

# What collective learning for Universal Health Coverage?

International Workshop // Antwerp, October 15th-17th 2018

## CONCEPT NOTE

### ■ Context

Many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) have signaled their intention to be part of the global agenda for Universal Health Coverage (UHC), which is central to the third Sustainable Development Goal. The WHO and others have set the course: as an international community, we have a good understanding of the objectives to be achieved (cf the UHC cube), the indicators to follow, the things not to do and the possible options. This 'global' knowledge does not, however, exhaust all the questions that national and international actors may have at country level. Questions are multiple and to a large extent are, and will remain, peculiar to the country's situation.

To move towards UHC, each country will have to find its own way. In a recent article<sup>1</sup>, we noted that this indicates that self-reliant learning will be, alongside national leadership, the most critical capacity for success in UHC. In this same article, after analyzing the situation in six French-speaking African countries, we note that the operational agenda with regard to this need to build an autonomous learning capacity remains unclear, both at country and international level.

Through many activities, some classic (empirical research), others more innovative (communities of practice, platform of exchange and collaboration...), our group has been committed, for nearly 10 years, to what we can call «collective learning for UHC». We are not the only actor engaged in this undertaking. We invite you to share with us the lessons learned and identify the priority action and learning agenda for the future.

### ■ Objectives and theme of the workshop

The two main objectives of the workshop will be to take stock of what we know and identify an agenda for the future. It is about joining forces to build the agenda that we want to implement together, including through a new entity that will bring forward the communities of practice agenda into the future.

We propose you to look at 6 major themes. For each theme, the objective will be to produce a concept note likely to support our future action. As an extension of our work, we will also produce blogs and a viewpoint to submit in a scientific journal.

The conference will be introduced by a plenary session on knowledge management and learning.

[1] Akhnif et al. 2018. *Are our 'UHC systems' learning systems? Piloting an assessment tool and process in six African countries – Health Research Policy & Systems*. <https://rdcu.be/38oW>

## 1. Learning at the level of organizations and health systems: review of experiences

*A series of experiences will be presented. They will cover actors such as ministries of health, health administrations, international organizations... Even if these experiences are still new, some first lessons can be identified.*

## 2. Collaborative models of transnational learning: dynamics in progress and the search for complementarity

*Different initiatives will be presented; we will work on an agenda that could enhance collaboration across initiatives, the contribution of the Harmonization for Health in Africa communities of practice and the role of the Collectivity platform.*

## 3. The challenge of UHC in 'fragile' settings in Francophone Africa

*In several French-speaking African countries, the general situation is deteriorating – they could be considered as 'fragile settings'. Isn't it time to revisit our paradigms and modes of operation in these countries? What does the UHC agenda mean in such contexts? We will share our analysis and jointly develop a program for an agenda setting conference to be held in early 2019. This session will be led by experts from Francophone Africa.*

## 4. Accountability for UHC

*Does the UHC agenda not leave national and international citizens and actors too much on the side? What are the courses of action at transnational and national level? This session will be organized in an exploratory and creative fashion. It will identify new avenues (civil rights, digital solutions...).*

## 5. Performance Based Financing, Health Systems Strengthening and Strategic Purchasing: What alignment?

*PBF is a means, not an end. Its future lies in its transformational power, including within itself. We will work on this transformational agenda, taking into account the constraints prevailing at the level of countries and their partners. This session will be moderated by experts from the PBF CoP.*

## 6. UHC and community health: an agenda

*The Community Health CoP is the youngest CoP. It has the mandate of situating Community Health as part of wider health system framework and bringing transnational learnings from global south. This session will be moderated by the Facilitation Team of the Community Health CoP. It will consist of drafting a report on the first 9 months of experience, building bridges with the other CoPs and preparing the agenda for 2019, along with providing an opportunity to reconvene the 2nd Institutionalizing Community Health Conference (IHC).*

### Profile of participants

This workshop is aimed at decision-makers, practitioners, researchers and partners directly involved in the agenda of "learning for UHC in LMICs" and who are interested in a long-term commitment to the agendas that will be covered.

We aim for a participation of **50 experts**. The entire application process will be managed through the Collectivity platform. Candidates are invited to indicate the topics for which they might be able to make a contribution. Support will be provided for participants from LMICs.

### Format of the workshop

The workshop will run from Monday 15th October to Wednesday 17th October (closing at 13.00) at the Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp. The plenary sessions will be held in English. Some group work will be held in French.

### Organizing committee

This note was developed by the Health Economics Unit of the Department of Public Health of the Institute of Tropical Medicine. The workshop is organized in partnership with the «Harmonization for Health in Africa» Communities of Practice, the Community Health Community of Practice and Collectivity experts. We welcome other potential partners.



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