



Photo credit: Ayenew Haileselassie, Abt Associates | Frehiwot Abebe, Director General of EHIA (left) and Alemtsehay Elias, advisor to the Head of Addis Ababa Health Bureau, address the review meeting

Addis Ababa Reports High Re-enrollment Rate for CBHI Members

The Addis Ababa City Administration Health Bureau, Ethiopian Health Insurance Agency (EHIA)'s Addis Ababa branch office, and partners, including the USAID Health Financing Improvement Program (the Program) and Clinton Health Access Initiative, reviewed the city's performance in implementing community-based health insurance (CBHI) during the first six months of the current Ethiopian fiscal year which spans July 8, 2020, to July 7, 2021. The meeting, organized with technical support from the Program, was held in Adama on April 2, 2021.

Addis Ababa piloted CBHI in one woreda in each of its 10 sub-cities in 2018. The following year, 30 woredas were added. By 2020, all 120 woredas in the city were implementing CBHI through the 10 sub-city schemes, enabling 761,000 residents to access health care services using their insurance coverage.

According to the performance report presented at the meeting, by the end of the six-month period:

- 76.6% of the households enrolled in CBHI the year prior renewed their CBHI membership and 80,834 new households enrolled.
- 226,098 households were enrolled in CBHI. This represents 87.4% of the total eligible households in Addis Ababa (258,744 households). All households headed by small-scale traders or others with no formal employment are eligible for membership.

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- Of the total households enrolled in CBHI, 73,221 had their annual CBHI membership contributions fully subsidized by the city administration. These households were experiencing a high level of poverty and could not pay for their contributions. The subsidy ensures that they, too, have CBHI coverage. In Addis Ababa, these households account for 32.4% of all enrolled households – the national average is 20%. During the meeting, Frehiwot Abebe, EHIA Director General, said that Addis Ababa's practice of including such a large proportion is a good practice that other regions and city administrations can follow.

The Addis Ababa Health Bureau and Addis Ababa EHIA branch office involved hundreds of community leaders, women from women's development groups, and idir (community self-help association) leaders in reaching people at the household level and encouraging them to join CBHI or renew their membership.

Information about CBHI and how to enroll was also made available to communities through radio, pamphlets, banners, and loudspeaker announcements in neighborhoods.

Addis Ababa CBHI schemes started this year with 46.5 million Birr (\$1.06 million) in the bank. However, they used most of it to reimburse health facilities and Kenema Pharmacy (a chain of drug stores under the city administration) for services and medications provided to CBHI beneficiaries last year. Some schemes used all of the funds in their bank accounts plus CBHI contributions mobilized this year to settle these debts. This year, 61.5 million Birr in CBHI contributions were collected. Nevertheless, the financial constraints faced by some schemes after paying last year's arrears led to discussions about increasing the annual CBHI contribution, which is currently 350 Birr (\$8) per household. The city's CBHI board will decide whether to increase it.

In her closing remarks, Frehiwot commended the city's leadership for their high level of commitment to CBHI, which was demonstrated by their deployment of staff to each sub-city to manage CBHI activities.

Alemtsehay Elias, Advisor to Head of the Addis Ababa Health Bureau, also commended leadership at all levels of the city structure for their commitment to CBHI, which enabled the reported achievements to be realized.

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