

Updated September 11, 2023

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

Toward more Resilient, Equitable and Sustainable UHC in 2030: A Toast to the Implementation of the 2023 UHC Political Declaration

Fourth Annual Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Friends of Universal Health Coverage and Global Health, in partnership with UHC2030

Date: 21 September 2023

Time: 6.00 – 8.00 pm EDT

Location: Delegates Dining Room

Co-sponsors: Co-chairs of the Group of Friends of UHC and Global Health (Georgia, Japan, Thailand), UHC2030, WHO UHC-Partnership, IFRC, UN Foundation

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Toward more resilient, equitable
and sustainable UHC in 2030:
A toast to the implementation of
the 2023 UHC Political Declaration

21 SEPTEMBER 2023
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. EDT
Delegates Dining Room, UN Headquarters



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Taking action for universal health coverage

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BACKGROUND

In 2019, world leaders adopted the most comprehensive agreement on global health to date at the first High-level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage. Following this, country commitments to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) per year almost doubled between 2019 and 2021.¹ Since then, progress has stagnated, and the COVID-19 pandemic exposed critical fault lines in health

¹ UHC2030, "State of UHC commitment review: key findings".

Updated September 11, 2023

systems around the world. The High-level Meeting on UHC on September 21, 2023 – which is taking place the same week as the quadrennial SDG Summit, the High-level Meeting on the Fight against Tuberculosis and the High-level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPPR) – provides an opportunity to reinvigorate national commitments and reiterate the value of UHC as an indispensable foundation to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and other health-related commitments.

The 2023 UHC Political Declaration offers a roadmap for national implementation and global cooperation to develop and maintain health systems that are more equitable and fit to meet current and future health threats, whether they be non-communicable diseases or emerging zoonotic pathogens. Recent years have demonstrated that Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and health security are complementary goals that require accelerated action. Broad support for reorienting health systems toward primary health care has been embraced as an imperative for making progress on both agendas. Essential services delivered through primary healthcare are at the core of protecting population health and realizing the promise of UHC – to reach everyone everywhere, with the promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative or palliative health services they need, without suffering financial hardship. This is one of the main focuses of the Political Declaration on UHC to be adopted at the High-level Meeting on UHC this year.

The latest data shows that 30 per cent of the global population cannot access essential health services and that 1.4–1.9 billion people face catastrophic or impoverishing health spending. This trend has been worsening in recent decades, making financial risk a significant and increasing barrier to care, especially in developing countries.² New and scaled-up strategies to improve financial protection are needed in the form of increased public spending, impact investing initiatives, enhanced social protection, removal of co-payments and other fees at the time and place of seeking care, and expansion of coverage and strengthening of primary health care.²

Along with improving affordability, increasing service coverage through better access – especially to primary care – is another top priority for implementing the 2023 UHC Political Declaration. Innovative approaches and new initiatives can contribute significantly toward solving acute and persistent barriers to service delivery, including through telemedicine, stronger health workforce, and deeper community engagement. In particular, social participation and community engagement in health systems are emerging as critical enablers for UHC that link social change with health improvement and draw on the diverse strengths of local individuals and institutions.³ Social participation is an important means for governments to develop responsive health policies and programs, which are more likely to be implemented by a broad stakeholder group. Though social participation is an important accelerant for UHC and PPPR goals, there are many opportunities to institutionalize this practice at national, regional and global

² <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240040618>

³ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(20\)30070-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(20)30070-X/fulltext)

Updated September 11, 2023

levels in order to build resilient and inclusive care systems that leave no one behind on the journey towards UHC.

This reception will provide UHC High-Level Meeting delegations and participants an opportunity to showcase success stories of UHC reforms in countries, provide inspiring testimonies of how we turn political commitments into country action and highlight the value of UHC for achieving broader development and humanitarian aims. The event will give government representatives and other stakeholders an opportunity to share their vision for implementing the Political Declaration and country-level progress to date, and call for further cooperation toward achieving more resilient, more equitable and more sustainable UHC. This reception will also include the official announcement of the UHC Day 2023 theme: Health For All – Time For Action.

OBJECTIVES

1. Celebrate the outcome of the 2023 High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage and adoption of its political declaration.
2. Acknowledge the leadership of the Group of Friends of UHC and Global Health and the important roles of other key partners in advancing UHC at the UN.
3. Share stories of successful UHC policies, provide testimonies for translating the political commitments in the UHC Political Declaration into action at country level, and demonstrate the value of UHC for achieving broader development aims, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. Keep up the momentum for UHC by highlighting the findings of the 2023 UHC Global Monitoring Report and announcing the UHC Day 2023 theme: Health For All – Time For Action.

DRAFT PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

The evening will include musical performances by engaged artists, remarks by the Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends and by Ministers of countries championing UHC, as well as a discussion with key stakeholders on the way forward and on how to move together and leave no one behind.