KPMG あずさ監査法人

WHA79 (Geneva) Rapid Brief

Toward a New "Global Health Architecture" Shaped by Climate & Health, Sustainable Finance, and AI for Health

KPMG AZSA LLC
Healthcare & Well-being (HC&WB)

During the 79th World Health Assembly (WHA79) in Geneva, a series of multistakeholder meetings and leadership engagements made one point unmistakably clear: **the very architecture of global health is beginning to evolve**.

What stood out most was not the prominence of individual agendas, but their growing **interdependence**. The deepening discourse on *climate and health*, the redesign of *sustainable financing under fiscal constraints*, and the dual momentum of *expectations and concerns around AI for health* are no longer separate conversations—they are structurally linked.

While WHA has traditionally served as a hub for policy alignment and international coordination, this year's discussions were characterized by a distinctly **cross-sectoral lens spanning environment, finance, and technology**. This report synthesizes these perspectives, highlights key developments, and explores how they collectively signal the emergence of a new *Global Health Architecture*.

Climate & Health / Planetary Health: Redefining Responsibility in Healthcare

The health impacts of environmental change are **multi-layered and systemic**. Extreme weather events—heatwaves, floods, droughts, wildfires—not only lead to direct morbidity and mortality, but also exacerbate health inequities through social determinants such as food security, water access, and living conditions. They are also reshaping the geographical and seasonal patterns of infectious diseases. WHO continues to frame climate change as a **fundamental threat to human health**.

Within this context, increasing attention is being paid to the fact that the healthcare sector is not only a **protector of health**, but also a **significant contributor to environmental impact**, particularly through its supply chains (Scope 3 emissions). This raises a critical imperative: healthcare must internalize environmental responsibility as part of its core mission.

At the same time, litigation against governments and corporations related to climate and health is gaining traction, with a growing number of cases resulting in rulings in favor of plaintiffs.

Against this backdrop, the launch of **"The Lancet MedZero"** at WHA79 represents a pivotal shift from **aspiration to implementation**. MedZero aims to function as a *public good platform* enabling **cross-comparable carbon data** for a wide range of healthcare products and procedures—from pharmaceuticals and medical devices

© 2026 KPMG AZSA LLC, a limited liability audit corporation incorporated under the Japanese Certified Public Accountants Law and a member firm of the KPMG global organization of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.

to diagnostics and sanitation products. At launch, it included over **14,000 modalities**.

Historically, healthcare actors have faced a fundamental constraint: the **lack of reliable, comparable data** to guide decarbonization decisions. MedZero has the potential to address this "data gap," establishing a shared foundation for evidence-based decision-making.

The potential implications are profound:

- **Procurement transformation**: Environmental impact may become a comparable metric alongside cost, quality, and supply stability in procurement decision by medical facilities—reshaping decision-making on environmental burdens, that is, lifecycle assessment of relevant products(procurement, usage, disposal, logistics, reuse).
- **Multi-dimensional valuation of companies**: Environmental performance could become a core determinant of enterprise value in healthcare industries, elevating sustainability from a compliance issue to a **strategic differentiator.**
- **Toward standardization**: If scaled, such initiatives could underpin **global standards** for measuring healthcare-related emissions—though achieving this will require substantial investment and coordination.

Sustainable Health Finance: Structural Shifts and the Need for a "Common Language"

Another defining trend at WHA79 is the **transformation of the global health financing landscape.** In 2026, the United States formally completed its withdrawal from WHO, creating significant uncertainty for global coordination mechanisms. At the same time, Official Development Assistance (ODA) is on a downward trajectory as a whole, with OECD data indicating real-term declines in 2024 and a projected **historically large contraction in 2025.**

In response, regions—particularly in Africa—are strengthening **regional self-reliance frameworks**. A prominent example is the **African Pooled Procurement Mechanism (APPM)** led by Africa CDC and endorsed by the African Union in 2024. By aggregating demand across countries, APPM aims to enhance bargaining power, improve supply predictability, and promote local manufacturing—effectively transforming fragmented national markets into **integrated regional markets.** This direction is closely tied to the evolving concept of **health sovereignty**.

Alongside regionalization, there is a growing push to **mobilize private capital at scale**. However, this requires alignment across diverse stakeholders—investors, governments, corporations, international organizations—which in turn necessitates a **shared framework or "common language."**

This is where the concept of a **Health Taxonomy**, promoted by initiatives such as the G20 Health & Development Partnership, becomes critical. It seeks to reframe health investment—not as social spending, but as **strategic investment** generating long-term returns in productivity, economic stability, and employment. At the same time, it addresses risks such as *"health washing"* by emphasizing transparency

© 2026 KPMG AZSA LLC, a limited liability audit corporation incorporated under the Japanese Certified Public Accountants Law and a member firm of the KPMG global organization of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.

and comparability.

