



**CIVIL SOCIETY DECLARATION/STATEMENT:
COUNTRY ADVOCACY MEETING FOR THE 2019 UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON
UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE (UHC)**

Representatives from civil society networks, organizations, stakeholders and communities in Nigeria, met at the UN House, Abuja, Nigeria on Tuesday 31st July, 2019 under the aegis of the Nigeria Universal Health Coverage Advocacy Group (NUHCAG); to discuss domestic priorities for UHC and how to leverage the HLM on UHC to address key challenges in ensuring that we 'leave no one behind' in Nigeria. The meeting was co-hosted by the West Africa Cluster office of IFRC, UNAIDS, WHO, Afrihealth Optonet Association [CSOs Network] and Nigerian Red Cross Society (NCRS).

Participants observed that:

- a. Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is a global priority, important to the achievement of Sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially in low-and-middle income countries;
- b. UHC is defined as ensuring all people have access to the needed key promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative health services of good quality at an affordable cost without the risk of financial hardship linked to paying for healthcare services;
- c. At least half of the world's population still does not have full coverage of essential healthcare services;
- d. About 100 million of the world's population is still being pushed into extreme poverty (defined as living on 1.90 USD or less a day) because they have to pay for healthcare services;
- e. About 12% of the world's population (Over 800 million people) spends at least 10% of their household budget on healthcare services, which is capable of pushing them into poverty;
- f. Nigeria's health indices have remained unbelievably poor and frightening over the years with antenatal coverage below 65%, skilled birth attendant below 42% and poor service delivery at our Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities;

- g. Impoverishing Out-of-Pocket expenses by households remains the major source of health expenditure, rising from 64.6% in 2003 to 76% in 2017, as a percentage of Total Health Expenditure (THE);
- h. Since the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) was set up in 2005, less than 5% of the population have been covered by any form of health insurance; and
- i. Nigeria still lags behind in ensuring health equity.

Participants noted the imperative to:

- 1. Provide information about UHC, UNGA and HLM on UHC with an emphasis on its importance at the country level;
- 2. Present UHC2030 Key “Asks” and CSEM Priority Actions;
- 3. Discuss the key gaps and priorities to ‘leave no one behind’;
- 4. Explore priority issues and actions for UHC, building on community-led evidence;
- 5. Provide civil society with a national level platform to advocate for an effective UN HLM that results in ambitious national commitments to advance UHC;
- 6. Mobilize political leadership for high-level government representation and concrete commitments at the HLM, and influence the overall outcome of the UN HLM on UHC; and
- 7. Improve awareness of the Health civil society on the HLM, UHC2030 and CSEM for improved UHC policy development and implementation including accountability mechanisms.

Participants in session received, discussed and reviewed/adopted the following presentations, speeches and UHC updates:

- 1. Objectives and Expected Outcomes of the meeting by **Dr. Uzodinma Adirieje**, National Coordinator (NC), NUHCAG and CEO/NC, Afrihealth Optonet Association [CSOs Network];
- 2. Mission, Objectives and Activities of UHC2030 and CSEM by **Mr. Sherry Joseph** of IFRC;
- 3. UNGA, HLM on UHC, implication of CAM, role of CSOs and country data on UHC by **Dr Moses Ongom** of WHO
- 4. Goodwill messages/supporting statements from:
 - **Mr. Ernest A. Umakhikhe**, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning (MBNP);
 - **Dr. Clement Peter**, Country Representative, WHO;
 - **Mr. Gabriel Undelikwo** of UNAIDS;
 - **Dr. Uzodinma Adirieje** of NUHCAG/AFRIHEALTH; and
 - **Dr. Ibrahim Juma Ibrahim** of the NRCS
- 5. Comments, Questions and Answers from participants
- 6. The Six key 'Asks' for HLM on UHC
- 7. National UHC questionnaires and additional questions

Participants unanimously:

- i. Commended the Federal Government of Nigeria for its interest in achieving the UHC in Nigeria;

- ii. Resolved to, and respectfully request Nigeria's President, **His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari**, GCFR: to
 - a. Personally attend the UN HLM on UHC holding in New York on 23rd September 2019 and personally present Nigeria's commitments to UHC2030;
 - b. Ensure Political Leadership Beyond Health by committing to achieve UHC for healthy lives and wellbeing for all ages as a social contract; as well as build strengthened health system that communities and Nigerians trust by upholding quality of care;
 - c. Increase Public Financing for Health to provide the necessary financial protection that supports healthcare-seeking behaviours;
 - d. Improve involvement of CSOs and citizens for transparency and accountability at all levels by establishing multi-stakeholders mechanisms in engaging the whole society for a healthier world;
 - e. Invest heavily and continuously in Health workers, including community health workers; and
 - f. Leave No One Behind by providing equitable access to quality healthcare service to all people in Nigeria, with financial protection;
- iii. Adopted the global UHC2030 'Key Asks' that were already adopted by the UN; and
- iv. Committed the NUHCAG, Nigeria Civil Society and CSOs to collaborate with the Federal Government of Nigeria to promote actions, transparency and accountability towards achieving UHC2030; and to:
 - a. Hold regular periodic national and subnational UHC stakeholders consultations/meetings;
 - b. Organize and facilitate/support periodic expanded stakeholders reviews of Nigeria's UHC achievements and challenges; and
 - c. Collectively continue to strategise towards achieving the UHC2030 targets in Nigeria.

Participants acknowledged the following Results/Outputs/Outcomes of the Nigeria CAM:

1. Completed country level UHC needs assessment (Questionnaire)
2. Articulated UHC2030 'Key Asks' for Nigeria was prepared for presentation to the CSEM Secretariat;
3. CSOs and stakeholders understood the CSEM Priority Action;
4. Official CSOs UHC commitment recommendations for government were agreed upon;
5. Participants committed themselves to continuous dialogue with, and support for civil society national consultations on 'Achieving the UHC' in Nigeria within the next 12 months and on annual thereafter basis towards 2030;
6. CSOs were sensitized about their roles in the forthcoming UN HLM on UHC and achievement of the objectives of UHC2030;
7. Civil Society unanimously agreed to work with the Federal Government and Stakeholders to achieve the objects of UHC in Nigeria;
8. Nigerian Government assured of its commitment to support the CAM and achievement of UHC2030 targets in Nigeria; and

9. It's requested that NUHCAG civil society representatives be included in Nigerian Governments' official delegations to the UN HLM on UHC, in line with global practices and to "leave no one (group) behind".

Participants acknowledged the following achievements of the Nigeria CAM:

1. At short notice, 22 leading CSO networks/coalitions and other CSOs were mobilized from all regions of the country by Afrihealth Optonet Association with the support of the CSEM, UNAIDS, WHO and IFRC/NRCS to organize the Nigeria CAM following the initial non-inclusion of Nigeria in CSEM plan for CAM;
2. Nigerian CSOs spoke with one voice in demanding that the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) should make realistic commitments at the HLM based on our country level needs;
3. Country specific challenges, data and information were reviewed and deliberated upon.
4. The six global UHC2030 key 'Asks' were adopted;
5. Country specific civil society Plan of Action (PoA) was developed and adopted; and
6. Civil Society committed its members/NUHCAG to support, work with and hold FGN accountable to their commitments after the HLM (e.g. using Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) as a review of progress towards Nigeria's UHC commitments).

Participants expressed their appreciation of the roles of the MBNP, CSEM, UNAIDS, WHO, IFRC, AFRIHEALTH and NRCS in the actualization of the country advocacy meeting for Nigeria.

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