



# Universal Health Coverage is critical for a world without AIDS

Universal Health Coverage aims to ensure that all people receive essential health services without falling into poverty due to high health expenses. UHC should include the full range of health priorities and good quality health services including HIV prevention, treatment and care. It should be financed as much as possible through greater public financing for healthcare, including through social health insurance contributions, and general government revenues (tax financing).

## What we want

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is critical for achieving a world without AIDS and STIs. We want UHC that is equitable and rights-based, includes comprehensive and good quality HIV services and is meeting first and foremost the needs of people who experience exclusion such as children, LGBTQI people, people with diseases, people who use drugs, sex workers and young women and girls (affected by HIV).

As an example, currently Aidsfonds, together with country partners in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, is developing [country briefs](#). The briefs will outline the current state of implementation of UHC and self-care commitments, the opportunities and challenges for integrating self-care interventions into UHC plans and the advocacy landscape for our partners to influence the in-country UHC agenda and commitments at the next High Level Meeting on UHC in 2023.

## Aidsfonds' work on Universal Health Coverage

In our [international programmes](#), we equip local civil society partners, activists and communities in the countries we work in, to actively engage with the UHC agenda at country, regional and global level. This support includes: capacity-building on UHC advocacy, conducting research on the integration of HIV into UHC, and supporting community engagement in global and country-level debates on UHC.

[Read below](#)

[about Aidsfonds' self-care programmes for young people. Aidsfonds sees self-care as crucial step to achieve Universal Health Coverage.](#)

## Aidsfonds' Self-care Approach

Self-care enables young people to take power over their own health, by choosing products and HIV/SRHR (digital) services they want, whenever they want it, wherever they want it.

**Young people have the power and agency to make informed health choices and to advocate for:**



Availability of health products and information the way young people prefer



Accessibility of new self-care products, such as the vaginal ring for HIV prevention, and injectable PrEP



Improved quality of youth-friendly health services

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# Self-care as crucial step to achieve Universal Health Coverage

Self-care has the potential to increase people's autonomy and agency over their health. This is especially important for adolescent girls and young women, and adolescents and young people living with HIV, who often face challenges to access health services due to poverty, distance, lack of privacy and out of fear of stigma. Self-care interventions provide ways to access healthcare from the privacy of homes, using phones or through convenient delivery and distribution sources.

New commodities and solutions such as HIV self-testing, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), self-sampling for sexually transmitted diseases and digital health solutions, in combination with promoting and encouraging self-awareness of one's own health, can increase access to and reach of services.

## Aidsfonds' self-care programmes for young people

Aidsfonds has ample experience in increasing young people's autonomy and agency over their health, as well as improving self-care prevention and treatment services. All Aidsfonds' programmes are developed according to 'the youth approach', where youth partners are in the lead and capacitated to influence policies and implement quality interventions.

### Some recent ambitious self-care projects are:

✓ **Stepped Care** Model for sexual and reproductive health. This model connects young people to the off- and online services that directly meet their needs. When their needs change, the services change with them, optimizing efficiency and quality of healthcare and increasing health outcomes as a result;



✓ **YouthWise** which aims to amplify the voices of adolescents and young people living with HIV in Kenya and Malawi to enable them to practice self-care and fulfil their sexual and reproductive health and rights' needs, in a supportive and respectful environment;

✓ **The EmpoweRing** project advocates for accelerated approval and uptake of the Dapivirine vaginal ring as an HIV prevention tool for women and girls in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda;



✓ **You(th) Care** enables adolescents and youth aged 10-25 in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia, especially girls, to advocate for- and practice self-care for their SRHR needs and increases access to (digital) self-care services and commodities.



Apart from our programmes, Aidsfonds aims to advance the global self-care agenda, through the global coalition [Self-Care Trailblazer Group](#), by bringing in decades of expertise from both our own center in The Netherlands, [Soa Aids Nederland](#), and our country partners from around the world.

### Partner with us to increase access to self-care and UHC

Aidsfonds, in our role as fundraiser & funder, advocate and expert, is interested to partner to further increase the uptake of- and access to self-care (services) for adolescent girls and young women, and adolescents and young people living with HIV. We would like to talk to anyone who shares our dream and wants to join an inspiring movement. Get in touch with us to discuss collaboration, strategic partnerships and innovative solutions to end AIDS by 2030. Please contact [Lewis Smith](#), Partnerships Lead at Aidsfonds.