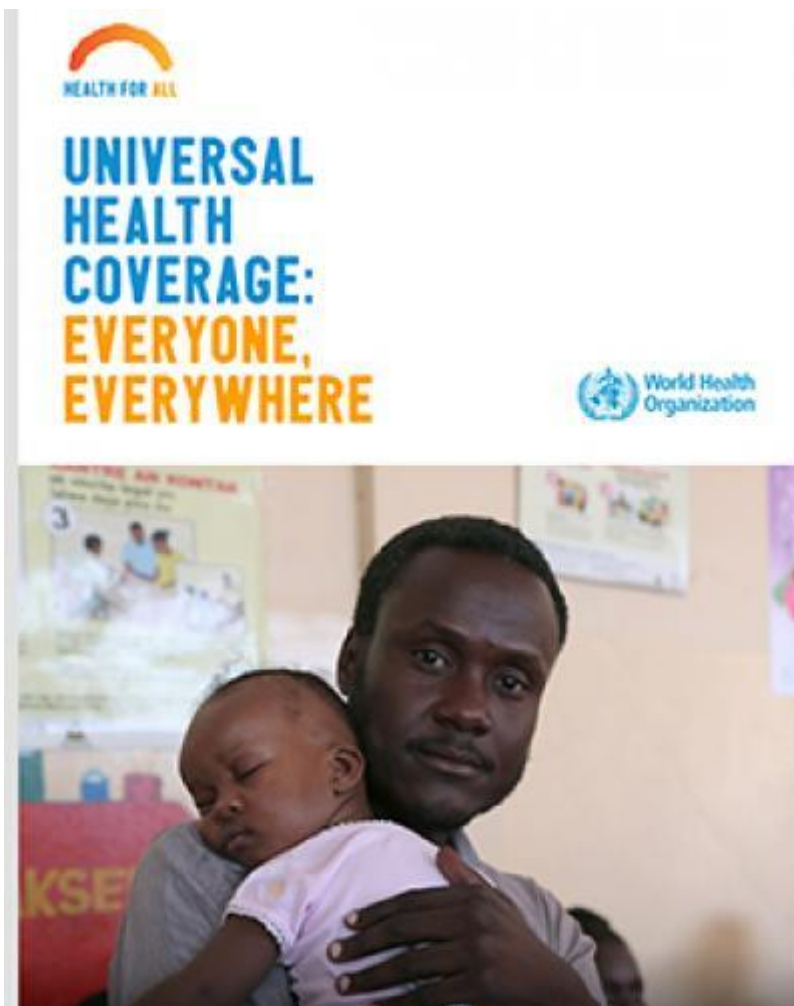


# *One in three people in the Americas faces obstacles to access health care*

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Washington, April 7 (RHC)-- The Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Carissa Etienne, and former president of Chile Michelle Bachelet called for collective actions to ensure that all people, everywhere have access to the health services they need.

In a ceremony on PAHO headquarters on Friday, on the eve World Health Day, Etienne noted that in the Americas region, one third of the population faces obstacles to accessing health.

"Health is a right, and as such we must overcome barriers to have access to care," added Etienne, stressing that out-of-pocket payment that many people must make to obtain health services "constitutes the main barrier and pushes families towards poverty."

Other barriers are geographic or institutional in nature, including stigma and discrimination in health services

Universal health, the theme of World Health Day 2018, implies that all people and communities have access, without discrimination, to quality health services without having to expose themselves to financial difficulties.

Under the slogan "Universal Health: Everyone, Everywhere," the campaign calls on representatives of governments,

academia and civil society to stimulate dialogue on policies that can help achieve health for all by 2030.

World Health Day is celebrated every April 7 by the World Health Organizations and other UN Agencies.

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