

African Health Leaders and Partners Launch New Framework to Strengthen Sickle Cell Disease Care Across the Continent

Imara Sickle Cell Framework aims to help countries turn policy priorities into coordinated diagnosis, treatment and lifelong care

NAIROBI, Kenya / KAMPALA, Uganda, June 19, 2026 — African health leaders and partners today launched the Imara Sickle Cell Framework, a new regional initiative designed to help countries strengthen sickle cell disease care by translating policy priorities into practical, coordinated delivery within national health systems.

Sickle cell disease remains one of Africa's most significant public health challenges. Recent data points to the continent accounting for nearly 80% of the global burden and hundreds of thousands of children born with the condition each year.¹ While awareness, screening and treatment access have improved in recent years, many patients still face fragmented care, delayed diagnosis and limited follow-up. The challenge is no longer a lack of knowledge. The challenge is ensuring care is connected.

The Imara Sickle Cell Framework is focused on the "how": helping countries connect screening, diagnosis, treatment, referral, follow-up and long-term management into a more coherent care pathway. Rather than duplicating existing global and regional efforts, the framework supports implementation by providing governments and partners a practical model for strengthening care across the full patient journey.

"Families need support beyond diagnosis, including regular treatment and follow-up care close to home," said Dr. Chris Baryomunsi, Minister of Health of Uganda. "This initiative supports our commitment to improving survival and quality of life for children living with sickle cell disease and strengthening access to care across the country."

"Sickle cell disease remains a significant health challenge for Kenya, particularly for children and families who depend on early diagnosis and lifelong care," said Dr. Ouma Oluga, Principal Secretary, State Department for Medical Services, Ministry of Health, Kenya. "Through the Social Health Authority, we are strengthening access to diagnosis, treatment and safe blood. The Imara Framework helps connect these services into a more coordinated system of care so that patients receive the support they need throughout their lives."

Initial implementation is underway in Uganda, Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire. The framework is being introduced as a shared approach that can be adapted to national systems and local needs, while maintaining a common focus on improving continuity of care for people living with sickle cell disease.

"Our coalition supports any effort that fosters government commitment, brings alignment and reduces fragmentation in sickle cell care. Imara offers a practical blueprint to turn these commitments into care that reaches patients," said Mario Ottiglio, Secretariat Lead of the World Coalition on Sickle Cell Disease.

"Important progress has already been made in recognizing sickle cell disease as a public health priority," said Eyong Ebai, General Manager, Africa, Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies. "The next step is ensuring these priorities translate into coordinated care that supports patients throughout their lives. Imara was designed to help countries strengthen that continuum of care."

The framework aligns with broader efforts by African governments, Africa CDC and the World Health Organization to improve early diagnosis, strengthen health systems and expand access to care for people living with sickle cell disease.

1. World Health Organization. Sickle-cell disease. August 6, 2025. Accessed June 12, 2026. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sickle-cell-disease>

About Sickle Cell Disease

Sickle cell disease is a serious inherited blood disorder. It affects the shape and function of red blood cells, which can block blood flow and cause severe pain, anemia, infections, stroke, organ damage and other serious complications.

According to the World Health Organization, Africa carries the highest global burden of sickle cell disease, accounting for nearly 80% of global cases.¹ In some settings, many children born with sickle cell disease die before the age of five, often because they are not diagnosed early enough or cannot access consistent care.

1. World Health Organization. Sickle-cell disease. August 6, 2025. Accessed June 12, 2026. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sickle-cell-disease>

About the Imara Sickle Cell Framework

The Imara Sickle Cell Framework is a multi-stakeholder initiative designed to strengthen sickle cell care across the full patient journey — from early diagnosis to lifelong management.

The framework is designed to help countries move from fragmented interventions to coordinated systems of care. It brings together governments, clinicians, patient organizations, blood services and implementation partners to improve access to screening, diagnosis, treatment, follow-up care and management of long-term complications.

Imara is organized around 10 priority intervention areas across primary, secondary and tertiary care. These areas are intended to help countries identify gaps, align partners and strengthen the systems needed to deliver consistent care.

Initial implementation is focused on Uganda, Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire.

About Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies

Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies is a medical technology company. Our products, software and services enable customers to collect and prepare blood and cells to help treat challenging diseases and conditions. Our employees worldwide believe in the potential of blood and cells to do even more for patients than they do today. This belief inspires our innovation and strengthens our collaboration with customers.

Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies' customers include blood centers, hospitals, therapeutic apheresis clinics, cell collection and processing organizations, researchers, and private medical practices. Our customers are based in over 160 countries across the globe. We have 750+ granted patents, with more than 150 additionally pending.

We have global headquarters in Lakewood, Colorado, U.S.A., along with four regional headquarters, eight manufacturing sites and seven innovation and development centers across the globe. Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies is a subsidiary of Terumo Corporation (TSE: 4543), a global leader in medical technology.

About World Coalition on Sickle Cell Disease

The World Coalition on Sickle Cell Disease is an international public-private partnership working to raise sickle cell disease on the global health agenda and to strengthen care for people living with the condition. It works with national governments, international organizations, financial institutions, foundations, health care providers, patient organizations, medical societies and the private sector and offers a multi-stakeholder platform for sickle cell disease that spans advocacy, policy and implementation.

The Coalition advocates for stronger political commitment and financing, including closer links between health and finance systems. It works to align partners and reduce fragmentation across the field and to help countries translate commitments into care. Working alongside global and regional initiatives, it aims to reduce childhood mortality from sickle cell disease and improve the lives of those living with it.