UNIVERSAL
HEALTH
COVERAGE

UN HLM
2019

Moving Together to Build a Healthier World

Key Asks from the UHC Movement

UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage

uhc2030

Ask 1

Ensure Political Leadership Beyond Health – Commit to achieve UHC for healthy lives and well-being for all at all stages, as a social contract.

Health is the foundation for people, communities and economies to reach their full potential. Universal health coverage (UHC) is primarily the responsibility of governments, which ensure people's health as a social contract. Achieving UHC is essential for inclusive development, prosperity and fairness, and requires political decisions that go beyond the health sector.

MILESTONE

By 2023, governments incorporate aspirational health-related SDG targets into national planning processes, policies and strategies to ensure everyone can access quality health services without financial hardship.

Ask 2

Leave No One Behind – Pursue equity in access to quality health services with financial protection.

Health is enshrined as one of the fundamental rights of every human being. UHC is key to reducing poverty and promoting equity and social cohesion. Governments should invest in everyone's health. Extension of geographical coverage and reaching the most marginalised and hard-to-reach populations are essential to achieving positive health outcomes. A strong system for monitoring and evaluation is needed to ensure accountability and participation.

MILESTONE

By 2023, governments report disaggregated data to SDG official statistics to capture the full spectrum of the equity dimensions of UHC monitoring progress (SDG 3.8.1 and 3.8.2).

Ask 3

Regulate and Legislate – Create a strong, enabling regulatory and legal environment responsive to people's needs.

UHC requires a sound legal and regulatory framework and institutional capacity to ensure the rights of people and meet their needs. Governments are the primary duty bearer under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, even in cases when they rely on private providers.

MILESTONE

By 2023, governments introduce legal and regulatory measures that accelerate progress toward UHC.

Ask 4

Uphold Quality of Care – Build quality health systems that people and communities trust.

Quality primary health care (PHC) is the backbone of UHC and creates trust in public institutions. Expansion of health coverage must be accompanied by investments in the quality of health services. People should be able to access a full spectrum of safe, quality services and products in their community, delivered by well-trained, well-paid, culturally and gender-sensitive health workers.

MILESTONE

By 2023, the coverage of **quality** essential health services has been delivered to one billion additional people (SDG 3.8.1).

Ask 5

Invest More, Invest Better – Sustain public financing and harmonise health investments.

Current funding levels are insufficient to achieve UHC by 2030. Governments need to increase domestic investment and allocate more public financing for health through equitable and mandatory resources. Governments must improve efficiency and equity in the use of existing resources and reduce reliance on impoverishing out-of-pocket payments. Development assistance to health should reduce fragmentation and strengthen national health financing capacities.

MILESTONE

By 2023, governments adopt ambitious investment goals for UHC, make progress in mobilising domestic pooled funding and reduce catastrophic health expenditure (SDG 3.8.2).

Ask 6

Move Together – Establish multi-stakeholder mechanisms for engaging the whole of society for a healthier world.

All countries must take active steps to meaningfully engage non-governmental actors - particularly from unserved, underserved or poorly-served populations - in shaping the UHC agenda. Solutions for each country must be tailored to context and population needs. The international community and global health partners should unite to support countries to build a healthier world.

MILESTONE

By 2023, all UN Member States join the UHC Movement and establish multi-stakeholder platforms to ensure the involvement of civil society, communities and the private sector, in regular policy dialogue and review of progress with all government actors.

Everyone, Everywhere

should have access to quality and affordable health services.

We call on Political Leaders

to legislate, invest and collaborate with all of society to make UHC a reality.

The UN High-Level Meeting (UN HLM) on UHC is a major opportunity to mobilise the highest political support for UHC as the cornerstone to achieving SDG3 and uniting other health agendas under a common theme. To deliver impact at the UN HLM, it is critical to identify how the Political Declaration can create an agenda and set milestones for achieving UHC by 2030.

To develop a set of key asks for the UN HLM, UHC2030 conducted three-month consultations with all actors of the UHC movement – parliamentarians, civil society, the private sector, agencies, networks and academia. The UHC Key Asks will feed into the UHC Political Declaration, and are the foundation for coordinated advocacy efforts that all partners can promote together throughout the preparation of the UN HLM, the Financing for Development Forum and the SDG Summit as well as other regional or economic fora in 2019.

ACTION AGENDA

Ask 1 — Ensure Political Leadership Beyond Health

- Prioritise **UHC as a commitment at all levels of government and as a whole-of-government and whole-of-society action** in order to provide equitable access to health services, irrespective of socio-economic and legal status, health condition, disease, religion, gender, age or any other factors.
- Prioritise **essential public health functions** and address the social, environmental and commercial determinants of health.
- Support **international and national regulation and fight tax evasion and corruption** through cooperation with finance ministries, national treasuries and national anti-corruption agencies to ensure more powerful people and entities pay their fair share.

- Invest in **health as a key component of sound macro-economic policies** to foster economic growth, human capital and workforce participation, especially for women.
- Promote **peace and strengthen cooperation between humanitarian and development actors** in fragile settings. Develop strong relationships to enhance the health security agenda, including through resilient foresight capabilities.
- Strengthen **national policy and institutional coherence between trade and intellectual property** for the right to health. This requires establishing inter-ministerial bodies to coordinate laws, policies and practices that impact health technology innovation and access.

Ask 2 — Leave No One Behind

- Establish **resilient, responsive and inclusive health systems that are accessible to all**, irrespective of socio-economic or legal status, health condition or any other factors. Such systems should prioritise an essential health package based on PHC principles.
- Incorporate the **health needs of vulnerable populations, in particular in fragile settings,** in national and local health care policies and plans, with increased focus on PHC, including disease prevention, immunisation services and health promotion activities.
- Establish **inclusive social accountability mechanisms for all parts of the health system** so that everyone is responsible for progress toward UHC.

