

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF
GHANA

**Access to Healthcare in Ghana
(Right to Health)**

Submission to the UN Human Rights Council

By Divine Group International Foundation

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Introduction

This report is submitted for the fourth cycle of the UPR by Divine Group International. Information in this document was compiled through a desk review process and from discussions at a Civil Society Organizations pre-UPR submission workshop in Accra organized by POS Foundation-Secretariat. The submission highlights developments and follow-up measures by Ghana in relation to Access to health following the 3rd UPR Cycle in 2017.

The purpose of this submission is to direct the UPR Committee's attention to the challenges the people of Ghana face regarding their right to health due to a lack of access to healthcare services.

Methodology

The report has been prepared using information from consultative meetings with partners, information from partner CSOs and desk reviews. The document was further validated by partners on 12th July 2022.

National UPR Context

At the 3rd UPR cycle, Ghana received and accepted 13 recommendations on the rights of citizens to health (Theme E41), Qatar (146.115) to Continue its efforts to promote access to health services, including in local communities, Venezuela (146.117) Continue improving the access to and the use of health services in the most remote communities.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

UHC according to who, means that all individuals and communities receive the health services they need without suffering financial hardship. it includes the full spectrum of essential, quality health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care across the life course.

Legal Provisions and Policies on Universal Health Coverage

Right to health is fundamental for the wellbeing and quality of life of every person and thus it is imperative for all governments to put in place systems that ensure that every person has access to health without any physical and financial barriers.

Ghana's Universal Health Coverage roadmap indicates that every individual should have unfettered access to health and healthcare irrespective of one's location or financial means¹. It includes the full spectrum of essential, quality health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care across the life course.

A lot of progress has been made by successive governments in Ghana regarding the promotion of the quality healthcare and services for all of Ghana's 31 million people. The health care provider per client/patient ratio is still low. In 2019, the UK government reported that there are only 1.1

¹ <https://www.moh.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/UHC-Roadmap-2020-2030.pdf>

doctors and 9.8 nurses and midwives for every 10,000 inhabitants of Ghana.

This fall short of the WHO's recommended minimum threshold of twenty-three doctors, nurses, and midwives per 10,000 population². this has put a huge strain on the delivery of health care in the country. Compounding the issue, budget allocation to the health sector over the past years has remained below international standards. The government made an explicit commitment in the Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework (MTNDPF 2022–2025) to allocate 15% of health expenditure as a percentage of the GDP in the 2022 budget. However, analysis reveals that the projected health expenditure as a percentage of the GDP is only 2.19%. This not only shows a significant deviation from the set target but also falls far below the World Bank and WHO averages for Lower Middle-Income Countries.³

Recommendations

- The Government must take all administrative and financial measures for guaranteeing universal access to health a priority including sufficient training for health and also constructing 60% of the health facilities in the Agenda 111 by 2024.
- Governments must increase investments (at least meet the Abuja Declaration) in the health sector to address the issue of unavailability of essential medicines, drugs and vaccines as well as equipment in all health facilities
- Government must form strategic partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organizations to ensure the availability of resources to support the implementation of the primary health care policy

²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812958/Ghana_-_Medical_and_Healthcare_-_CPIN_-_v1.0__GOV.UK_.pdf

³ <https://sendwestafrica.org/nu/gh/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/01/SEND-GHANA-assesses-2022-budget-statement-and-economic-policy.pdf>