



**SpeakUpAfrica.**

*Impact Report 2023*



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# Message from the Executive Director



*AS A WOMEN-LED ORGANIZATION, GENDER EQUALITY IS INGRAINED IN OUR DNA. WE FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT FOR AFRICA TO THRIVE, WOMEN AND GIRLS—IN ALL THEIR DIVERSITY—MUST HAVE THE POWER TO HOLD LEADERSHIP POSITIONS, MAKE PIVOTAL DECISIONS, AND ALLOCATE RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY.*

In 2023, we are proud to have broken down some of the incredibly high barriers women face when accessing healthcare, education, economic and personal development opportunities, and decision-making spaces across Africa. Through our flagship programs and campaigns, together with our partners, we have raised awareness and encouraged policy change, investment, and collaboration to close the gender gap in healthcare outcomes, from NTDs to malaria and digital health and beyond.

On an even higher note, in 2023, the same year we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Maputo Protocol on the Rights of African Women, the Protocol reinforces women's rights in Africa, including the elimination of discrimination against women, the right to participate in political and decision-making processes, and greater autonomy in their reproductive health decisions.

Africa accounts for 94% and 95% of malaria cases and deaths respectively, with children under five years of age being the most vulnerable group affected. Additionally, the African continent bears 40% of the global NTDs burden. These preventable and treatable diseases are climate-sensitive and continue to disproportionately affect women and girls while remaining often neglected due to insufficient attention, funding, and research.



**YACINE DJIBO**  
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In response to these challenges, our «No to NTDs» and «Zero Malaria Starts With Me» campaigns aim to build social movements advocating for eliminating NTDs and malaria by 2030 and to increase political engagement and domestic resources for these causes. In 2023, we signed an agreement with the African Union Commission (AUC) to expedite the control and elimination of NTDs and malaria and to strengthen continental advocacy for the local production of medical products.

We also celebrated five years of the «Zero Malaria Starts With Me» campaign, achieving significant milestones, including US\$32 million in commitments from national malaria councils, creating the Malaria Youth Corps, and implementing national and subnational malaria scorecards in over 40 African countries. We also advanced our Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative in partnership with Ecobank, engaging the private sector in the fight against malaria with contributions totaling \$5.94 million from 59 companies.

Our broader commitment to tackling global health challenges in Africa is equally matched by our belief in the transformative power of youth. To mark World NTD Day in 2023, in partnership with Reaching the Last Mile, we co-hosted a youth talk in Senegal, bringing together young advocates, government leaders, civil society actors and the private sector to explore how young people can best be engaged in decision-making spaces to help cross the last mile of NTD elimination.

We also celebrated the winners of the second edition of the Africa Young Innovators for Health Award at the Galien Forum Africa in Dakar, Senegal. This Award, implemented in partnership with the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Associations and Manufacturers (IFPMA), recognized innovations advancing Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Africa, a goal many African governments are committed to but require accelerated progress.

Africa simultaneously held the FSM Conference and the African Water and Sanitation Association Conference for the first time in Abidjan. I'm proud to highlight that Speak Up Africa supported the development of the Abidjan Declaration signed by Africa's Ministers of Water and Sanitation, which aimed at guaranteeing access to quality water and sanitation for all in recognition of the right to water and sanitation as a unified right. During the congress, we also highlighted the success of the CAPOOP Alliance in implementing inclusive and equitable sanitation policies.

As we continue our work in 2024, we look forward to supporting African leaders and communities to take an active role in identifying and developing solutions to tackle the challenges facing our continent — including malaria, NTDs, immunization, sanitation, gender equality and global health research and development.

# About Speak Up Africa

## WHO WE ARE

Speak Up Africa is an African-led and African-based organization dedicated to building an Africa in which its citizens drive growth and sustainable development.

Through strategic communications and advocacy, we actively support African leaders and communities in identifying and developing solutions to our continent's challenges. We value our partnerships with governments, communities, media, civil society groups, business leaders, and global policymakers as they are integral to our mission of inspiring lasting change.

Everything we do is not a standalone effort but part of a more significant, unified movement. Our work aligns with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union's Agenda 2063, and national and regional priorities, ensuring that every man, woman, and child is empowered to live a long and healthy life.

## WHAT WE DO

*We Convene. We Enable.  
We Advocate.*

### WE CONVENE.

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

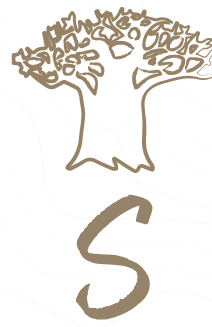
### WE ENABLE.

We support our partners 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 with governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, media, donors and organizations to drive long-lasting policy change.

## OUR VALUES



### **I-INCLUSIVENESS**

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 we, as 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 Team of Experts

