

***Beyond borders:
building a healthcare network in East Africa***

27 May 2026 | 11:30 – 13:00 EAT (10:30 – 12:00 Italy time)
Online – Microsoft Teams

Context and objectives

How can we build a stronger, fairer and more sustainable healthcare system? By building on what already exists: the people, the skills, and the relationships between neighbouring countries facing similar challenges.

As part of the 2026 edition of the Sustainable Development Festival (ASviS), the side event **“Beyond Borders: Building a Healthcare Network in East Africa”** brings the value of regional collaboration to the forefront of the debate, with a view to strengthening healthcare systems and tangibly improving the lives of women and children. Drawing on the experience of the programme *“Establishing a Regional Health Network in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda”*, funded by the Italian Cooperation and implemented between 2023 and 2026 by a network of partners under the technical supervision of the Center for Global Health of the Tuscany Region, this event aims to spark a broader reflection on an alternative model of cooperation — based on proximity, reciprocity and local human capital. Through the creation of a network of healthcare facilities, the programme promoted the exchange of expertise and lessons learnt between the three countries, the adoption of evidence-based quality standards, and the strengthening of healthcare services through an integrated and sustainable approach.

The event is organized by the Nairobi Office of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) Center for Global Health of the Tuscany Region and the contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular Goals 3 and 17, demonstrating how international cooperation, reinforced by South-South cooperation, can generate real and lasting change.

Key Themes - Session

1. South-South cooperation as a paradigm: the programme has demonstrated that when Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda network — exchanging best practices, training their own staff together, and learning from one another — the results are more deeply rooted, more appropriate and long-lasting. It is not a matter of transferring models from North to South, but of recognising and amplifying the knowledge and skills that already exist locally, creating opportunities of peer exchanges and spreading best practices across borders, soliciting virtuous learning processes.

2. Human capital as a driver of change: at the heart of this approach are people: midwives, nurses, community health workers, local doctors. Investing in their continuous training, on-the-job mentoring and professional recognition is not merely a technical matter — it is a strategic choice that determines the sustainability of every intervention.

3. Proximity as a strategic principle: The geographical and cultural proximity between the three countries has enabled concrete and rapid exchanges, solutions adapted to real-world contexts, and a mutual trust that is difficult to build from a distance. Proximity is not merely a logistical matter: it is a methodological value. In this context proximity also translated into a deliberate shift in how care is delivered: bringing services closer to people rather than at centralised level. The introduction of point-of-care ultrasound is a case in point — a technology deployed at community level that has allowed access to prenatal care for thousands of women.

Format

The event will take the form of a dynamic and participatory roundtable, bringing representatives from the three countries, experts and implementing organisations into direct dialogue, and opening the discussion to stakeholders and the wider public. Excerpts from the documentary "Together", produced as part of the programme, will offer an authentic account of the initiative's impact on the ground, complementing and enriching the participants' testimonies.

Agenda

Time (EAT)	Presentation
11:30	Opening and welcome — <i>Moderator</i> <i>Francesco Giulietti, Health Sector Coordinator, AICS Nairobi</i>
11:35	Opening remarks <i>Fabio Minniti, Head of Office, AICS Nairobi</i>
11:45	Thematic overview: the programme and the model <i>Maria Josè Caldes, Director, Global Health Centre – Tuscany Region</i>
11:55	Screening of excerpts — documentary " <i>Together</i> "
12:05	Thematic overview: a perspective on joint development <i>Father Sandro Borsa, North Kinangop Catholic Hospital</i>

- 12:15** Voices from the field – Uganda
Dr. Jackie Aloba, Doctor
- 12:25** Voices from the field – Tanzania
Dr. Revocatus Baltazary, Medical Doctor, Makole Health Centre
- 12:35** Voices from the field
Dr. Rhoda Masaku, Paediatrician
- 12:45** Q&A
- 12:55** Conclusions — Moderator
Francesco Giuliotti, Health Sector Coordinator, AICS Nairobi

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