



# ACTION FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

United Nations High-level Week, 21–27 September, 2019



## High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage

23 September • Trusteeship Council Chamber

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- At least half of the world's population do not have access to the essential health services they need. More than 800 million people spend at least 10% of their household income to pay for health care, with out-of-pocket health expenses pushing almost 100 million into extreme poverty each year. Climate shocks and environmental risk factors, such as air pollution, have drastic effects on the health of populations, and different groups of countries, such as small island developing states, face unique health challenges of their own.
- Health is a human right. Everyone, everywhere, should have access to quality and affordable health services. Leaders are urged to legislate, invest and collaborate with all of society to make universal health coverage a reality. Universal health coverage is primarily the responsibility of governments, ensuring people's health as a social contract, and leaving no one behind. Because affordable, accessible, quality health services unlock people's potential, universal health coverage is a smart investment for countries, making a strong case for sustained financing.
- As part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all countries have committed to trying to achieve universal health coverage by 2030, which requires a people-centered approach and includes financial risk protection, high-quality health care services, and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.
- The UN High-Level Meeting is the biggest and best opportunity to secure political commitment from Heads of State and Government to prioritize and invest in universal health coverage and ensure health for all. It will be the most significant political meeting held on universal health coverage to date and will result in a political declaration negotiated by Member States and endorsed by Heads of State and Government. The declaration will form the basis for global efforts to provide universal access to affordable and quality health care services, in line with the Sustainable Development Goal target 3.8. The achievement of UHC is dependent on the success of broader SDG outcomes, including sustainable financing and accelerated action toward climate change.
- Achieving universal health coverage is essential for inclusive development, prosperity, gender equality and fairness, and requires political decisions that go beyond the health sector.



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## WHAT IS THE FORMAT?

The High-Level Meeting will begin with an opening segment where the 74<sup>th</sup> President of the General Assembly, the UN Secretary-General, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, the President of the World Bank and an eminent high-level champion of UHC are expected to deliver statements.

A plenary segment will follow during which Heads of State and Government will deliver their statements. There will also be two consecutive **multi-stakeholder panels**, held in parallel to the plenary. The themes are:

- 1: Universal Health Coverage as a driver of equity, inclusive development and prosperity for all
- 2: Accelerating Multi-sectoral and Multi-Stakeholder Action and Investments for achieving Universal Health Coverage.

## WHAT OUTCOMES ARE EXPECTED

The meeting will conclude with a political declaration made at the highest level, reaffirming the global political commitment to achieving Universal Health Coverage.

## WHAT ARE THE LATEST FACTS AND FIGURES?

- At least half of the world's population still do not have full coverage of essential health services.
- About 100 million people are still being pushed into extreme poverty (defined as living on 1.90 USD or less a day) because they have to pay for health care.
- Over 800 million people (almost 12% of the world's population) spent at least 10% of their household budgets to pay for health care.
- All UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) by 2030, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- To meet the requirements of the Sustainable Development Goals and universal health coverage targets, over 18 million additional health workers are needed by 2030.
- The growing demand for health workers is projected to add an estimated 40 million health sector jobs to the global economy by 2030.

**For more information:**

[www.un.org/pga/73/event/universal-health-coverage](http://www.un.org/pga/73/event/universal-health-coverage)