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



**YACINE DJIBO**  
Founder &  
Executive Director



**FARA NDIAYE**  
Deputy Executive  
Director

## PARTNERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT



**YAYE SOPHIETOU  
DIOP**  
Partnership &  
Development  
Director



**ASSIATOU KAMA  
NIANG**  
Policy and  
Research  
Manager



**MOUHAMADOU  
DIENG**  
Policy and  
Research  
Manager



**MAÏMOUNA DIOP  
LY**  
Senior Policy and  
Financing Advisor



**MAELLE BA**  
Senior  
Communications  
Manager



**ORLANE ABENG  
ONDO**  
Malaria  
Communications  
Officer



**COURANI  
DIARRA**  
Strategic  
Communications  
Officer



**FO-KOFFI  
DJAMESSI**  
Media Relations  
Officer



**MADINA BAH**  
Communications  
Officer



**MEGANE BOHO**  
Strategic  
Communications  
Officer



**BARA MBAYE**  
Creative Content  
Manager



**ANGELO ZOGO**  
Graphic Designer



**MAME CHEIKH  
MBAYE**  
Graphic Designer



## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE



**ANICET GOUMAO GBOHO**  
Administrative and Financial Director



**ABABACAR YAGUE**  
Finance Manager



**SIAKA TRAORE**  
Chief Accountant



**EDGARD KOUASSI**  
Accountant



**NDEYE CODOU SY**  
Human Resources Manager



**ANTA MBODJ**  
Administrative and Logistic Manager



**ANTA GAYE**  
Administrative and Logistic Manager



**MARIEME MBENGUE**  
Administrative Assistant



**MARIÈME NDIAYE**  
Administrative Assistant



**ELISABETH DIA**  
Administrative and Logistic Manager

## PROGRAMS



**ASTOU NGOYE FALL**  
Director of Programs



**ROXANE FIAN**  
Sanitation Program Officer



**SEYNABOU DIOKHANE**  
Senegal Advocacy Officer



**KAMAL DEEN HABIB**  
Ghana Advocacy Officer



**DAVID MULABI**  
Uganda Advocacy Officer



**JAMES WALLEN**  
Malaria Program Coordinator



**FRANZ OKEY**  
National Coordinator Benin



**FIRDAOSS YOUSOUFOU**  
Program Associate, Benin



**PAPA MOMAR TOURE**  
Immunization and NTDs Program Officer



**PAPA DJIBRIL FAYE**  
CSO Program Officer



**ROUKIATTOU OUEDRAOGO**  
National Coordinator Burkina Faso



**AWA YANOGO**  
Advocacy Officer Burkina Faso



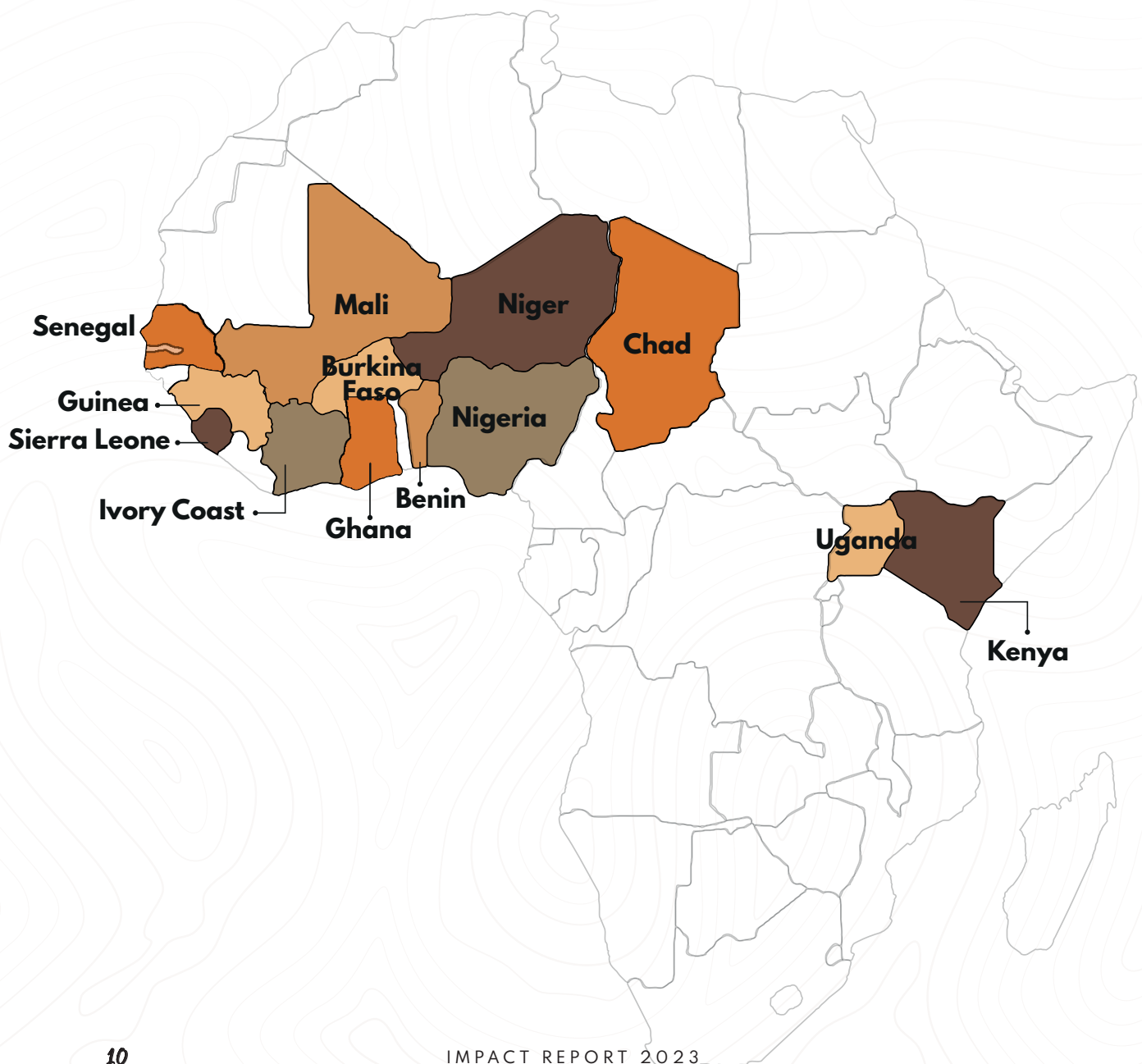
**DÉBORAH INES SINARE**  
Program Associate, Burkina Faso

# Our Reach

From our strategic base in Dakar, Senegal, our team of dedicated, nimble, and bilingual experts partner with African leaders and change-makers to implement the right policies and secure sufficient resources to achieve the SDGs and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

Our experienced team operates seamlessly in French and English. We are uniquely placed to bring together civil society organizations, the private sector, media, governmental and regional institutions across the continent to contribute to building the Africa we all want.

