

Interim findings

Maternity fee waiver in Kenya

The research project 'Comparing the impact and cost-effectiveness of two social protection interventions in Kenya: fee waiver versus social health insurance scheme' analyses the cost- effectiveness of the government's Free Maternal Care and Free Primary Care (FMC-FPC) programme and the Tanykina Community Healthcare Plan (TCHP), which offers affordable insurance for dairy farmers in the informal sector. The objective is to establish and compare the effectiveness of these programmes in achieving health outcomes (i.e. geo-social targeting of the poor, quality of care, utilization rates and out-of-pocket expenditure by households). The following are the interim findings and policy messages.

Interim findings:

- There is duplication and overlap between the FMC-FPC, TCHP and other healthcare programmes. These programmes interfere with each other, which has implications for their implementation and operation and ultimately affects their outcomes and impact. For example:
 - The FPC was introduced approximately two years after the introduction of the TCHP. Because the FPC provides free primary healthcare, people in the TCHP catchment area are less interested in paying for insurance, as part of what the insurance package offers is already available at no cost.
 - There is an overlap in the provision of maternal health care. The government offers FMC in all public facilities and the TCHP provides maternity services in its insurance package. The National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) also offers a maternal health care package. The contextual factors are still changing; for instance, there are plans to channel FMC through the NHIF by July 2016, however, the NHIF is already offering an out-patient package as part of the benefit package.

Policy messages:

- **The effects of possible interference with existing programmes should be well thought through before introducing new programmes:** Policy actors and stakeholders in the health sector should obtain a complete overview of stakeholders and programmes in the country or area in which they wish to operate and conduct an analysis of the effect that their intervention will have on the various stakeholders (healthcare patients, health staff working in the area, managers, donors). Through this analysis they can anticipate what implications the new intervention will have and how they can develop and introduce new interventions without harming the implementation and sustainability of existing ones.
- **Studying the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of two social health protection programmes requires a full understanding of the context by the actors.** The communication and implementation of new policy can often differ from what was intended by the policy. Consequently, the stages of implementation may differ in different locations. For example, one county may receive funds for FMC-FPC under the Free Health Policy, while another may receive nothing or just part of the funds. This results in a complex context that must be taken into account when comparing programmes.

Knowledge products:

- 'Social health programmes and transmission pathways to inclusive growth', presentation by Thu Vu and Chris Elbers, April 2016
- 'Home or hospital? Factors influencing the decision for home-based or facility-based delivery after implementation of two social protection programmes for maternal health in Nandi County, Kenya', AIGHD presentation by Elise Wub and Chris Elbers
- 'The scarcity of reliable and routine health data is harming us', web page post by Djesika Amendah, 28 April 2016, available at: <http://aphrc.org/the-scarcity-of-reliable-and-routine-health-data-is-harming-us/>
- 'Assessing the Impact and cost-effectiveness of Kenya's Free Healthcare Programmes and the Community Health Plan in Nandi County', Research Brief No. 1, September 2015, Available at: http://aphrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Wotro_2-pager.pdf
- 'Cost-effectiveness of free healthcare versus private health insurance in Kenya', Research project update, 18 January 2016, Available at: <http://aphrc.org/research-update-cost-effectiveness-of-free-healthcare-versus-private-health-insurance-in-kenya/>

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