



THE MWANGAZA

SHEDDING LIGHT ON TRANSFORMATIVE ADVOCACY IN HEALTH

Welcome to The Mwangaza. In each edition, we take a deep dive into one of our transformative areas of work, and its impact in improving health systems and advancing the health and well-being of all.

This special issue marks **UHC Day**. Today, advocates around the world are raising their voices for universal health coverage (UHC), the global commitment to ensure that everyone, everywhere can access quality health care when they need it, without financial hardship.

Today, WACI Health affirms that the pathway to health for all must be built—and measured—through inclusive, sustained, and accountable partnerships. Recent developments offer powerful reminders that when countries, global health institutions, private sector, civil society, and communities work together, progress becomes possible.

Partnership in Action: Outcomes from the UHC High-Level Forum

Held on 6 December 2025, the UHC High-Level Forum—co-hosted by the Government of Japan, the WHO, and the World Bank—marked important milestones in the global UHC agenda. The event brought together ministers of health and finance, development partners, multilateral agencies, private sector actors, and civil society representatives to advance country-led reforms and promote deeper collaboration toward UHC.

Two major initiatives were launched at the Forum: the [UHC Knowledge Hub](#), a platform designed to build technical and institutional capacity among Ministries of Health and Finance, and the [Health Works initiative](#), focused on mobilising investment in health systems as drivers of economic growth and resilience.

The Forum also saw the release of the [Global Monitoring Report](#), which painted a sobering picture: 4.6 billion people lack access to essential health services and 2.1 billion people face financial hardship due to health costs.

One of the Forum's headline outcomes was the announcement of 15 [National Health Compacts](#), country-led five-year reform plans focused on strengthening primary health care, improving affordability, and expanding service coverage. These compacts, endorsed at the highest levels of

government, reflect a collective vision to improve health outcomes while driving jobs and economic growth.

In Tokyo, WACI Health Executive Director Rosemary Mburu with the Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (CSEM) for UHC2030 and as a member of the [Health Works Leaders Coalition](#) championed the essential role of civil society in achieving UHC.

CSEM and the Japan CSO Network on Global Health released [joint statements](#) endorsed by over 130 civil society organisations across 48 countries, calling on leaders to centre equity, embed social participation in UHC reforms, prioritise financial protection, and establish robust accountability mechanisms.

Notably, several countries included financial protection in their compacts. This momentum is encouraging, but translating these ambitions into results will require coordinated action: robust policies, sustained financing, inclusive governance, and a strong role for civil society.

This moment presents an opportunity for co-creation. The absence of a shared monitoring and accountability mechanism for the National Health Compacts underscores the urgent need for countries and partners to collaboratively define what progress looks like and how it will be measured. Civil society and communities must be active participants in shaping this agenda.

We will continue to mobilise action, especially to ensure that equity and social participation are fully integrated into the UHC Knowledge Hub's training and peer learning programmes as well as in the implementation of the Compacts.

Strengthening Strategic Collaboration: MoUs with Global Fund and Gavi

On the margins of the UHC Forum, the World Bank Group signed two Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) reinforcing a shared commitment to align financing, strengthen systems, and deliver country-led solutions.

We welcome the new [MoU between the World Bank Group and the Global Fund](#) to strengthen primary health care and expand sustainable health financing. The MoU commits the two institutions to mobilising at least US\$2 billion over the next three years – with an emphasis on alignment with country priorities – to build stronger, more resilient health systems, strengthen primary health care (PHC), and continue the fight against HIV, TB, and malaria.

The partnership is designed to support progress toward the World Bank Group's goal of helping countries provide quality, affordable health services to 1.5 billion people by 2030, while advancing the Global Fund's mission to end the three diseases and reinforce systems for health. Central to the agreement is a commitment to align external financing with government-led strategies, using national compacts as a platform to coordinate partners around shared priorities, financing needs, and accountability frameworks. We commend this renewed partnership and its recognition of country ownership, aligned investments, and coherent financing as critical enablers for realising UHC.

We also welcome the [MoU between the World Bank Group and Gavi](#) to strengthen primary health care, immunisation systems, and regional vaccine manufacturing. The partnership aims to mobilise at least US\$2 billion over five years in joint financing, aligned with country priorities, to expand access to life-saving vaccines and support sustainable health system reforms. By leveraging blended finance and other tools, this agreement reinforces a shared commitment to

sustainable, country-led approaches that advance health equity and resilience as part of the broader UHC agenda.

Partnership for the GFF: Investing in Women, Children, and Adolescents

Thank you to the Gates Foundation for the renewed commitment to the GFF! We welcome the \$100 million pledge from the Gates Foundation announced at the UHC Forum. This is an early signal of trust in the GFF's approach to joint financing and system transformation.

The GFF is leading work to end preventable deaths among women, children, and adolescents in low- and middle-income countries and just launched their new five-year strategy, [TRANSFORM 2030: Transforming Health Systems, Saving Lives](#).

Through the [GFF We Want](#) civil society campaign, we have continued to articulate the importance of country leadership, collaborative decision-making, and inclusive governance. We recognise the consultative process that shaped the strategy and its commitment to country ownership, catalysing domestic resources, and real-time data to drive decision-making and resource allocation.

We urge more donors to sustain the momentum and invest in the lives of women, children, and adolescents.



The past month has brought renewed energy and high-level political attention to universal health coverage. While domestic financing remains fundamental, it is not enough. Delivering on UHC requires stronger partnerships across global health institutions, the private sector, and others. The sustained support for global solidarity and collaboration in trying times is encouraging, but the real

test lies ahead: will these commitments translate into transformative change that reaches those most in need?

As WACI Health and our civil society networks continue to engage in these spaces, we reiterate that meaningful partnerships must go beyond formal institutions. Communities, frontline health workers, young people, and civil society organisations are essential to delivering UHC that is equitable, inclusive, and accountable. Realising health for all requires shared responsibility and shared power.

Take Action Today!

More than half of the world's population still lacks access to essential health services. A quarter of people face financial hardship when paying for health care out of pocket - often at the expense of food, education or housing. This year's UHC Day campaign theme, "**Unaffordable health costs? We're sick of it!**", centers the lived experiences behind these statistics. It reminds government decision-makers that unaffordable health costs are making our communities poorer and sicker, and holding back progress across all the Sustainable Development Goals.

- [Use the UHC Day toolkit](#): Use the graphics and messaging to spread awareness about the urgent need for universal health coverage and what countries can do to accelerate progress.
- [Tell your story for the #HealthCostsHurt campaign video](#): Share what you're sick of when it comes to accessing and paying for health services. Your lived experience will help decision-makers better understand and respond to the real challenges in your community. Record and post your videos on social media with the #HealthCostsHurt.
- [Join the 2025 UHC Day Town Hall](#): This year's Town Hall brings together youth advocates and parliamentarians for an open dialogue on accelerating progress toward UHC and strengthening financial protection for all.
Register here: <https://bit.ly/2025uhcdayTownHall> / 13:00 GMT
- [Add your activities to the UHC Day heatmap](#): Are you organizing an event, publication, or announcement for UHC Day? Make it visible by adding it to the global heatmap.

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Follow and engage with CSEM on [LinkedIn](#), [BlueSky](#) and [X](#) to help amplify the UHC Day campaign.

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