We understand that our ability to tackle specific diseases or challenges depends on robust health systems and universal health coverage. This belief drives our work and cuts across all of our issues. With a team of experts across Africa, Speak Up Africa now has projects in **Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Kenya** and **Uganda**.



# Areas of Intervention

Under the umbrella of the SDGs and the African Union's Agenda 2063, we work on several issue areas, including:



**Gender equality**



**Global Health  
Research &  
Development**



**Immunization**



**Malaria**



**Neglected Tropical  
Diseases**



**Sanitation**



**Youth engagement**

Our work, however, is not executed in silos: it is underpinned by the knowledge and belief that our efforts addressing any of these issues are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Our work is underpinned by the knowledge that our efforts to tackle Malaria, Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), immunization, sanitation, digital health, research and development and gender challenges are interlinked and reinforce one another.

Our ability to achieve our goals depends on creating awareness and robust health systems. Vaccines save lives only if they reach those who need them the most, which requires a trained and motivated healthcare workforce, adequate supplies of vaccines and equipment, the proper infrastructure, and an informed population that demands vaccination. This needs to be supported by sufficient and sustainable funding and a steady flow of research that can generate the necessary evidence to inform policies.

These pillars also underpin our ability to prevent, control and treat malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases, which are impossible to eliminate without adequate and sustainable sanitation solutions. And without ensuring our continent's women, girls and youth have a seat at the decision-making table, efforts to build a better future for our continent would be severely impeded.

# Our Impact at a Glance

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



### CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

+110

NTD program personnel in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Senegal trained and engaged by Speak Up Africa to deliver performance scorecards for World NTD Day.

2

Mentorship programs for young Africans to advance their careers: in the sports industry through the “African LeadHERs x BAL4HER” mentorship program, and in health innovation through the Africa Young Innovators for Health Award.



### COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

16

the number of civil society organizations we have supported to help fight NTDs and malaria.



### DRIVING INVESTMENT TO ELIMINATE MALARIA

\$6 million

raised since 2021 in financial and in-kind contributions from 60 companies, with 75% of these contributions made in 2023 alone, through the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative, in partnership with Ecobank.

140%

increase in Benin’s national budget allocation (compared to the previous four years) and a further 20% increase for the 2024 budget announced.



## INVESTING IN GENDER EQUALITY

**\$800,000** the amount Speak Up Africa invested in 39 women-led and grassroots organizations in 2023.

- 3** Voix EssentiELLEs leaders became part of key decision-making bodies (the National Coordinating Mechanism of the Global Fund, the General Parliamentary Assembly and the National Assembly in 2023).
- 6** Young African females were guided and supported in their professional and personal journey through the «Teaming up: African LeadHERs meet BAL4HER » Mentorship Program.



## MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS

**\$2 million** the value of the malaria mass communications support major media outlet, Next Media, Uganda will support with over 2 years.

**78%** of the annual need for mosquito nets in a Senegalese health post located in a high burden district was covered via donations from Canal+ Group, as well as the free broadcasting of awareness raising content on their national channels

**102** pieces of media content created, including articles, radio and TV content produced and broadcast in 24 African countries as part of the REMAPSEN partnership.

**742** the number of Speak Up Africa media mentions globally with a potential reach of 82.5 million.



## EXPANDING OUR REACH

**10** private sector champions across 5 countries joining the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative.

**5** year anniversary milestone reached in 2023 for the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign in Africa.

**27** African Union Member States are part of the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign.



## SUPPORTING LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**5** individuals and organizations awarded the Speak Up Africa Leadership Award.

**30+** the number of ELCP “Élus Locaux Contre le Paludisme” (Local Elected Officials Against Malaria) members supporting the fight against malaria.



# Our Impact



# PROGRESSING TOWARDS ELIMINATING MALARIA AND NTDs

## OUR IMPACT AND REACH



**140%** increase in the Benin government national budget allocation for malaria control (compared to the previous 4 years)



**1 million people** reached through our activities in the fight to eliminate malaria and NTDs through various media channels and events hosted by Speak Up Africa and partners



**\$5.94 million** raised through contributions from 59 companies through our Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative in partnership with Ecobank



**10 private sector champions** across 5 countries joining the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative. Representing a wide range of economic sectors and supporting advocacy and resource mobilization efforts by leveraging their influence, networks and platforms to bring new partners and resources to the table

## WHAT WE DID

### • FROM CONTINENTAL TO LOCAL ACTION AND VICE VERSA



The campaign originated in Senegal in 2014 as a nationwide citizen movement to increase awareness about malaria, make malaria elimination a political priority and ensure national commitment.

Building off Senegal's success, in July 2018 African Union Heads of State and Governments endorsed the campaign in support of the African Union goal to end malaria by 2030, expanding it from a nationwide campaign to a pan-African movement.

