



Republic of the Gambia
Ministry of Health
The Quadrangle
Banjul

SEVENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, GAMBIA

Geneva, 2026

Agenda Item A	Social participation for universal health coverage, health and well-being (resolution WHA77.2 (2024))
Document	Documents A79/26 and A79/26 Add.1
Time limit	2mn
Requested action	Take note of the report
Commission	B

Honourable
Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Chair,

The Republic of The Gambia believes that social participation is fundamental to building inclusive, people-centred, and accountable health systems. It ensures that policies and programmes are responsive to the needs of communities, particularly women, children, and vulnerable populations.

In The Gambia, we have made deliberate efforts to institutionalize community engagement as part of our health system strengthening agenda. Through community health structures, local governance platforms, and stakeholder consultations, we are enhancing citizen voice, improving service delivery, and strengthening accountability.

We recognize that meaningful social participation goes beyond consultation. It requires structured mechanisms that empower communities to actively contribute to decision-making, planning, and monitoring of health services.

However, challenges remain. We request WHO to help address the limited capacity at the community level, fragmented engagement platforms, and resource constraints. Addressing these gaps is critical to ensuring that no one is left behind.

We call on WHO to mobilize the international community to support institutional frameworks to embed social participation, health literacy, financing, partnership, and country-led efforts to advance social participation as a core pillar of Universal Health Coverage.

The Gambia remains committed to building a health system that is not only accessible and resilient, but also responsive to the voices and needs of its people.

I thank you.