Multilateral development banks (MDBs) are also adapting. The **Health Impact Investment Platform (HIIP)**, developed in collaboration with WHO, is designed to act as a **catalyst**—supporting LMICs in structuring investment plans, building pipelines, and linking them to MDB funding and expertise.

Importantly, these financial innovations are increasingly **interconnected with data platforms like MedZero**. As the availability of comparable impact data improves, financial decision-making becomes more evidence-based, accelerating the convergence of **impact measurement and capital allocation**.

AI for Health: Innovation Amid Rising Expectations and Concerns

AI for Health continues to be positioned as a **core driver of health taxonomy to pursue innovation to establish sustainable financing in healthcare sector**—with applications spanning diagnostics, resource optimization, drug discovery, and disease surveillance. However, a notable feature of discussions around WHA79 was the equal emphasis placed on **risks and constraints**, including ethics, equity, accountability, and implementation capacity. These concerns are shared across both high-income and low- and middle-income settings.

A recurring critique is that LMICs risk becoming **"testing grounds" for AI systems developed in high-income countries**. Issues such as data representativeness can degrade model performance and lead to misdiagnosis or inappropriate decision support. Weak data governance frameworks can expose vulnerabilities in privacy and cross-border data use. Furthermore, limited digital infrastructure and insufficient digital literacy among healthcare workers and communities can result in **implementation failure**, even when technologies are introduced. Solutions that fail to account for cultural, linguistic, and system-level differences may not be adopted—and could inadvertently **widen health disparities**.

WHO has addressed these challenges through its guidance on AI ethics and governance, emphasizing six core principles, including autonomy, safety, transparency, accountability, explainability, equity, and sustainability[1].

At **Geneva Digital Health Day 2026**, held alongside WHA79, the theme "Responsible AI and the Future of Health: Promise vs. Reality" reflected this balance. While showcasing successful use cases, discussions made clear that **without robust governance and ethical design, AI adoption risks losing trust—and with it, policy and investment support.**

Toward a New Global Health Architecture

Taken together, these three agendas are **mutually reinforcing** and point toward a structural transformation of global health decision-making:

- Platforms like **MedZero** enable measurable, comparable environmental data, reshaping procurement and clinical choices in the healthcare sector.

© 2026 KPMG AZSA LLC, a limited liability audit corporation incorporated under the Japanese Certified Public Accountants Law and a member firm of the KPMG global organization of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.

- Frameworks such as **Health Taxonomy and HIIP** establish the financial logic and mechanisms including environmental considerations to channel capital toward health outcomes.
- Governance approaches in **AI for Health** ensure that technological innovation remains trustworthy, scalable, and sustainable, leading to the realization of sustainable finance in the healthcare sector.

As these elements converge, the boundaries between **health, environment, finance, and technology** begin to dissolve, forming a more integrated and dynamic **Global Health Architecture**.

Implications for Japanese stakeholders

These developments have direct implications for Japan as well, that will be leading to other global north countries as well.

Shifts in procurement criteria will influence hospital management and industrial competitiveness. As environmental data becomes standardized and comparable, pharmaceutical and medical device companies will need to integrate **clinical value with environmental performance** in their value propositions.

In finance, healthcare is increasingly being reframed within the **sustainable investment paradigm**, requiring alignment with global taxonomies and standards.

For AI, adoption will continue to expand across modalities, alongside growing expectations around ethics, equity, and accountability—even in domestic contexts.

Against the backdrop of demographic transition and potential market contraction, it is essential to engage with these trends from a **global perspective**.

In summary, **Climate & Health, Sustainable Health Finance, and AI for Health are not isolated themes—they are converging forces shaping the next Global Health Architecture.**

[1] WHO. Ethics and governance of artificial intelligence for health. 2021. Available at https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/f780d926-4ae3-42ce-a6d6-e898a5562621/content accessed on the 25th April, 2026

Author

Michikazu Koshiba
Director - Healthcare & Well-being
michikazu.koshiba@jp.kpmg.com

KPMG AZSA LLC
Healthcare & Well-being (HC&WB)

The information contained herein is of a general nature and is not intended to address the circumstances of any particular individual or entity. Although we endeavor to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. No one should act on such information without appropriate professional advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation.

© 2026 KPMG AZSA LLC, a limited liability audit corporation incorporated under the Japanese Certified Public Accountants Law and a member firm of the KPMG global organization of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.

The KPMG name and logo are trademarks used under license by the independent member firms of the KPMG global organization.