The campaign is based on three pillars: political engagement, private-sector engagement and community engagement. These pillars lay the foundation to keep malaria high on the political agenda, raise funds to support malaria work and activate everyone from heads of state to community members.

Throughout 2023, Speak Up Africa continued to play a leading role in supporting the pan-African Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign at the regional level, through the RBM Partnership to End Malaria and within target countries. The Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign is now active in 29 countries (with 27 of those countries being African Union Member States) since its initial launch in Senegal in 2014 and adoption by the African Union in 2018.

In addition, the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative, which supports the second pillar of the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign—that of private sector engagement—entered its third year, with Speak Up Africa, in collaboration with Ecobank, leading engagement efforts across five African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal, and Uganda.

The African Union Commission and Speak Up Africa signed an agreement to accelerate the control and elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) and malaria and strengthen continental advocacy for the local production of medical products. The agreement will see the two entities work on joint advocacy initiatives aimed at promoting the dissemination and operationalization of the continental framework for NTDs through interventions such as Speak Up Africa's "No to NTDs" movement, the promotion of joint South-to-South malaria initiatives and advocacy for the operationalization of the African Medicines Agency (AMA).

### • SPOTLIGHT ON OUR REGIONAL IMPACT

On World Malaria Day, 25 April 2023, the founding members of ELCP «Élus Locaux Contre le Paludisme» (Local Elected Officials Against Malaria) and Speak Up Africa, came together in Paris to formally launch the group. ELCP supports French elected representatives and other stakeholders wishing to support the fight against malaria through awareness-raising, prevention, promotion of research and development of new tools to combat the disease, support for people and families affected by malaria, and funding for the fight against malaria.





*The right to live in good health should be universal by 2030 and this will not be the case. The resurgence of malaria shows that we are far from it, and this must alert us and above all remind us of the urgency of mobilization.*

**JEAN FRANÇOIS MBAYE**

VICE-PRESIDENT OF LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS AGAINST MALARIA

Fatimata Lamine Sy, a Voix EssentiELLES and a locally elected official in Guediawaye, Senegal participated in the event and shared her experience in the fight against malaria and the importance of collective actions to accelerate the efforts to end the disease.



*Pictured from left to right: Rachid CONGO, Director and referent for the Youth Committee and Fatimata Lamine Sy, a Voix EssentiELLES*

In July 2023, Speak Up Africa joined the African Union, the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA), and the RBM Partnership to End Malaria to mark the 5th anniversary of the Zero Malaria StartsWith Me pan-African movement in Senegal. The event featured a youth forum and a high-level panel that brought together stakeholders, partners, and champions to strongly advocate for the engagement of African youth and the importance of mobilizing all stakeholders to eliminate malaria in Africa. Ahead of the celebration and together with the African Union Commission, we also held a simulation of the AU Youth Malaria Conversation Guide with 50 young people who worked on and launched the Youth Declaration on Malaria Elimination.



*By working closely with national governments, the Zero Malaria Starts with Me Campaign has demonstrated the power of collective action against malaria in Africa. We encourage more African countries to join this unprecedented movement. Every commitment counts, and every preventive action is needed to build a continent finally free from the burden of malaria.*

**H.E. AMBASSADOR MINATA SAMATE CESSOUMA**

COMMISSIONER FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AFRICAN UNION  
COMMISSION



*Pictured from left to right: Yacine Djibo, Executive Director, Speak Up Africa; Dr. Michael Charles Adekunle, CEO, RBM Partnership to End Malaria; Joy Phumaphi, Executive Secretary of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA) and Pr. Julio Rakotonirina, Director of Health and Humanitarians Affairs at the African Union Commission*

## • LOCALIZING ACTION ON NTD AND MALARIA ELIMINATION

Throughout 2023, Speak Up Africa continued to strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) in program implementation, leadership, strategic communication across Niger, Senegal, Guinea and Benin, including directly supporting 16 CSOs.

In Niger, local authorities in the communes of Bouza, Deoule, Allakaye and Karofane have advocated the inclusion of NTDs in their Communal Development Plans (PDC). In Guinea and Senegal, Speak Up Africa supported the technical validation of their NTD Master Plan 2023-2027 to monitor elimination targets and accelerate resource mobilization through the national advocacy plan.

In Senegal, advocacy efforts led by the civil society have facilitated the signing of municipal decrees on the fight against malaria in certain communes in the Sedhiou and Kolda regions, guaranteeing local funding for 2023 worth \$20,000.



*Youth Talks event in Kaolack, Senegal to commemorate World NTD Day 2023 on 30 January 2023*

Speak Up Africa and its partner, Reaching the Last Mile, co-hosted the first Youth Talks in Kaolack, Senegal, bringing together young advocates, government leaders, civil society actors and private sector representatives. Through an animated debate, the group explored how young people can best engage in decision-making spaces to help cross the last mile of NTD elimination. Attendees included Mama Gueye, Health Commission President at Kaolack City Hall, who addressed the crowd and urged the youth to share their ideas for combatting NTDs, and the Senegalese artist Bamba Ly Seck, who uses his artwork as a platform to drive awareness and action in support of NTD elimination.

In 2023, major broadcaster Canal+ reaffirmed its commitment to the fight against malaria. Through a partnership with Speak Up Africa, and as a dedicated contributor to the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative, Canal+ Group, as well as the Canal+ Senegal, continue to support mass communications for malaria control every year through free televised spots. They also contribute to the government's routine distribution strategy by donating mosquito nets to vulnerable populations in Senegal. As this partnership continues to strengthen, the Managing Director of Senegal officially committed to being a Zero Malaria Champion.

