

June 26, 2019

In this edition of our newsletter Communities at the Heart of UHC looks at Uganda's development of a Universal Health Coverage roadmap, the campaign's participation in the Women Deliver conference, the latest with our Global Policy Workstream, and the release of the next draft of the Global Action Plan and accompanying seven accelerator papers.

Welcome New Members

Sauti ya Mama Advocacy, Kenya
IntraHealth International

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Uganda's Ministry of Health Develops Universal Health Coverage Roadmap

Campaign member Living Goods joined the World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Bank and others to work with Uganda's Ministry of Health in developing the first ever Roadmap for Universal Health Coverage (UHC). With knowledge and alignment with the global UHC movement, Uganda has taken key steps toward this goal, including the development of a UHC research agenda, a UHC situation analysis and a Presidential Economic Council paper. These processes have illuminated remaining challenges in delivering quality health services and identified necessary policy actions and interventions necessary for achieving UHC. The development of the UHC Roadmap is being prioritized as a key driver for sustainable impact.

Against this background, the Ministry of Health commissioned the development of a roadmap for the implementation of UHC-related strategies for Uganda. Working across sectors, the Ministry of Health collaborated with the ministries of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; Gender, Labor and Social Development; Public Service; Education and Sports; Water and Environment; and the National Planning Authority. Participants consulted civil society organizations in the process, including Amref Health Africa, the Uganda Health Federation, Pathfinder International and Supporting Policy Engagement for Evidence-based Decisions.

The roadmap's objectives include aligning global and regional thinking on UHC with Uganda's Vision 2040 to clarify priorities and sequencing on some of the interventions. The roadmap will articulate milestones needed to achieve community health as a core component for primary health care (PHC). The roadmap will also clearly define the key investment requirements, timeline, approach, mechanisms and the conditions necessary to secure high-level political will at the Ministry of Health and across sectors to achieve UHC in Uganda.



A young family in Bwaise, Uganda, receives a visit from a community health worker.

Living Goods photo

Zimbabwe Makes Progress on Primary and Universal Health Care

Zimbabwe has adopted the PHC approach as a national policy priority and has committed to directing government funding toward that goal. Section 57 of the country's Constitution recognizes the right to health, including sexual and reproductive health. A number of progressive laws, policies and strategies such as a free user fee policy for pregnant women, children under five and those aged 65 years and above, free blood and blood products in public health institutions, the unfreezing of health posts and last year's assenting of the Public Health Amendment Bill into law are some of the bold steps taken toward ensuring the attainment of UHC in Zimbabwe.

Despite the current debilitating economic situation, the country has put in place domestic funding mechanisms such as the AIDS Levy, an earmarked fund toward mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS, and the five percent Health Levy on airtime and data bundles in an attempt to address the challenges of obsolete equipment and the perennial shortages of drugs in public health institutions. An encouraging sign of government commitment on UHC is the recent launch of the National Health Financing Policy and Strategy as well as the current attempts to establish a mandatory National Health Insurance Scheme that also covers rural dwellers and those in the informal sector.

However, limited government funding continues to hinder the roll-out of PHC, along with compromised referral systems due to poor emergency services (ambulances); poor communications and road networks; long waiting periods because of staff shortages leading to burnout; long distances to health centers; and low uptake of the expanded program on immunization, especially in hard-to-reach areas. Other factors that hinder provision of PHC services include high out-of-pocket costs for patients, foreign currency shortages, frequent stock-outs for essential supplies and medicines, as well as low water and sanitation coverage in the informal settlements.

Many thanks to campaign member the Community Health Technical Working Group for this article and its efforts to make UHC a reality in Zimbabwe.

Community Health in the Spotlight at Women Deliver



Living Goods photo

Margaret Kilonzo, a CHW supported by Amref Health Africa in Kenya, speaks about the power of CHWs at the Women Deliver Conference.

In early June, members of the Communities at the Heart of UHC joined more than 8,000 leaders, advocates, implementers and journalists from 165 countries in Vancouver, Canada, for the 2019 Women Deliver conference. With a focus on power and how it can drive—or hinder—progress and change, the power of community health workers (CHWs) was in the spotlight during several sessions.

CHW Margaret Kilonzo, a health equity champion supported by Amref Health Africa in Kenya, was among the attendees. She has been working for more than 20 years in Kibera, Nairobi, as a CHW to deliver PHC health services to families. At Women Deliver, Kilonzo spoke at multiple events, including "All in a Day's Work: Gender Equality in the Health System." Women subsidize global health by over a trillion US dollars annually in the form of unpaid work. Communities at the Heart of UHC advocates for payment of all female health workers, especially CHWs who have been historically underpaid and undervalued.

Kilonzo also gave a dynamic talk on the conference's Power Stage, telling the audience, "We are the link between the communities and the health facilities. No one knows the community like us, the CHWs." Watch Kilonzo's full talk on the Power Stage [here](#).

Missed Women Deliver? Check out blog posts and reports from our members and partners:

- [Women Deliver 2019: #ThePowerOf Community Health Workers](#), Living Goods
- [What Women Report: Global Findings](#), report launch from White Ribbon Alliance at Women Deliver
- [The Power of Empowerment](#), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance
- [Five Key Takeaways from Women Deliver](#), the UN Foundation

Global Policy Workstream Holds First Meeting

On June 13, during the first meeting of the Global Policy Workstream, members discussed the Zero Draft of the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting (HLM) on UHC and the campaign's [Call to Action](#). The release of the second Political Declaration included new and important language on the role of CHWs in achieving UHC. The Global Policy Workstream will continue to track and influence the Political Declaration in the lead-up to the September HLM-UHC to ensure that quality community health programs that are financially sustainable and integrated in country health systems are prioritized.

Additionally, members of the Global Policy Workstream are starting to plan activities around the [2019 Core Group Regional Global Health Practitioners Meeting](#) in Nairobi in October and the [Nairobi Summit on the International Conference on Population and Development](#) in November. If you're interested in collaborating at these meetings or joining the Global Policy Workstream, please contact Sarah Lindsay at slindsay@livinggoods.org. The next Workstream meeting will be July 17.

Second Draft of Global Action Plan Released

The second draft of the Global Action Plan on Healthy Lives and Wellbeing, including seven accelerator papers, has been released with an open comment period from June 17-30. Twelve multilateral global health and development organizations (including WHO, the Global Fund, the Global Financing Facility and Gavi) have united under a joint vision and commitment to align efforts and more effectively support countries in achieving the health-related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Wellbeing. The plan is set to be launched in September 2019.

You can find the outline and accelerator paper drafts here:

Papers for Public Comment

- [Outline of the Global Action Plan](#)

Accelerator Discussion Papers

- [Sustainable financing](#)
- [Primary health care](#)
- [Community and civil society engagement](#)
- [Determinants of health](#)
- [Research and development, innovation and access](#)
- [Data and digital health](#)
- [Innovative programming in fragile and vulnerable states and for disease outbreak response](#)

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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.

