



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

**REMARKS BY SUSAN MOCHACHE, CBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY,  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH, DURING THE IMPACT PHILANTHROPY AFRICA  
FORUM ON HEALTH ON WEDNESDAY, 13.10.2021 AT 9:00AM**

**Good morning,**

I am extremely happy to join you today during the Impact Philanthropy Africa Forum, which is focusing on health.

The Ministry of Health fully supports efforts of philanthropists, which have immensely contributed to improving the quality of lives for the majority of Kenyans.

Indeed, one of the most renown philanthropists of our time, Melinda Gates, aptly captures the role of philanthropy in our lives when she says: ***“Philanthropy is not about the money. It’s about using whatever resources you have at your fingertips and applying them to improving the world.”***

Those conversant with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s contribution in our country would agree that most of the gains we have realised in the war against HIV and AIDS have arisen through prudent use of resources graciously donated by the Foundation to the Kenya Government. This applies to other philanthropies like the Bill Clinton Foundation, Global Fund, and many others.

When COVID-19 cases were reported in Kenya last year, various local and international philanthropies moved in to collaborate with the Government to step up efforts of mitigating the impact of the Coronavirus.

For instance, the donations of large quantities of test kits and PPEs by Jack Ma at the beginning of the pandemic were a major boost to the Government's containment measures against COVID-19.

Locally, you all vividly remember how our corporates came together to form the Kenya COVID-19 Fund, which marshalled massive resources that were used to support the national response to COVID-19. Many will remember that frontline public healthcare staff handling COVID-19 patients received training on case management, application and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE's), and on psychosocial support to help them cope with the daily challenges occasioned by their service in thanks to resources mobilised by the Fund.

Equity Group Foundation, Kenya Commercial Bank, East African Breweries Limited, Safaricom Foundation, and Absa Group Limited are among Corporates that stood up to be counted as the country sought emergency measures to protect its people against COVID-19.

Besides, the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) has stepped in to contribute to the vaccine acquisition efforts and have been allowed to import a million doses through government agencies.

All these support is in line with the long-standing African culture, which we popularly call *Ubuntuism* that has for many years meant a positive human interdependence for survival and human fulfilment.

This explains why I found your invitation irresistible given our Ministry's long-standing partnerships with various philanthropies that have made it easier for us to run various health programmes.

I must therefore thank all the current 20 members of this Forum who, in one way or the other, have contributed to the immense progress that our

country is making in taking care of its people, especially in seeking to achieve the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indeed the goal of this forum, to build a culture of Corporate Social Investment and influence policy through advocacy and through leadership is extremely commendable.

No one of us can gainsay the fact that philanthropy is a space, medium and vehicle through which people extend themselves to others in society. It also brings people together in their quest to advance common causes in human advancement.

In Africa for instance, the Africa Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT), championed by Africa's renown philanthropist Strive Masiyiwa, is targeting to support countries with resources to enable purchase and deployment of vaccines for up to 400 million people across the continent by 2022. This and much more will only be possible if all Philanthropists rose to the occasion to offer support.

Indeed this is why we are here to explore ways that can help us to build resilient health systems through goodwill and support of organizations like you.

I wish to assure you that the Government will relentlessly continue to providing a good environment for philanthropy to thrive, including through guaranteeing tax waivers for areas that merit.

We believe this is the best way through which we can effectively achieve the Government's broad health objective of ensuring that all Kenyans access quality and affordable healthcare without suffering financial setback . We are determined to reduce the country's disease burden and

spare our citizens from the heavy medical bills arising from hospital expenditure on diseases such as malaria, pneumonia, cancer and COVID-19.

Indeed, provision of quality healthcare is core in His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta's Big Four Agenda and the Kenya Vision 2030. The Government is determined to make the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) a policy priority in the country.

You may be aware that His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta in 2017 set the agenda on UHC for all Kenyans by 2022 to further accelerate existing efforts by the Ministry of Health to ensure that all Kenyans have access to affordable and quality essential health services.

In order to fulfil the UHC agenda, we focused on robust health systems strengthening of county facilities to ensure they were ready to offer services under the scheme. Having fully prepared ground for UHC insurance, the Government resolved to roll out the cover, which provides beneficiaries with essential health services including ailments such as mental health, dental, surgeries, cancer treatments, (radiotherapy and chemotherapy). The UHC Insurance cushions poor households from the high cost of accessing medical services and spares many families from the pain of borrowing, including seeking huge loans, to meet medical expenses.

The UHC journey continues to be implemented in phases, with the first phase that was rolled out for one year between December 2018-2019. During this period, there was a marked increase in hospital visits for the people in the targeted counties.

The Government is now engaged in a UHC scale up exercise with a health insurance cover for more than 5 million poor and vulnerable households; Ksh 6 billion has been disbursed to finance the UHC insurance programme for the 1 million households.

Since we have institutions that are big players in philanthropy in this room, I wish to call upon all of you to collaborate with us to shore up the strength of UHC. This will supplement national efforts in the UHC Agenda.

As you are aware, we are busy managing the COVID-19, which we have agreed is here to stay. But all of us will agree that our Government has made great efforts at mitigating the impact of Coronavirus, in a manner that has reduced deaths and hospital admissions.

We are currently engaged in aggressive COVID-19 vaccination, targeting to immunize 10 million Kenyans by the end of the year. Our efforts to do better on this scale were slowed down by inability to access vaccines in the international space, although the situation has since improved. We however see this as another opportunity where your forum can collaborate with us to scale up the vaccination process through acquisition of more vaccines and mounting of a robust advocacy strategy to beat existing hesitancy by some Kenyans.

I am therefore today welcoming you to work with Government in all spaces of Health to ensure that we achieve our aspirations both in meeting UHC, Vision 2030 and SGD Goals.

We are eager to discuss various modalities through which we can collaborate to ensure Kenyan people live health lives.

**Thank you and God bless**