### • **ADVOCACY FOR IMPACT IN BENIN**

In Benin, a powerful collective effort was witnessed as Speak Up Africa supported the creation of the Zero Malaria Coalition. This coalition, comprising 30 members from across the country, was a testament to the power of unity and collaboration, aimed at streamlining and harmonizing civil society advocacy efforts. Furthermore, civil society organizations, also supported by Speak Up Africa, established a network of anti-malaria village committees and school clubs in 16 districts across 3 regions within the country, further amplifying the impact of our collective efforts.

Speak Up Africa and the National Program for the Fight against Communicable Diseases (PNLMT) supported three civil society organizations from Benin (SI'ANSON, VIA-ME and COBCUS) to implement advocacy activities focused on mobilizing and educating the community in the fight against NTDs in 8 municipalities across Benin. As a result, the mayor of Tiébélé in Benin allocated funding to the fight against NTDs.

In October 2023, ELCP «Elus Locaux Contre le Paludisme» (Local Elected Officials Against Malaria) visited Benin and met with the National Association of the Communes of Benin (ANCB). The deliberations resulted in ANCB launching the Alliance of the Mayors of Benin Against Malaria, bringing together regional representatives to mobilize efforts to fight malaria.

Zero Malaria Champion, the Honorable Aké Natondé from the National Assembly of Benin, held briefing sessions to parliamentarians explaining the challenges of malaria control and the implementation of the National Primary Health Care Policy. As a result, combined with years of multi-sectoral advocacy work, Benin's government made a significant stride by increasing their national budget for malaria control by 140% in 2023 (compared to the average over the prior 4 years) and announced a further 20% increase for the 2024 budget. This increase in budget is a beacon of hope, signaling a brighter future in the fight against malaria in Benin.



*Pops Mensah Bonsu, former NBA Player and NTD-elimination champion*

### • **LEVERAGING THE POWER OF SPORT FOR DISEASE ELIMINATION AND PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY**

In April 2023, as part of the Zero Malaria Starts With Me Campaign, the Zero Malaria Football Club was launched with a squad featuring globally renowned footballers joining forces to end malaria by increasing awareness of the disease and communicating the need for urgent action, especially amongst young people. Led by Co-Captains Luis Figo and CAF and FIFA legend Khalilou Fadiga, the squad also features Kader Keita, a former Ivorian footballer and Jay Jay Okocha, a former Nigerian player.

The power of collective action was demonstrated as the Basketball Africa League (BAL), Shooting Touch, and Speak Up Africa joined forces around Africa Day. Organizing a basketball and health clinic in Nyamirama, Rwanda, equipping youth and BAL Ambassadors with the knowledge and tools they need to drive effective change supporting NTD elimination.

Speak Up Africa and BAL also launched the «Teaming Up: African LeadHERs meet BAL4HER» mentorship program to leverage sport as a critical driver of gender equality and social and economic transformation of Africa. Through this mentorship program, six young African female athletes from Senegal, Egypt and Rwanda benefitted from the

leadership and networking experience of six female leaders in the sports industry. Over six months, mentees were coached to strengthen their skills and knowledge on gender inequality in sports, mental health, public speaking, and storytelling. By providing a structured mentorship experience, complete with educational modules and real-world exposure, the program has nurtured the personal and professional growth of its participants and set a new precedent for leveraging sports as a vehicle for societal change amid issues of gender imbalance in society.

## • **MOBILIZING PRIVATE SECTOR RESOURCES**

The Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative continued to make waves through extensive private sector mobilization in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal and Uganda, hitting a total of \$5.94 million mobilized in financial and in-kind contributions from 59 companies since 2021, 75% of which was secured in 2023, making it a watershed moment in the roll-out of this initiative.

Ecobank Ghana, in partnership with Speak Up Africa, National Malaria Elimination Programme and other partners, officially launched the Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative (ZMBLI) in Ghana in 2023, under the auspices of the Ministry of Health.

Beyond financial contributions, Speak Up Africa has also been able to leverage the voices, networks and platforms of the private sector to raise awareness about the fight against malaria and promote the advocacy efforts taking place across target countries. We have built firm partnerships to further malaria-control plans and gain support for awareness raising, advocacy and resource mobilization, and actions to support community prevention strategies.

## • **LEVERAGING PRIVATE SECTOR VOICES, NETWORKS AND PLATFORMS**

- ▶ Speak Up Africa signed an MOU with major media outlet Next Media, Uganda, to support malaria mass communications with \$4 million over two years.
- ▶ 40 companies were engaged through roundtable engagement meetings in Ghana.
- ▶ Major francophone media outlet TV5 Monde produced two 25-minute media reports highlighting advocacy and resource mobilization efforts as part of the Zero Malaria Starts with Me campaign and Zero Malaria Business Leadership Initiative.
- ▶ A network of 10 business leaders committed to leveraging their voice, networks and platforms to drive advocacy and resource mobilization efforts.

## • **BUILDING STRONG PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS**

- ▶ Signed an MOU with microfinance company Alliance de Crédit et d'Épargne pour la Production (ACEP) in Senegal, with an initial \$16,000 malaria-control action plan.
- ▶ Signed an MOU with the Benin branch of Lions Club, committing them to supporting mass communications, advocacy and resource mobilization, and actions to support community prevention strategies.
- ▶ Formal establishment via Ministerial Decree of an 11 member national steering committee for the Zero Malaria Fund in Benin, providing an official mechanism for the mobilization and management of resources leveraged through private sector engagement.
- ▶ Raised \$160,000 in in-kind and financial contributions from 30 companies in Uganda.



# IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## OUR IMPACT AND REACH



**\$800,000** The amount Speak Up Africa invested in 39 women and grassroots organizations in 2023.



**3** Voix EssentiELLEs leaders became part of key national decision-making bodies (the National Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) of the Global Fund, the General Parliamentary Assembly and the National Assembly).



**2** Mentorship programs for young Africans to advance their careers: in the sports industry through the « African LeadHERs x BAL4HER » mentorship program, and in health innovation through the Africa Young Innovators for Health Award.

## WHAT WE DID

### • **SETTING THE AGENDA FOR ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY IN HEALTH**

Over 2023, Speak Up Africa convened several discussions to focus on the need to build an inclusive health ecosystem where women and girls can thrive, and emphasize the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors to drive social change and achieve gender equality.

As a highlight of the second African LeadHERs' Forum, Speak Up Africa orchestrated a series of empowering webinars on the theme of digital spaces to achieve gender equality, coinciding with International Women's Day. These webinars served as a platform to amplify the voices of women from community-based organizations to pan-African sports organizations, both within and beyond the continent. The aim was to underscore the urgency of reducing gender inequalities worldwide, inspiring hope for a more equitable future.

### • **IMPROVING ACCESS TO QUALITY SEXUAL AND MENSTRUAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS**

At the 22nd edition of the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA), held in early December 2023 in Zimbabwe, Speak Up Africa held a sharing session dedicated to its flagship program, VoixEssentiELLEs. The team also participated in the Ready Summit and the Youth Conference. These collaborative efforts, involving various stakeholders and organizations, underscored the importance of collective action in addressing the challenges of AIDS and STIs in Africa, particularly for women.

During the debates at the Ready Summit, Speak Up Africa reaffirmed its position in favor of universal access to preventive treatment and respect for sexual and reproductive health rights. The organization also promoted the application of the Maputo Protocol on women's rights in the face of rising conservatism. Participants at the sharing session between Voix EssentiELLEs and Her Voice Fund stressed the importance of holistically looking at these two initiatives, combining capacity building, access to healthcare services and advocacy for equity and quality of care. Several avenues for collaboration were suggested, such as the organization of joint events or joint advocacy with donors.

At the ICASA Youth Conference, Speak Up Africa was able to gauge the expectations of the new generation in the fight against HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. Several avenues for improvement were identified, such as the creation of mentorships and discussion forums on sensitive subjects such as mental health and sexuality.

On International Women's Day 2023, Speak Up Africa and the social enterprise Kitambaa signed a partnership agreement to improve women's and girls' access to menstrual health services. This three-year agreement consolidates the long-standing collaboration between the two organizations to promote menstrual health and gender equality. As part of this partnership, the interventions of Speak Up Africa and Kitambaa will focus on strengthening health systems for access to menstrual health services and the promotion of services related to menstrual hygiene management. These interventions will also focus on advocacy for resource mobilization for increased access to menstrual health services and the prioritization of menstrual hygiene and health among decision-makers.

In September and October 2023, Speak Up Africa held impactful workshops in Senegal, Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso as part of the Voix EssentiELLEs initiative, aimed at strengthening the representation of women in health governance and improving access to quality sexual health services. These workshops, a testament to the collective effort, evaluated the pilot phase, defined strategic directions for the next phase and promoted the exchange of experiences between various actors, including representatives of civil society, beneficiary organizations and ministries. They resulted in the drafting of roadmaps to promote access to decision-making bodies for women and improve the health and well-being of women and girls in the region.



*Yacine Djibo, Executive Director, Speak Up Africa and Yaye Hélène Ndiaye, Executive Director of Kitambaa sign partnership agreement to improve women's and girls' access to menstrual health services*

## • **PROMOTING GIRLS' RIGHTS: GENDER EQUALITY AND CLIMATE ACTION**

On the International Day of the Girl Child, celebrated on October 11, JGEN led the "POTENTIAL" campaign to promote girls' rights in Senegal. The campaign mobilized 100 girls in Fatick and highlighted the devastating consequences of climate change on their lives, including climate-related school disruptions, economic shocks on climate-sensitive households, increased risk of early marriage, transactional sex, HIV infection and early pregnancy due to lack of education among others.

Among the 100 girls in attendance, two from the JAGAMMAR Children's Group stood as the voices of their generation, highlighting the intersection of gender equality and climate action. Their words were a reminder that climate change disproportionately affects young girls, who often bear the brunt of its consequences.

JGEN engages on issues like the legal age of marriage and climate impact, supported by Speak Up Africa, to promote gender equality in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.





*We call on all the girls of Senegal, the mothers, fathers and authorities to give meaning to the protection of girls from all forms of violence.*



*JGEN - 16 days of activism*

- **SUPPORTING RESEARCH TO REDUCE MORTALITY RATES AMONG CHILDREN AND INFANTS**

Speak Up Africa supported an extensive awareness-raising campaign on the AVENIR research program through local advocacy and social and behavioral change components, facilitating behavioral changes at all levels (administrative, customary, and religious). As a result, AVENIR implemented objectives in a total of 2,490 villages in line with the program's goals centered on treating children in the 1-59 months age group with Azithromycin in three regions of Niger (Dosso, Tahoua and Maradi), and evaluating the implementation of different approaches to mass distribution of Azithromycin in Niger.



*Awareness-raising activity in Dosso- Niger*



# CHAMPIONING DIGITAL AND GLOBAL HEALTH R&D

## OUR IMPACT AND REACH



**+127 media publications** disseminated on digital and global health R&D through collaboration with the media including national and regional media networks such as REMAPSEN.



