

Kabul, 7 April 2018



Minister Ferozuddin speaking at the World Health Day event in Kabul. World Health Day, celebrated annually on the 7th April, was commemorated in an event organized at the Ministry of Public Health in Kabul, Afghanistan today.

The theme of the celebration in 2018 is “universal health coverage: everyone, everywhere.”

In his message on the occasion, the Minister of Public Health, Dr Ferozuddin Feroz said that “The Ministry of Public Health of Afghanistan believes that UHC is an investment in human capital, a basic human right and a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth and development.”

Dr Richard Peeperkorn, WHO representative in Afghanistan, noted that “On 7 April 2018, we celebrate WHO’s 70th anniversary, and the 40th anniversary of the Alma-Ata Declaration on primary health care, which set the goal of ‘health for all’.

In his speech at the event he stressed the importance of the theme this year: “Universal health coverage means that everyone should have access to the quality health services, when and where they need it, without suffering financial hardship.”

In the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, of which Afghanistan is a part, estimated 55 million individuals face financial hardship and around 7.7 million are pushed into poverty every year because of excessive out-of-pocket payment. In Afghanistan, the share of out-of-pocket expenditure remains high at 73%. Overall access to primary health care remains challenging and particularly in the remote, more insecure and underserved areas.

“It is the responsibility of all of us to work with government to help ensure universal access to quality health services”, Dr Peeperkorn urged the participants.

The celebration is followed by a two-day workshop on health financing.

“–One of the biggest obstacles to towards making substantial progress towards UHC are the relatively low investments into Health in Afghanistan. The meeting of today, reviewing potential Health Financing options for Afghanistan is therefore very opportune. There is a huge need to substantially increase domestic and international investments in Health”, Dr Peeperkorn stated.



WHO representative Dr Richard Peeperkorn spoke at the event He concluded by calling on the participants to commit to the shared goal of universal health coverage. “Let us all pledge our commitment to ‘health for all’, without discrimination, leaving no one behind.”

In addition to Minister of Public Health and Dr Peeperkorn, the event was attended by Members of Parliament, Government partners, representatives of UN agencies, and officials from MoPH.

[More information on this year's theme](#) and [World Health Day](#)

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