

## **14<sup>th</sup> NETWORK OF AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES OF HEALTH (NEAPACOH) MEETING**

### **“Building the Capacity of African Policy Makers for Achieving UHC and SDGs: The Role of Parliamentarians”**

**Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala, Uganda**

#### **KAMPALA CALL TO ACTION**

The 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Network of African Parliamentary Committees of Health (NEAPACOH) was held on February 22 – 23, 2023. The meeting convened delegates and members of Parliamentary Committees responsible for health from 20 countries (Benin, Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Tunisia, The Gambia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) as well as representatives of international organizations, development and technical partners, health champions, researchers and academics, Civil Society Organizations, and other stakeholders engaged in Reproductive, Maternal, New-Born, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH+N) programmes, under the theme: ***Building the Capacity of African Policy Makers for Achieving UHC and SDGs: The Role of Parliamentarians***

The 2023 NEAPACOH meeting provided a platform for regional leaders for shared learning, and discussion (on) how to consolidate the gains made towards achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), increasing domestic investments in health and foster effective utilization of resources for health with a focus on Primary Health Care (PHC), maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health (MNCAH) in African countries.

The meeting was hosted by the Parliament of Uganda and Partners in Population and Development Africa Regional Office (PPD ARO) with support from the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), Centre for Health, Human Rights and

Development (CEHURD), Faith To Action Network and PATH. The 14<sup>th</sup> NEAPACOH Meeting ended with the Kampala Call to Action (2023).

Preamble:

**At the conclusion of the 14<sup>th</sup> NEAPACOH Meeting, we, the participants:**

**Cognizant** that the health status of the people of Africa continues to be a matter of concern with unacceptably high morbidity and mortality levels, especially among children, youth and women with low access to quality health services, with consequences such as teenage and unplanned pregnancies coupled with inadequate birth spacing;

**Appreciating** that Universal Health Coverage (UHC) means that all people should access and utilize the health services they need without suffering social exclusion, financial hardship and other barriers;

**Recognizing** that health is an investment in human capital and social and economic development, towards the full realization of human potential, and significantly contributes to the promotion and protection of human rights and dignity as well as the empowerment of all people.

**Realizing** that UHC implies that all people have access, without any form of discrimination, to nationally determined sets of the needed promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative essential health services, and essential, safe, affordable, effective and quality medicines and vaccines, while ensuring that the use of these services does not expose the users to financial hardship;

**Recalling** that primary health care (PHC) brings people into first contact with the health system and is the most inclusive, effective and efficient approach to enhance people's physical and mental health, as well as social well-being, and that PHC is the cornerstone of a sustainable health system for the attainment of UHC and health-related SDGs;

**Underscoring** the need for strong, people centred health systems that are resilient, functional, well-governed, adolescent and gender-responsive, accountable, integrated, and capable of quality service delivery, supported by a competent

health workforce, adequate health infrastructure, enabling legislative and regulatory frameworks as well as sufficient and sustainable domestic funding;

**Mindful of** the need to tackle health inequities and inequalities within and among countries through (national) political commitment, policies and international cooperation, with emphasis on social, economic and environmental and other determinants of health.

**Noting** that whereas African countries often have strong policies that advance access to quality reproductive health information and services for women, girls, young people and adolescents, the implementation of these/such policies remains weak largely due to under-investments and low prioritization in national planning frameworks;

**Deeply Concerned** that family planning and reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and NCDs are among the essential health services most seriously affected by inadequate funding;

**Aware** that environment and climate change are influenced by human activity, hence the need to integrate and prioritize Population, Health and Environment (PHE) in the policies;

**Noting** the critical role of sharing of experiences and innovative practices in the context of South-South Cooperation for the achievement of UHC and SDGs;

**Acknowledging** the vital role of representation, legislation, appropriation and oversight by the parliamentarians towards the achievement of national, regional and global development goals, including UHC and SDGs;

**Further acknowledging** the contributions of (governments), development partners, Civil Society Organizations, adolescents, youths and faith-based organizations, and the private sector towards attainment of UHC and the SDGs;

**Re-affirming** that health is a precondition for and an outcome and indicator of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

**Appreciating** that evidence-based policy advocacy should guide and inform Africa's policies on ASRHR, that will respond actual issues and stand the test of time.

**Hereby** adopt and bind ourselves to this Kampala Call to Action on this 23<sup>rd</sup> Day of February, 2023, with the following commitments:

1. To increase domestic resource allocation towards primary health care systems to meet the needs and priorities of communities and countries towards achievement of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development - the SDGs
2. To strengthen South-South Cooperation so as to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, lessons learned and good practices in the field of population, health, environment and development.
3. To develop and pass appropriate laws and policies that ensure universal access to health including sexual and reproductive health, family planning services, and post-abortion care to support the initiatives for achieving zero unmet need for family planning, zero preventable maternal deaths, and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices, such as child marriages and female genital mutilation, and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
4. To develop and strengthen Africa's manufacturing capacity through harmonized regulatory frameworks to promote self-reliance, and unfettered equitable access to health commodities, products and pharmaceuticals.
5. To advocate for increased financial resources, including domestic, bilateral and multilateral funding for programs that contribute to accelerated UHC and achievement of the SDGs in our countries.
6. To promote and uphold good governance and accountability in all matters of health.
7. To increase domestic financing for immunization to protect populations from vaccine-preventable diseases, sustain immunization gains made over the years, and strengthen epidemic preparedness, prevention, and response.
8. To strengthen NEAPACOH through expanded partnerships and undertaking resource mobilization activities to support the implementation of the NEAPACOH commitments and ensure sustainability of the network.

9. **To call upon** (our) Governments, development partners, civil society organizations, and all relevant stakeholders, to commit more investments including new and emerging health technologies to accelerate attainment of UHC and SDGs on the continent.
10. To support the development and adoption of the African Citizens Manifesto on Health
11. To continue providing leadership and stewardship on policy, legislation and perform budgetary oversight for all the priority areas highlighted above.

**In the same vein, the 14<sup>th</sup> NEAPACOH meeting participants collectively and individually convey** their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the People and Government of the Republic of Uganda, especially the Parliament of Uganda, Partners in Population and Development Africa Regional Office (PPD-ARO) and the partners, for the successful organization and hosting of the 2023 NEAPACOH meeting.

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