**20 civil society organizations (CSOs)** were trained on advocacy for innovation, research, and development (R&D) to support African Medicines Agency (AMA) ratification at country level and domestic resource mobilization for R&D.



**25 Organizations** join the African Women in Digital Health (AWIDH) Network.



**4** Young African Innovators awarded.



**1** New national network of scientists working on research and development in Benin: the platform for business-led research and innovation (PRISE).

## WHAT WE DID

- **ADVOCACY FOR THE RATIFICATION OF THE AFRICAN MEDICINES AGENCY (AMA) TREATY**

To support advocacy for the ratification of the AMA treaty, Speak Up Africa worked with its partner NGO, COVIE, to organize a round table and press conference about the treaty that convened various stakeholders, notably representatives of the Ministry of Health, Ivorian Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority, civil society organizations and health networks and umbrella organizations. These activities carried out following an SUA mission on-site enabled us to step up our advocacy for the ratification of the AMA treaty, which led to the signing of the treaty by the President of the Republic of Ivory Coast in early 2024.

- **SUPPORTING LOCAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Speak Up Africa worked with the civil society organization VIA-ME to initiate an advocacy campaign for financing health research and development in Benin. VIA-ME developed a situational analysis document on the financing of health and development research in Benin, accompanied by a documentary film that follows the journeys of researchers in human, animal, plant and environmental health and the valuable contributions their work makes to global health developments to strengthen advocacy efforts in support of financing health research.

With the support of Speak Up Africa, VIA-ME also organized a multisectoral forum, bringing together representatives from the government, private companies, and actors in scientific research and development. This forum resulted in establishing a framework for consultation on the endogenous financing of scientific research in Benin. The participation of the First Vice President of the National Assembly of Benin and the Technical Advisor for Partnerships at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research demonstrated the importance given to this issue.

- **STRENGTHENING MARKETS FOR LOCALLY MANUFACTURED MEDICAL PRODUCTS**

In August 2023, Speak Up Africa and PATH signed a 2-year memorandum of understanding (MoU) focused on strengthening sustainable markets for locally manufactured medical products and medicines and medical product regulatory systems in Africa.

- **BACKING YOUNG AFRICAN INNOVATORS IMPROVING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE**

Speak Up Africa and the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) proudly presented the second edition of their prestigious Africa Young Innovators for Health Award. This initiative is a testament to our commitment to empower young local innovators and invest in creative solutions to tackle Africa's most critical healthcare challenges. The awardees were lauded for their innovative solutions, which are instrumental in expanding population and service coverage, ensuring financial protection for patients, and contributing to the ambitious goal of achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by 2030.



From left to right: Teniola Aderonke Adedeji, CEO of Pharmarun, Nura Izath, Founder and CEO of Neosave Technologies, Muhammad Abdullahi, founder of the Trash 4 Health Innovation and Sheebah Niwensiima, Chief Technology Officer, Photokabada

Teniola Aderonke Adedeji, CEO of Pharmarun, a groundbreaking on-demand platform bringing together a vast pharmacy network offering a wide medication selection at affordable prices to address fragmented medication access, won first prize alongside Dr. Ochora Moses, a Paediatrician and Co-founder and CEO of Photokabada Limited, a company dedicated to developing a phototherapy device able to treat at least three babies simultaneously with remote monitoring. The second prize winners were Nura Izath, Founder and CEO of Neosave Technologies, which has developed a medical device to combat neonatal mortality caused by hypothermia by helping healthcare workers quickly identify and treat sick newborns, improving survival rates and reducing their workload. Muhammad Abdullahi was also jointly awarded the second prize. He founded Trash 4 Health Innovation, a social enterprise transforming plastic waste into essential medications for diseases like diabetes and hypertension in underserved communities.

Awardees benefit from financial support, a mentorship program, expert advice on IP rights, media training, and access to a network of supporters and partners working in healthcare, technology, and media.

## • CLOSING THE DIGITAL HEALTH GENDER GAP

During the Africa Health Tech Summit (AHTS) held from 17-19 October in Kigali, Speak Up Africa convened two panels focused on delivering digital health in Africa, focusing on women.

The first panel on “**The New Africa Digital Health Deal: Stronger Health Security Through Digital Innovation**” delved deep into the various facets of advancing health security through digital innovation, including the strengthening of primary care, disease surveillance, health innovation, data governance, and the workforce. These discussions were illuminating and shed light on the transformative power of digital solutions in healthcare across the continent.

The second panel, “**Breaking Barriers—Women Shaping the Future of Digital Health in Africa,**” emphasized the need for meaningful engagement and leadership of women in the entire digital health ecosystem. Panel discussions underscored the importance of policy, collaboration, and infrastructure, leaving participants with a sense of determination to create positive change for women in digital health.



*Speaking: Nura Izath, Founder and CEO of Neosave Technologies at the Africa Health Tech Summit*

Speak Up Africa and The Country Health Information Systems and Data Use (CHISU) program also rallied stakeholders to focus on the significant gap in women’s meaningful participation in digital health on the sidelines of the Global Digital Health Forum held in Washington D.C in December. Their side event, held under the African Women in Digital Health (AWiDH) movement brought together influential stakeholders from across sectors to better understand how to remove barriers to women’s meaningful engagement and leadership in digital health. The discussions and insights shared during the event reinforced the urgent need to expand opportunities for women and girls to shape and lead digital health in Africa beyond gender equality and towards catalyzing progress towards our shared aspirations of health and prosperity across the continent.



