



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# Parliaments as a key actor in ensuring access to health for all

Side event at the 69th World Health Assembly

Concept note

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have the potential to transform the lives of people across world. Under the auspices of the IPU, parliaments have committed to taking the necessary action to identify from the overall Goals country-specific objectives and targets, including by working with constituents to that end. Their commitment will involve translating the SDGs into enforceable domestic legislation, holding governments to account in their implementation of that legislation and aligning budgets with national sustainable development plans.

Most of the targets under SDG 3, including universal health coverage, will not be met without strong parliamentary action to ensure effective legislation, oversight and budget appropriations for health programmes and interventions. Parliaments have an equally important role to play in creating an enabling environment for health-related policy work – it is a critical precondition for ensuring universal access to health.

One of the areas in which parliaments have made a strong impact is women's, children's and adolescents' health. Parliaments have brought about tangible change as part of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health in a number of countries where the Strategy is of particular importance. As a result, the new Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health recognizes that parliaments have a strong interest in ensuring that change happens on the ground. The past work of parliaments should therefore serve as an inspiration for parliamentarians to go further in the future in order to meet the targets and objectives set under SDG 3.

## **Objectives and expected outcomes**

Participants will be able to:

- Share information about the commitments made and actions taken by their parliaments to implement the SDGs and the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health
- Increase their understanding of the role of parliaments in health and health-related policymaking
- Discuss how to make the best use of the wide variety of action that parliaments are taking on women's, children's and adolescents' health in order to achieve universal health coverage and other SDG targets
- Discuss opportunities for partnerships and collaboration between parliaments and health actors