

July 16, 2019

In this edition of our newsletter the campaign looks at the Cabinet of Uganda's approval of its National Health Insurance Scheme Bill, keeping community health in the spotlight in global policy, the UN High-Level Forum on Sustainable Development and meetings of civil society on universal health coverage.

Welcome New Members

Access Challenge, Health and Rights Education Programme - Malawi, PATH, Village Reach
Click [here](#) to see more of our members!

Uganda's Cabinet Approves National Health Insurance Scheme Bill



Living Goods photo

A client receives maternal and child health counseling from a community health worker.

The Cabinet of Uganda in June approved the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) Bill 2019, reaching an important milestone in delivering health for all. The approval is a significant accomplishment as discussions around the bill started in 2002. It took "17 years of drafting, discussions, negotiations and engagements," said Hon. Dr. Jane Aceng, Uganda's Minister of Health.

Out-of-pocket health expenses are a large barrier to accessing health services in Uganda. According to the national health accounts report for 2014/15 to 2015/16 financial years, "even with free services at public facilities, the share of household expenditure spent in public health facilities was between 14.1% and 17.5% in the period under review." The NHIS bill is an important step to protect Ugandans from financial hardship when seeking services. With the

Cabinet's approval, the bill will now be gazetted and sent to Parliament for debate, amendments and approval. Read more about the bill [here](#).

Community Health Prioritized in Key Global Policies

Country delegations in September will gather at the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The meeting aims to accelerate progress toward UHC, including access to essential health services, developing a skilled health workforce, providing financial risk protection and access to safe, quality, effective and affordable medicines and vaccines for all. The meeting will result in a political declaration on UHC, which Member States are currently negotiating.

In the July 12 draft of the political declaration, community-based primary health care (PHC) is prioritized as a critical strategy for countries to achieve UHC. The draft explicitly calls for investment in community health worker (CHW) cadres, recognition of community-based PHC as essential for UHC, and advocates for payment of CHWs. The Communities at the Heart of UHC Campaign will continue to track and advocate for community health in the political declaration as this important document will shape global and national priorities through 2030 for both governments and major bilateral and multilateral institutions.

Also in development is the Global Action Plan to advance progress toward Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3: to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, and related health and development goals, including UHC. The action plan outlines how 12 signatory agencies (Gavi, the Global Financing Facility, Global Fund, UNAIDS, UN Development Program, UN Population Fund, UN Children's Fund, Unitaid, UN Women, the World Bank Group, World Food Program and World Health Organization) will work together to help achieve SDG 3 and their action priorities through 2030. The document further identifies seven priority areas, or action plan accelerators, that are most likely to drive progress on SDG 3.

Members of the Communities at the Heart of UHC Campaign provided input into Accelerator 2: Primary Health Care; and Accelerator 3: Community and Civil Society Engagement. We are pleased to see recognition of community engagement and PHC, as well as calls for funding community participation, in the document to help achieve UHC.

Happening Now: High-level Political Forum

The [United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#) began last week in New York to evaluate successes, challenges and lessons learned in global efforts to achieve the SDGs. The meeting, with the theme "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality," runs from July 9 to July 18.

More than 47 countries are expected to present their progress implementing the SDGs at the meeting. It is an important touchpoint in the conversations leading up to the High-level Meeting on UHC in September. Join Communities at the Heart of UHC in tracking the Political Forum's conversations on Twitter with #UHC4Communities.

UHC Civil Society Meeting Held in Malawi

On July 2, the Malawian Ministry of Health director, UNAIDS country director, WHO country representative and 40 civil society organizations came together for a UHC country statement on the High-Level Meeting on UHC. This was one in a series of gatherings being organized by the UHC2030 Civil Society Engagement Mechanism, in collaboration with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and UNAIDS. If you have a report from a meeting in your country please contact Ezinne Keke at ekeke@livinggoods.org.



Photo by Maziko Hisbon Matemba, Health and Rights Education Program, Malawi

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About Us

We are a coalition of six organizations—Amref Health Africa, Aspen Management Partnership for Health, Financing Alliance for Health, the International Rescue Committee, Last Mile Health and Living Goods—leading this effort but working with many other organizations to elevate the visibility of community health within the UHC space. We are a part of the larger movement of key organizations, including UHC2030, donors and country leaders working to increase the dialogue on community health programs globally and advocate for funding through domestic resources and foreign assistance.

