



## **PLENARY SESSION 1**

**IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR UHC 2030**

## | BACKGROUND

Underlying the achievement of most SDG3 targets is universal access to and uptake of quality, affordable health services (SDG target 3.8), the large majority delivered close to where people live and work (i.e. primary care).

WHO estimates that around half of the world's population lack access to essential health services worldwide. Even when essential services are accessible, they are often fragmented, of poor quality and safety, and do not always address the upstream determinants of health and equity in health.

At the same time, the burden of noncommunicable diseases, accidents and mental health problems is growing. Ageing populations are causing people to live longer, but often with multiple diseases and conditions that require complex care over time. With the growth of social media and digital communication, healthcare users and their families are much more informed (or mis-informed) and are demanding more say in how health services take care of them. Significant rise in medical consumerism, malpractice litigation, and lack of trust in vaccination campaigns are observed. In more fragile contexts, the lack of confidence in health services and has hampered efforts to control communicable disease threats. This shows that communities are the anchor of nations' resilience-building efforts. In this context, increased accountability (including social accountability to local communities) and broader stakeholder participation is needed.

The key to dealing with today's public health challenges and changing landscape is not to change strategic direction - primary health care remains the cornerstone of a sustainable health system and is the foundation for essential part of achieving universal health coverage- but to transform the way health and social services are organized, funded and delivered. For health care and coverage to be truly universal, it calls a shift from health systems designed around diseases and health institutions towards systems designed for people, with people. This is required to meet the evolving needs of the population, ensure population trust in services and subsequently their effective use, and to curb inefficiencies related to duplication and waste. In the wider context of Sustainable Development Goals, health workers are also expected to demonstrate their social responsibility: protecting the general public's well-being and meeting social expectations, while also aiming to reduce the impact on the environment of their activities.

## | OBJECTIVES

Political commitment to achieving UHC is strongly affirmed at the global level as the world convened in Astana in 2018 to reiterate their commitment to PHC; and the 2019 United Nations General Assembly United Nations prepares to hold a High-Level Meeting on "Universal Health Coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World". In this context, this session aims at building on the global commitments and experiences learned from pioneering countries to go one step further and identify innovative solutions to make significant progress in implementation for local communities, ensuring no one is left behind. This session adopts whole-of-system approach to achieving UHC and considers both the supply and demand side interventions. It highlights the political economy of reforms through countries' stories to transform its health system and calls on to concrete innovative actions to achieve demonstrable results in short time frame (panel session).



Panelist / Keynote Speaker / Moderator

## Naoko Yamamoto

*Assistant Director-General, UHC/Healthier Populations*

World Health Organization  
Switzerland

Dr Naoko Yamamoto  
Assistant Director-General  
Universal Health Coverage/ Healthier Populations  
World Health Organization

Dr Naoko Yamamoto was most recently WHO's Assistant Director-General for Universal Health Coverage and Health Systems. Dr Yamamoto brings nearly 30 years of experience working on health in Japan and served as Senior Assistant Minister for Global Health in Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. In this capacity, she was heavily involved in Japan's global health leadership, including hosting and organizing the International Conference on Universal Health Coverage in 2015 and supporting the compilation of the G7 Ise-Shima Vision for Global Health and Kobe Communique of the G7 Health Ministers' Meeting in 2016, both of which highlighted the importance of promoting universal health coverage.

Prior to this role, she served in numerous health-related positions within the government of Japan, including as Director General of the Hokkaido Regional Bureau of Health and Welfare, Director of the Health and Medical Division at the Ministry of Defense, and Counsellor to the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations. She holds a medical degree, a PhD in epidemiology and a Masters in Public Health.