

# RESOLUTION

## OF THE

### WHO REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH-EAST ASIA

SEA/RC65/R6

## REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

The Regional Committee,

Having considered SEA/RC65/15 Information Document on Regional Strategy for Universal Health Coverage;

Concerned that 1 billion people worldwide do not have access to health care, 150 million people face catastrophic health-care costs each year because of direct payments for health care, while 100 million are driven below the poverty line thereby contributing to avoidable morbidity and premature mortality, aggravating inequity and impeding sustainable social and economic development;

Recognizing the contribution of universal health coverage (UHC) towards achieving Millennium Development Goal 1, to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Goal 4, to reduce child mortality; Goal 5, to improve maternal health; Goal 6, to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB and other diseases; and Goal 8, to develop a global partnership for development; and the achievement of wider social policy objectives as set out by the Joint UN Social Protection Floor Initiative;

Acknowledging the crucial importance and contributions of all health systems building blocks including human resources for health, medicines, and a resilient and responsive health services delivery with extensive geographical coverage of functioning primary health care with an effective referral system is a key foundation for UHC;

Noting that each country can start providing financial risk and social protection to targeted populations, taking into account harmonization across different schemes, and gradually accelerate

progress towards UHC, which is possible and affordable even at a low level of economic development provided that there are strong and sustained political and financial commitments by governments; and

Appreciating the Director-General of the World Health Organization and the Regional Director of the WHO South-East Asia Region for their leadership and support to Member States in moving towards UHC and formulating the Regional Strategy for Universal Health Coverage, based on evidence and participatory processes;

ENDORSES the Regional Strategy for Universal Health Coverage;

URGES Member States:

- (1) To develop and/or strengthen country-specific strategies for UHC including health development and investment plans, as appropriate, applying the four Strategic Directions of the Regional Strategy for Universal Health Coverage.
- (2) To strengthen national capacity for monitoring and evaluation and regularly monitor progress towards UHC; and
- (3) To actively contribute to the work of the regional UHC platform for exchange of UHC experiences across countries, which could also accelerate the implementation of national UHC agendas; and

REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (1) To provide technical support to Member States in developing, implementing and monitoring country-specific strategies for UHC, applying the four Strategic Directions of the Regional Strategy for Universal Health Coverage;
- (2) To strengthen capacity in the Region and the existing platform initiated by WHO-SEARO for sharing of UHC experiences, supporting collaborative research, monitoring progress and linking with other UHC networks;
- (3) To support countries to produce evidence on impact of UHC, including on reduction of out-of-pocket expenditure, prevention of household catastrophic health expenditure and impoverishment; and using this for discussions on universal health coverage at the highest regional and global development forums;
- (4) To convene regular workshops for Member States in the SEA Region to share experiences, identify challenges and their potential solutions, and monitor progress towards UHC; and
- (5) To support mechanisms at regional and international levels for specific needs of Member States for health system strengthening for UHC, including bulk procurement of medicines.

Fifth meeting, 7 September 2012