# IMPROVING ACCESS TO SANITATION

## OUR IMPACT AND REACH



**1** revised policy document based on the African Sanitation Policies Guidelines (ASPG) providing a solid foundation for hygiene and sanitation initiatives in Niger and highlighting the importance of addressing the specific needs of women, girls, and people with disabilities.



**+15,295** social media engagements on our Golden Sludge content.



**41** media publications disseminated as part of our ongoing commitment to advancing sanitation access issues.



**4** research institutes in the ECOWAS region convened to launch a sanitation research network to find appropriate solutions to the sanitation crisis in Africa.

## WHAT WE DID

### • **PLACING SANITATION ON THE GLOBAL HEALTH AGENDA**



*Adamou Mahaman, Former Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation, Niger*

Speak Up Africa supercharged its powerful “No Taboo Periods” campaign in 2023, leveraging social media to illuminate the harsh reality of menstrual poverty. Our aim is to stir empathy and drive action for equitable access to quality menstrual hygiene, a basic right that many women and girls are still denied.

To commemorate World Menstrual Hygiene Day, Speak Up Africa worked with the Former Minister of Water and Sanitation of Niger, Adamou Mahaman, to publish an article in regional media outlets, urging collective action to ensure the dignity, health and safety of all women and girls.



*It is our collective responsibility to ensure that all women and girls in Niger can experience menstruation in dignity, health and safety. We must therefore work together to promote adequate menstrual hygiene education and create an inclusive environment where women and girls can thrive without fear.*

**ADAMOU MAHAMAN**

FORMER MINISTER OF HYDRAULICS AND SANITATION, NIGER

Our collaborative partnerships with media houses including the African Media Network for the Promotion of Health and the Environment (REMAPSEN), PressAfrik, EchoNiger, Jeune Afrique and Africa.com enhanced understanding and advocacy for sanitation issues among journalists and stakeholders.

### • **SHARING BEST PRACTICES**

Speak Up Africa also played a crucial role in facilitating the exchange of experiences, lessons learned and ministerial meetings during the 21st Congress of the African Water and Sanitation Association. These sessions provided a platform to identify challenges, share experiences, and propose adapted solutions to the impact of climate change and the water and sanitation deficit.

Speak Up Africa presented a summary paper at the 21st African Water Association International Congress and Exhibition and the 7th International Faecal Sludge Management Conference, titled “Strategic Partnerships: A Prerequisite for the Implementation of Inclusive and Equitable Sanitation Policies – The Case of the CAPOOP Alliance”. This session provided us with a platform to present the platform’s vision, objectives, successes and plans while promoting engagement with new members and expanding our collaboration network.

## • **SUPPORTING POLICY CHANGE AND LOCAL RESEARCH**

Speak Up Africa, in collaboration with the General Directorate of Sanitation of Niger, orchestrated a revision and validation workshop of the National Hygiene and Sanitation Policy (PNHA) in March 2023 to create a new policy in alignment with the African Sanitation Policy Guidelines principles.

Speak Up Africa co-organized the Ministerial Session at the 21st African Water and Sanitation Association Congress and Exhibition and the 7th International Faecal Sludge Management Conference, where experts, engineers, technicians and researchers agreed to the Abidjan Declaration for Sustainable Resource Management and Universal Access to Water and Sanitation in Africa. This declaration is an opportunity to push for the continent’s working water and sanitation reforms. It also underscored the importance of collective efforts among African ministers.

To start addressing Africa’s sanitation challenges, Speak Up Africa supported the launch of the Sanitation Research Network, bringing together research institutes from the ECOWAS region to find appropriate solutions to this sanitation crisis in Africa. The Network comes at a time when only 31% of the African population have access to safely managed sanitation and 28% used basic hygiene in 2022 and achieving universal coverage to water, sanitation and hygiene services by 2030 will require a 23-fold increase in rates of progress.

## • **SUPPORTING AFRICAN LEADERSHIP ON THE GLOBAL STAGE**

Speak Up Africa was key in supporting Senegal’s Ministry of Water and Sanitation at the preparatory meeting for Senegal’s participation in the United Nations Water Conference 2023. This preparatory workshop aimed to refine Senegal’s engagement in various interactive dialogues, focusing on key themes such as water for health, water for sustainable development, water for climate, resilience and the environment, and the water action decade. A notable aspect of the preparatory meeting was Senegal’s co-presidency of Interactive Dialogue 4 on Water and Cooperation alongside Switzerland.

These preparations culminated in Senegal’s impactful participation in the United Nations Water Conference on March 23 in New York. Senegal seized this global forum to make the case for the «Blue Deal», focusing on the critical aspects of water and sanitation security for peace and development to promote perspectives on cross-border and international cooperation, multi-stakeholder collaboration, cross-sectoral cooperation, including scientific collaboration, and the indispensable role of water in achieving the Agenda 2030. Senegal’s active engagement, supported by Speak Up Africa, underlined the commitment to global water and sanitation initiatives.



# Our Board



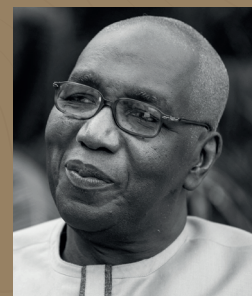
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“  
Coming together is a  
beginning, staying together  
is progress, and working  
together is success.

*Henry Ford*



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18 Ave. Leopold Sedar Senghor - 8th Floor  
BP 3837, Dakar, Senegal  
+ 221 33 822 49 22 - [www.speakupafrika.org](http://www.speakupafrika.org)