



# This UHC Day, Let's Keep the Promise

In September 2018, the Communities at the Heart of UHC Campaign launched to generate high-level political will and commitments for including and prioritizing quality community health programs that are financially sustainable and integrated in national health systems as part of national and global United Health Coverage (UHC) strategies. In the campaign's first year, we've worked hard to keep this promise. We've grown to more than 53 organizational members across Africa, North America, Europe and South America. Together with all of you, we successfully advocated for community health to be included in the UN High-Level Meeting (HLM) on UHC, resulting in 31 country delegations including community health or community-based primary health care in their official statements.

As we reflect on the highlights of our work in 2019, we have a lot to be proud of and we are grateful for the continued partnership in this shared vision. As we look ahead to 2020, we remain committed to keeping the promise of UHC in communities by continuing to share information on UHC commitments and policies, facilitating budget tracking and advocacy, and working to spotlight community voices at priority meetings and events.

## UHC Highlights 2019

World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus includes community health in [WHO Executive Board Meeting remarks](#): *"Primary health care is not just about the facility. It is from the facility to the community. It will not be successful without ownership of our communities."*

**Campaign partners and aligns with UHC2030:** The campaign was a [featured partner](#) on the UHC2030 website and aligned with [UHC2030 Key Asks](#), including "Leave No One Behind."

**Campaign participates in the Africa Health Agenda International Conference in Kigali:** [The campaign hosted](#) a high-level, closed-door session, "Committing to Community-Centered UHC: From Advocacy to Action." Held during the largest health-related conference on the African continent—with more than 1,500 participants—the session brought together ministerial leaders, members of parliament, multi- and bilateral leaders, advocates, implementers and civil society organizations to share commitments to including community health in UHC strategies and priorities.

**Article highlights the need for public financing for successful community health programs:** "Many countries are now recognizing that one of the best strategies to achieve this objective is to scale up coverage of services provided by trained community health workers (CHWs). In particular, CHWs are proving to be a very efficient way to provide primary health care services, which represent some of the best buys that governments can make in improving the health of their people," [wrote Robert Yates](#), project director for the UHC Policy Forum at Chatham House.



Living Goods photo

Rita Nakakande (L), a CHW in Uganda, Albertha Freeman, a Community Health Services Supervisor in Liberia (C), and Hon. Dr. Jane Aceng, Minister of Health, Uganda, at the World Health Assembly.

**Communities in the spotlight at the [72nd World Health Assembly \(WHA\)](#):** The campaign co-hosted three successful events highlighting the importance of community health. Two community health leaders, Albertha Freeman, a Community Health Services supervisor in Liberia, and Rita Nakakande, a CHW from Uganda, attended WHA to share the impact and importance of their work and to call on stakeholders to strengthen support to extend community health programs to deliver health for all. The campaign also applauded the approval of the CHW Guidelines as a part of the "Community Health Workers Delivering Primary Health Care: Opportunities and Challenges" resolution.

**Health workforce wmbassador elevates community health:** Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former president of Liberia, was appointed as the goodwill ambassador for the health workforce by the WHO Director-General at the WHA. As WHO goodwill ambassador for the health workforce, Sirleaf called for an investment vehicle for education, skills and jobs for frontline and community health workers.

**Campaign statement read at the multi-stakeholder hearing for the HLM-UHC:** On April 29, members of the campaign attended the multi-stakeholder hearing to discuss priorities and input needed for the political declaration on UHC. [A statement](#) submitted by the campaign in partnership with the Frontline Health Workers Coalition and the Community Health Impact Coalition was read on the floor, stating, "We believe that only by prioritizing quality community health delivery in building stronger health systems for UHC can the global community ensure we Leave No One Behind."

**Launch of Call to Action for HLM-UHC:** [The campaign called](#) for prioritizing financially sustainable and quality community health programs in country health systems in the HLM-UHC.

**Campaign chapter launched in Kenya:** On July 25, Living Goods, Amref Health Africa and the Financing Alliance for Health formed the Kenyan chapter of the campaign. [The Kenyan chapter](#) will work closely with the Ministry of Health to assess progress made on community health commitments; contribute to the Kenyan government's community health commitments made at the HLM-UHC; and support the government to execute on these commitments.

**Campaign highlights UHC and community health progress in Malawi, Uganda and Zimbabwe:** Throughout the year, the campaign reported on progress in multiple countries, including:

- The adoption of the UHC Roadmap in Uganda: 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.
- Stakeholder meeting in Malawi: The Malawi Ministry of Health director, UNAIDS country director, WHO country representative and 40 civil society organizations collaborated on a UHC country statement for the HLM UHC.
- Primary health care in Zimbabwe: The government of Zimbabwe has adopted a PHC approach as a national policy priority and committed to directing government funding toward that goal.

**UHC begins in the community:** Community members and health workers—most of whom are women—will be responsible for translating declarations into frontline service delivery. As Professor Miriam Were, Kenya's goodwill ambassador of Community Health Strategy, said, *"If change doesn't happen in the community, nothing changes and we keep talking. If change happens in the community—in the household— a nation changes!"* Read the rest of the blog [here](#).

**Campaign amplifies community health commitments at UNGA:**

At the end of September, the campaign was active in New York City, joining heads of state, ministries of health, global leaders and likeminded advocates from around the world for the HLM-UHC. The campaign celebrated the adoption of the Political Declaration for UHC, which calls for the scale-up of competent, skilled and motivated health workers, including CHWs. On the sidelines of UNGA, [the campaign hosted an event](#) for campaign members to discuss next steps following the adoption of the Political Declaration. The main takeaways from the meeting included:

- prioritizing community voices;
- utilizing budget tracking to hold decision-makers accountable; and
- collaborating and advocating across sectors.



Photo by Jeroen van Loon, for Amref

**[Join the campaign and share with others!](#)**

### 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.

