

## JOINT NATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

# Nigeria steps up preparations for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in lead up to the UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on UHC in September 2019

**Abuja, 30 July 2019** —16 Civil Society Organization members of the Nigeria Universal Health Coverage Advocacy Group (NUHCAG) had a country advocacy consultation on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in collaboration with UHC2030 Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (CSEM), WHO, UNAIDS and IFRC in Abuja on 30 July 2019. The consultation took place in the lead up to the first ever United Nations High-Level Meeting (HLM) to discuss UHC which will be held on the margins of the UN General Assembly meeting in September 2019. The HLM on UHC provides civil society and communities with an opportunity to influence government commitments towards meeting the SDG3 targets.

The consultation created a space for constituents to discuss domestic priorities for UHC and develop a mechanism to leverage the HLM on UHC to address key challenges in leaving no one behind.

Achieving UHC is a global health priority embedded in the Sustainable Development Goals and 2019 is a year filled with opportunities to drive progress towards UHC.

The participants called for mobilizing political leadership for high level government representation at the HLM and improve awareness of the civil society on the HLM, UHC 2030 and CSEM for improved UHC policy development and implementation. The consultation generated consensus on the commitments envisaged to inform Nigeria's stand and position in the HLM.

### Quotes:

*"As a government, collectively we commit to ensure everyone in Nigeria has access to health care."* **Mr A. B. Saadu, Director of Social Development and representative of Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Nigeria**

*"We cannot achieve UHC if everyone in the family cannot access health care services."*  
**Dr Clement Peter, WHO Representative i.e. Nigeria**

*“The efforts to achieve UHC should prioritise reviving and strengthening public health systems to provide health services to all who need them and protect populations from impoverishing health care costs”* **Dr Uzodinma Adirieje, National Coordinator, Afrihealth Optonet Association (CSO Network) /NUHCAG**

*“Universal health coverage cannot be achieved and sustained without increasing the awareness of the general public, especially, with the heightened security situation in certain part of the country.”* **Dr Ibrahim Juma, Nigerian Red Cross Society**

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