



The Africa Resource Centre (ARC) aims to improve the availability of medicines and health products in Africa by building more efficient and effective supply chain systems.

# ACCELERATING RESEARCH TO IMPROVE THE PUBLIC HEALTH SUPPLY CHAIN IN AFRICA



## BACKGROUND

As African governments and their partners work towards achieving universal health coverage (UHC) in line with the World Health Organization's call to action in 2017, greater access to independent and local experts and experience from private sector and academic partners could dramatically improve their ability to meet health goals.

Achieving UHC requires robust research to support the complexity of this move, and there may be similarities in the research needs of multiple countries, particularly around emerging questions relating to public health supply chain in Africa.

There is also growing demand across the globe to engage local and regional academic and research institutions in Africa to address these with Africa-based studies. Most engagements are bi-lateral in nature, and there is a significant hurdle for international organisations to identify and engage with a broad base of relevant institutions.

## ARC ROLE

The Africa Resource Centre (ARC) believes there is a strong rationale for a knowledge-sharing forum that is based in Africa and responsive to and challenging of policy makers on the continent, based specifically on research in Africa. In line with this and to further enhance public health supply chain research discourse in Africa, ARC established the ARC Academic Forum, focused on public health supply chain challenges. It will serve as a link to academic institutions for international actors, African governments, and vice versa.

The creation of the forum aligns with the goal of research capacity building and talent cultivation that forms part of ARC's theory of change. The theory of change is driven by the goal to support ministries of health to improve the performance of supply chains to increase availability of medicines and health products, at the last mile, by building efficient, effective and resilient supply systems.

The objective of the forum is to provide a broad base of understanding of public health supply chain challenges amongst supply chain researchers. In addition, it aims to help drive efforts towards specific and immediate policy-relevant research questions through sharing broad policy questions and research themes from the ARC Research Advisory Panel and governments, as well as findings from existing supply chain research.

The activities of the ARC Academic Forum will include:

- Exchange of ideas through virtual forum discussion meetings (virtual).
- Sharing funding opportunities.
- Mentorship match making.
- Identifying and facilitating research opportunities and collaborations.
- Efficient access to supply chain expert pool.
- At least three meetings per year.

The ARC research team will perform the secretariat function to the forum and will manage communications, correspondence, and relationships with forum members and other potential stakeholders.

The forum members will contribute to the review of areas of key potential supply chain research by highlighting topics and trends of interest for consideration by ARC and its funding partners. The output should be a list of research themes/areas of great interest, against which research proposals could be developed. The research list developed through the forum will form part of ARC's Research Advisory Panel deliberations on areas to be considered for support and research calls.

Although the academic forum is a nascent platform, ARC has already sponsored a researcher in Nigeria through the forum model. The researcher was supported to take up a project proposed by the Nigerian government, which wanted to understand more about the family planning supply chain in the country.





Through the academic forum, ARC is supporting stakeholders with:

**Advocacy** by encouraging and supporting Africa-based research to address public health supply chain challenges on the continent.

**Reimagining** the means of engagement between governments and academia to improve the effectiveness and refine the focus of supply chain research.

**Connecting** partners, government and researchers around shared ideas for research.



### IMPACT:

ARC has established an Afrocentric knowledge-sharing forum that is responsive to and challenging of policy makers on the continent.

## ADVOCACY: ADVANCING THE PROGRESS OF UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE IN AFRICA

ARC established a dedicated context for African academic institutions and researchers to work towards understanding and offering solutions for African challenges to the public health supply chain.



### IMPACT:

Directly applying expertise from the academic sector and learnings from other countries to develop solutions for government and partner-identified challenges.

## REIMAGINING: DEVELOPING NEW WAYS TO ADVANCE PUBLIC HEALTH SUPPLY CHAIN ON THE CONTINENT

ARC proposed establishing this network, focused on public health supply chain challenges, to simplify communication and access between academic institutions, international stakeholders and African governments.



### IMPACT:

Providing a practical framework for collaboration between different stakeholders in the supply chain landscape.

## CONNECTING: CULTIVATING FRUITFUL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND GOVERNMENTS TO SOLVE SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES

The academic forum works to link the private and academic sectors' capabilities by leveraging ARC's catalytic capacity. ARC Academic Forum members are academics and researchers, and in some cases other relevant stakeholders, such as private sector professionals, joining forces in a community of practice to participate in lending their expertise to Africa's public health supply chain conversation. ARC shall, through its existing network, nominate the inaugural members to the forum. Inaugural members will then nominate other members to join subject to vetting by ARC Advisory Panel.

## ABOUT ARC

ARC mobilises the collective strengths of ministries of health, donors, implementing partners and the private sector to reimagine public health supply chains in Africa that can achieve universal availability of medicines and health products. ARC aims to improve the availability of medicines and health products in Africa by building more efficient and effective supply chain systems. ARC follows a government-led approach, acting as a trusted, independent advisor that supports ministries of health in coordinating the range of resources available to them. ARC aims to support long-term, sustainable public health systems transformation by understanding demand for supply chain investment and brokering resources and expertise from all sectors to fulfil often complex requirements. ARC endeavours to build an extensive network of private sector, academic and professional institution partners to achieve this.