

January 23, 2019

In this edition of our newsletter we talk about keeping up the momentum on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in 2020, upskilling for a sustainable health workforce, a call for action on UHC by Kenya civil society organizations, spotlighting community health workers and the need for well-performing health financing mechanisms.

Welcome New Members

Happy Destiny for all through Education, Civil Society Coalition on UHC Uganda, Indigenous Community of Muslim Women Living with HIV in Northern Kenya

Click [here](#) to see more of our members!

Keeping the Momentum in 2020

Adoption of the [Political Declaration on Universal Health Coverage \(UHC\)](#) at the UN High-level Meeting (HLM) in September 2019 was a monumental step toward achieving UHC by 2030. Achieving health for all means that everyone, everywhere, has access to quality health services without financial burden. Many country delegations committed at the HLM to invest in primary health care and community health as part of their UHC roadmaps. Momentum to achieve UHC at national and global levels is at an all-time high and the time to act is now.



Photo by Last Mile Health

As we enter 2020, making commitments actionable will require a collaborative effort across governments, civil society and communities. Adopting the political declaration was just the beginning; UHC advocates now must urge governments to prioritize community voices and utilize budget tracking tools to hold decision-makers accountable to their commitments. Participating in post-HLM meetings, reaching out to partner organizations and engaging in webinars, especially those hosted by civil society organizations, are ways to further advocacy efforts. Global health advocates can assist by assuring that the information shared at high-level forums is made available to their networks of organizations on the ground. By working together as a global community, we can accelerate progress to achieve UHC.

New Blog: Upskilling Critical for Sustainable Health Workforce

While many African countries have successfully expanded the numbers of their community health workers (CHWs), and the World Health Organization (WHO) has developed guidelines for educating health professionals, there is almost a neglect of CHW incentives and career pathways, write Dr. Lola Dare, President of CHESTRAD Global, and Crystal Lander, Advocacy Director at Living Goods, in a new blog post.

Many countries have no formal process for upskilling for CHWs, leaving no pathway for training to reach mid-career and professional levels. This can lead to a waste of human capital and financial resources, as well as missed opportunities to provide vital health services to communities. CHESTRAD is working with other stakeholders to establish the Adetokunbo Lucas African Academy of Public Health in Nigeria to have courses online and onsite that allow CHWs to pursue pathways to four professional institutions in the country. Read more about upskilling and the efforts of CHESTRAD in the blog post [here](#).

Kenya Civil Society Organizations Call for Action on UHC



Photo by Living Goods

Living Goods co-chaired a post-HLM meeting with HENNET on November 7, 2019, to update other civil society organizations (CSOs) on the HLM proceedings at the 74th UN General Assembly and map a way forward in defining and achieving UHC in Kenya. More than 40 organizations attended the meeting and reached a consensus that Kenya has good political will but needed to define a framework to track funding and actionable progress toward these goals.

The government of Kenya made a commitment within the "Big Four Agenda" to provide UHC to all citizens and piloted this initiative in four counties (Kisumu, Nyeri, Isiolo and Machakos) in 2019. The pilot counties have yet to release official learnings, but various teams, including the World Bank, have been documenting lessons. In order to achieve progress toward UHC, participants discussed the need for CSOs and community leaders to hold government officials accountable for community health commitments. In January, this discussion moved forward with the cabinet secretary of health signing UHC scale-up documents with governors from the Central Region Economic Block. Governors from Kenya's remaining 43 counties are to sign commitments early this year.

Community Health Workers in the Spotlight at ICPD25 and CHW2019

At the end of 2019, more than 9,500 delegates from 170 countries gathered for the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD25): The Nairobi Summit. At the summit, partners and governments made bold commitments to end preventable maternal deaths, meet unmet need for family planning and combat gender-based violence. Achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health as part of the larger UHC movement is central to this mission, and digitally empowered CHWs can expand access to essential health services, including family planning.

Living Goods-supported CHW Roseline Moenga was a featured speaker at one conference session, "Reaching UHC through Digital Innovations," where she explained the impact of digital health on her work. "Digital health connects me with the clinic staff," she said. "When a child is sick and needs more treatment, my app refers them to the clinic." Read Moenga's blog on her experience at ICPD [here](#).

In late November, the Second International Symposium on Community Health Workers (CHW2019) was held in Bangladesh with the theme "Potentials of Community Health Workers in Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) in the Context of Universal Health Coverage (UHC)." The symposium provided an important platform for various stakeholders interested in community health programs to discuss and share past successes and challenges with supporting high-impact CHWs. Campaign member Last Mile Health presented the Exemplars in Community Health Worker Programs at a plenary session. The Exemplars aims to help public health decision-makers around the world understand how select countries made extraordinary progress in important health outcomes and how to adapt elements for their own goals. The case studies will be available through an online platform in the coming months.



Photo by Last Mile Health

High-Performance Financing and Investments in Community Health Needed to Achieve UHC

Progress toward UHC remains stagnant in low-income countries because of the lack of well-performing health financing mechanisms. According to a [World Bank report](#), strengthening health financing can benefit the economies of these countries by building human capital, expanding the job market, reducing poverty and inequity, improving efficiency and strengthening health security. Investing in community health services is the most cost-effective intervention that results in strong population health gains. In fact, low spending on community health services is perceived as a major cause of inequities and inefficiency. Community health services have shown to be effective, efficient and equitable in countries at all income levels.

G20 finance ministers and Central Bank governors can play a vital role in supporting low-income countries by:

- adapting proven health-financing principles and policies to country-specific contexts;
- connecting health financing policy across sectors and consistently assessing and adjusting strategies when problems arise with revenue generation, health costs, efficiency and equity; and
- strengthening health financing leadership, governance, and organizational capacity.

[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.