- Pursue the **concept of progressive universalism** and establish health systems that promote equity, reduce stigma and remove barriers based on multiple types of discrimination. Improving health outcomes for populations on the move, migrants and refugees is critical, as huge gaps remain to be addressed.
- Institutionalise **data collection to implement the SDG Global Indicator Framework**, especially concerning indicator 3.8.1. and 3.8.2 with equity dimensions of progress (age, sex, geographical location, income level).
- Evaluate the **impact of policies and programmes regularly and document who is left behind** to promote inclusive access and utilisation of health services.

Ask 3 — Regulate and Legislate

- Create an **evolving and responsible regulatory and legal system** that sets an ethical framework, promotes responsiveness and inclusiveness of all stakeholders and supports innovations. This system must respond to changing needs and comply with medical and public health ethics in a period of rapid technological evolution and medical innovation.
- Set and implement **national quality control mechanisms or minimum national quality health service standards**, and create legislation on data protection and security, patient rights and the education of health workers.
- Prioritise **public oversight, data protection and data ownership** by the patient, and resolve data transferability.

- Support **redress mechanisms to manage conflicts of interests** that aim to promote equity, quality and financial risk protection.
- Take steps to ensure **coherence with national and international legislations on population health**, such as tobacco legislation, including the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), labour laws, emergency response and implementation of IHR, international humanitarian principles and international human rights laws.
- Invest in **health regulatory agencies** (food & drug; tobacco & alcohol; medicines & technologies; medical & nursing training) and the implementation of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, the FCTC and other existing laws.

Ask 4 — Uphold Quality of Care

- Put **better quality on par with expanded coverage**. Progress on UHC must be measured through the achievement of equitable and effective coverage and access to promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative health services. This requires new investment and delivery models, as well as collaborations through participatory and inclusive service delivery redesign and planning.

- Build **quality assurance measures** to achieve resource optimisation and the satisfaction and safety of patients, families and providers.

- Ensure the **appropriate, safe and affordable use of digital and AI innovation.** Digital health and AI provide new opportunities to respond to the unique needs of each person, organise services seamlessly, involve patients in decision-making and collect, connect and disseminate data with smart and autonomous systems.

- Promote **innovation and harness a variety of technologies, including digital technologies,** to improve equitable access to health services, complement and enhance existing health service delivery models and empower and enable people and communities to play an active role in their own health.

- Train a **health workforce based on quality and competence,** with a special focus on nurses, midwives and community health workers. Education must improve overall management capacity and skills and foster the appropriate use of technology. UHC requires supportive education policies, labour market regulations, effective environmental stewardship and monetary and non-monetary incentives for health workers and health organisations.

- Empower **providers to undertake real-time implementation research** to identify and scale best practices for achieving quality.

Ask 5 — Invest More, Invest Better

- Set **nationally appropriate spending targets for investments in health** (e.g., ideally at least 5% of GDP on public health spending) consistent with sustainable national development strategies, and ensure efficient and equitable allocation of resources to PHC. Mobilisation of domestic resources requires cooperation between ministries of health and finance.

- Increase **public financing for health and pool health financing through mandatory contributions** so that everyone can access the health services they need without financial hardship due to out-of-pocket payments. This requires mechanisms such as progressive taxation, public subsidies to marginalised populations and mechanisms to include the large and growing informal sector through more flexible use of general revenues.

- Foster **strong alignment among global health actors and development partners** to support progress, including coordination of financing mechanisms. Countries need to adapt to transition from external funding that aim to increase effective coverage of priority interventions toward achieving and sustaining UHC.

- Invest in **global and regional public goods** including universal access to essential medicines, vaccines, technology and emergency preparedness.

- Explore how **digital, technological, financial and social innovations** can help to address challenges to deliver quality health services.

- Prioritise **debt restructuring to address the debt sustainability challenges** faced by many countries and decrease competition in the fiscal space between debt servicing and health spending.

Ask 6 — Move Together

- Enable and introduce **processes for structured and meaningful engagement** of all government sectors and actors, the private sector and a broad base of civil society, including youth and academia.

- Empower **individuals, families, communities, local providers and civil society organisations to be at the centre of UHC**, especially by strengthening and enhancing community capacity to get involved in decision-making and accountability processes.

- Empower **communities through a PHC approach**. This applies, among other issues, to promoting good health, managing disease and mitigating health crises at the community level, while also strengthening community participation of all populations.

- Improve **health literacy, legal and systems literacy and capacity for health decision-making** by focusing on prevention, appropriate technology and a multisectoral approach at the local level, including addressing all determinants of health.

- Support **financially civil society and community groups** as key contributors to health systems development, and critical advocates for vulnerable and marginalised populations.

- Support **women as community leaders and changemakers.** Their significant unpaid contribution to family care should be recorded, redistributed, rewarded and recognised.

- Enhance **international coordination and enabling environments** at all levels to strengthen national health systems and share knowledge and experience to strengthen the sustainability of UHC.

UHC2030 is a **movement to accelerate progress toward UHC** by providing a multi-stakeholder platform that promotes collaboration on health systems strengthening at the global and country levels. **We advocate for increased political commitment, facilitate accountability and promote knowledge sharing** to develop strong, sustainable and equitable health systems. UHC2030 has been tasked to support the UN HLM with a focus on **"sharing evidence and good practices, challenges and lessons learned"**.

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← **Campaign Toolkit** **uhc2030.org/un-hlm-2019**