**Bringing it all together: A health systems framework of actions for UHC**

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**Background**: The SDGs call for a rethink of health service delivery. The 17 goals are indivisible, with actions influencing each existing in other goals. Additionally, country health systems are facing unique routine and emergency health challenges arising from changing epidemiological, demographic, social, and environmental changes in the continent. A new way of designing, implementing and monitoring health service provision targeted at health stewards was therefore needed.

**Methods**: A review of the current health system design and challenges was carried out by independent teams. The results of this was presented to a technical forum of health stewards and donors from all countries of the region, who deliberated on the findings from an SDG perspective. Several recommendations arose, including the need to re-define health service priorities incorporating all SDG interventions influencing health; a specific focus on health security, resilience, health infrastructure and service responsiveness as unique regional needs; elaboration of health system performance measures avoiding verticalization of the building blocks; and a special emphasis on guidance for district implementation. In addition, the forum recognized the need to provide comprehensive guidance, while taking cognizance of the different nature of countries. A technical team of experts brought these recommendations together into a draft framework of actions that was reviewed by the independent program management committee made of country experts prior to discussion by Ministers of Health.

**Results**: The framework consolidates systems and services around a logical results chain that defines elements at each level from the SDG perspective – with the desired impact as attainment of the SDG 3 goal. Outcomes are the health and related service outcomes people deserve, structured around 6 UHC, and 4 other SDG intervention domains. Health system performance is defined around 4 elements of access, quality, system resilience and service demand. Finally, system investments are defined across 7 elements with a menu of actions for their attainment elaborated. For each element in framework, attributes are elaborated that define what it entails.

**Key words:** Universal Health Coverage, sustainable development