



Universal Health Coverage in Least Developed Countries: A time for Accelerated Action A High-Level Side Event on the sidelines of HLM on UHC

Organisers: Permanent Missions Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Malawi and Nepal to the United Nations and the United Nations Office for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS (UN-OHRLLS)

Date: 23 September 2019 at 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Venue: Conference Room 5, UN General Assembly Building

Objective: Achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is central to achieving health related targets and other Sustainable Development Goals. Moving towards UHC requires strengthening health services so that individuals and communities are protected from financial hardships borne by paying for health services out of their pockets. Since UHC is unachievable without an efficient health care system that provides the entire population with access to high quality health service, a sustainable financing system tailored to the country context is fundamental to protect people from financial hardship and impoverishment from health care costs.

The high-level speakers will discuss the underlying barriers that Least Developed Countries (LDCs) face in accelerating UHC. They will also present successful example from the LDCs that exemplify possibilities to progress towards UHC. Following this there will be an opportunity for national and international stakeholders, including UN entities and civil society, for an interactive dialogue on the role of UHC in sustainable development, poverty reduction and reducing social inequalities and the discussion will also highlight potential ways to accelerate progress towards UHC in LDCs.

Background: More than 75 percent of a total of 880 million people in the forty-seven Least Developed Countries (LDCs) still live in poverty, facing several barriers to human development, growth and wellbeing. The LDCs are characterized with their vulnerability to external economic shocks, natural and man-made disaster and communicable diseases along with increasing burden of non-communicable diseases. Health systems in LDCs lack adequate and sustainable financing. As such, they need the highest degree of attention from the international community to address their basic needs including access to quality health services. Collective actions are needed to translate international commitments to accelerate LDCs efforts to UHC in current context.

Programme

- **Opening Statement by Hon. Upendra Yadav, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health and Population, Government of Nepal**
- **Statement by Hon. Zahid Maleque, MP, Minister for Health and Family Welfare of People's Republic of Bangladesh on Bangladesh's achievement and challenges**
- **Statement by Hon. Dr. Amir Aman Hagos, Minister of Health of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on Ethiopia's achievement and challenges**
- **Statement by Hon. Jappie Mhango, MP, Minister of Health and Population, of Malawi on Measures to make financing UHC sustainable in LDCs**
- **Statement by H.E. Fekitamoeloa Katoa Utoikamanu, USG UNOHRLLS on Measures to accelerate UHC in LDCs**
- **Interactive discussion and Q&A session**
- **Concluding remarks by H.E. Amrit Bahadur Rai, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations**

The high-level event will be moderated by Ms. Bandana Rana, Vice-Chairperson, United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).