

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

**MESSAGE ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE DAY
12 December 2021**

As we enter the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must urgently strengthen our health systems to ensure they are equitable, resilient and capable of meeting everyone's needs, including for their mental health.

COVID-19 has reached nearly every part of the world, but health coverage still has not. The shockwaves of this health emergency are hitting hardest those countries that lack health systems capable of providing quality, affordable care for all.

If we are to reach our goal of achieving universal health coverage by 2030, we must commit to investing in and scaling up proven solutions. This means making more and smarter investments in the foundations of health systems, with an emphasis on primary health care, essential services and marginalized populations.

The best insurance for resilient economies and communities, as well as pandemic preparedness for the future is strengthening health systems before a crisis arrives. The unequal distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in the past year has been a global moral failure. We must learn from this experience. The pandemic will not end for any country until it ends for every country.

On this Universal Health Coverage Day, let us join the commitment to end the COVID-19 pandemic and build a healthier, safer future for all by investing in health systems that leave no one behind.