Caught in the COVID-19 storm: women’s, children’s, and adolescents’ health in the context of UHC and the SDGs
UN Secretary-General’s Independent Accountability Panel for Every Woman, Every Child, Every Adolescent
2020 Report

Draft: concept note

Introduction
The United Nations Secretary General’s (UNSG) Independent Accountability Panel for Every Woman, Every Child, Every Adolescent (IAP)1 was established in 2016 as part of Every Woman Every Child movement.2 Appointed by the UNSG, the IAP is composed of 10 internationally-recognized experts in the fields of health and human rights. The Panel’s mandate includes:
• providing rigorous, independent and transparent assessment of progress on implementing the Global Strategy (Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health, 2015-2030), under the overall rubric of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
• issuing recommendations and reports with a view to providing constructive, solution-oriented directions based on the best available evidence and analysis, with the aim of contributing to strengthened accountabilities for accelerated achievement of the Global Strategy and the SDGs.

In 2020, the IAP is preparing a landmark report: Caught in the COVID-19 storm: women’s, children’s, and adolescents’ health in the context of UHC and the SDGs. This report will be launched alongside the High-level Political Forum, 14-16 July 2020. The report will include status on key EWEC indicators, country scorecards on progress and success factors, country case studies and updated accountability framework and recommendations. The report will draw heavily on evidence during the COVID-19 pandemic and implications for women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health and rights.

2020 Report Outline

Chapter 1: Progress towards women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health and UHC: implications of COVID-19
• Chapter 1 surveys emerging evidence for the impact of COVID-19 on women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health and UHC.
• It sets this evidence in the context of pre-2020 progress on women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health, which was lagging even before the pandemic struck. Most countries – wealthy and poor alike – were unprepared, making a bad situation worse.
• The pandemic has confirmed existing accountability priorities for the health of women, children and adolescents and highlighted new ones. From the COVID-19 experience, we see that gains made are fragile and can erode quickly.
• Informed by this analysis, the chapter outlines priorities for a reinforced approach to accountability for women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health, focused on essential accountability features, greater citizen voice and participation and interconnected, accountable institutions.

1 For more information visit IAP website: https://iapewec.org/
2 For more information visit EWEC website: https://www.everywomaneverychild.org/
Chapter 2: Fast lane, slow lane – countries with similar resources progress at different rates

- Chapter 2 outlines the status of women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health and UHC, based on key indicators of the Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health (2016–2030) and the SDGs.
- 10 years since the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women’s and Children’s Health (CoIA), unacceptable gaps remain in CRVS and HIS.
- To track progress and accountabilities for WCAH and rights, the IAP assessed countries within the same income category, by best performing countries to those furthest behind.
- Chapter 2 offers an analysis of the findings, including how they reflect on health inequities; human rights; countries affected by fragility, conflict, and violence; country health financing; service coverage and financial protection within UHC; and multisectoral action.
- Additional analyses are provided in an Annex.

Chapter 3: Unique contexts, global challenges – accountability to accelerate country progress

- Voice does not equate to accountability if there is no one to listen, respond and act.
- Country case studies highlight what accountability means to individuals, how it benefits women, children and adolescents health, and where accountability barriers obstruct progress on health, rights and SDGs.
- They include the opinions and lived experiences from a wide range of stakeholders in health, including service users, health workers and officials.
- Case studies were undertaken in:
  - Ethiopia on community scorecards to strengthen accountability in health
  - Georgia on accountability of public-private partnerships in attaining UHC
  - Guatemala on barriers and bottlenecks to women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health
  - Kenya on pregnancy-related medical detentions
  - Papua New Guinea on accountability barriers to maternal, adolescents’ and newborn health
- Case studies contain practical, innovative suggestions for the way forward to strengthen accountability.

Chapter 4: Revitalize accountability – an updated framework and recommendations to accelerate progress

- Chapter 4 reviews lessons from a decade of EWEC accountability and places them in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on WCAH.
- It considers factors that support or threaten progress for WCAH, and the priorities for action. It also looks at big challenges, such as how COVID-19 lessons feed into the development of UHC/PHC, contextual issues such as human rights, women’s empowerment and climate change.
- Based on these considerations, and findings in the main report, chapter 4 sets out an updated accountability framework and provides recommendations to accelerate progress.

Conclusion: Ensuring accountability for every woman, child and adolescent through the 2030 agenda

- Through this report and its recommendations, the IAP remains committed to its vision to provide an independent and transparent review of progress on the implementation of the Global Strategy and to identify and advocate the necessary actions to accelerate achievement of its goals from the accountability perspective.
- It is further committed to promoting accountability for UHC and PHC to ensure they deliver for the health and rights of all women, children and adolescents, enabling them to access the quality services they need without financial hardship, and allowing them to realize their rights to health and wellbeing.