communities, and partnerships that deliver results.

Gates called for prioritizing primary healthcare, emphasizing that “investing in primary healthcare has the greatest impact on health and wellbeing.”

“With primary healthcare, what we’ve learned is that helping the mother be healthy and have great nutrition before she gets pregnant, while she is pregnant, delivers the strongest results. Ensuring the child receives good nutrition in their first four years as well makes all the difference.”

Gates’ speech highlighted how countries like Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Zambia are showing what’s possible when bold leadership harnesses innovation. From expanding frontline health services and using data to cut child mortality, to deploying advanced tools against malaria and HIV, and safeguarding primary healthcare despite fiscal strain —these country-led efforts are driving scalable, homegrown progress.

Reflecting on more than two decades of engagement on the continent, Gates said, “I’ve always been inspired by the hard work of Africans even in places with very limited resources.” He added, “The kind of field work to get solutions out, even in the most rural areas, has been incredible.”

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He pointed to Rwanda as an early example of this promise, noting, "Rwanda is using AI to improve service delivery. E.g. AI-enabled ultrasound, to identify high-risk pregnancies earlier, helping women receive timely, potentially life-saving care."

In Ethiopia and Nigeria this week, Gates will see first-hand the state of health and development priorities in the wake of foreign aid cuts, and he will affirm his and the foundation's commitment to supporting Africa's progress in health and development over the next 20 years.

"Our foundation has an increasing commitment to Africa," Gates said. Our first African office was here in Ethiopia about 13 years ago. Now we have offices in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and Senegal. That's a great way for us to strengthen partnerships."

While in Ethiopia, Gates met with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and heard how Ethiopia is sustaining the momentum on critical reforms, expanding essential services, and remaining resilient amid shifting global aid dynamics. Gates also took part in a roundtable with the Ethiopian Public Health Institute on the country's iodine-folic acid double-fortified salt initiative.

From Addis Ababa, Gates will travel to Nigeria, where he will meet with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and engage with federal and state leaders to discuss Nigeria's primary health care reforms. He will also participate in a Goalkeepers Nigeria event focused on Africa's innovation future and meet with local scientists and partners shaping Nigeria's national AI strategy and scaling up health solutions.

Gates's trip follows the foundation's historic announcement on May 8 that it would spend \$200 billion over the next 20 years to advance progress on saving and improving lives and Gates' commitment to give away virtually all of his wealth to the foundation in that timeframe. Over the next two decades, the foundation will work together with its partners to make as much progress as possible towards three primary goals: end preventable deaths of moms and babies; ensure the next generation grows up without having to suffer from deadly infectious diseases; and lift millions of people out of poverty, putting them on a path to prosperity. At the end of 20 years, the foundation will sunset its operations.

Over the last two decades, the Gates Foundation has worked alongside African partners to save lives, develop vaccines, and strengthen systems. It has helped catalyze more than 100 innovations and contributed to saving more than 80 million lives through Gavi and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS,

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foundation is led by CEO Mark Suzman, under the direction of Bill Gates and our governing board.

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