

# Abuja Declaration on REACH for child survival



31 October 2024

**We, Minister Muhammad Pate and Professor Samba Sow, as Co-chairs of the REACH Network, together with all partners represented at the REACH Annual Meeting in Abuja, reaffirm our collective vision: that every child in Africa has the right to health and the opportunity to thrive.**

REACH, or "Resiliency through Azithromycin for Children," is an initiative aimed at reducing child mortality by distributing biannual azithromycin through mass drug administration (MDA) in high-mortality regions across six African countries—Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

In alignment with the 77<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly resolution on maternal and child health, we recognize that achieving this vision requires a unified, Africa-led approach grounded in the unique needs of our diverse nations. Together, we are committed to forging consensus across the continent and advancing African-driven solutions to address the critical health challenges facing our children and communities.

To implement REACH effectively, we uphold evidence and data as the foundations of our decision-making alongside compassion and solidarity. This approach includes rigorous monitoring and evaluation to ensure transparency, accountability, and adaptability. Integral to this commitment is the vigilant monitoring of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), balancing the benefits of child survival with the risks of resistance. In alignment with the recent United Nations General Assembly declaration on AMR, we will work to incorporate AMR surveillance to protect the sustainability and effectiveness of our program. This approach allows REACH to adapt responsibly, ensuring decisions that safeguard present and future generations.

We recognize that the true impact of REACH is felt in the most vulnerable and hardest-to-reach communities across the continent. For this reason, we are unwavering in our commitment to equity. In the face of limited resources, our guiding principle is to prioritize those most at risk, ensuring that no child is left behind.

The REACH Network is unique in its country-led and country-owned approach. Each participating nation plays a leadership role, shaping the program to fit its specific context, leveraging existing systems and strengthening cross-continental collaboration. This commitment to national ownership within a shared, pan-African framework ensures a resilient network that enhances health outcomes across our continent.

Finally, maintaining and expanding this network across Africa is essential. The strength of our network is our collective voice and impact; it enables innovation, resource-sharing, and mutual support that transcend individual borders.

**Today, we renew our commitment to a future where African children are healthy, resilient, and able to reach their full potential. Through national ownership, African-driven solutions, and a unified approach, we can fulfil this vision and ensure that Africa's next generation thrives.**

**This is our shared responsibility, and together, we will work tirelessly to achieve it.**

**Professor Muhammad Ali Pate**  
REACH Network Co-chair

Coordinating Minister of Health and Social  
Welfare, Federal Republic of Nigeria

**Professor Samba O. Sow**  
REACH Network Co-chair

Former Minister of Health  
of the Republic of Mali