

PAYING FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

The need to pool financial resources

All countries have agreed to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) by 2030, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Many low- and middle-income countries therefore need to strengthen their health systems. This calls for substantial and sustained financial resources, and political commitment at national and international level.

NOW PROBLEMS OF FRAGMENTATION & INEQUITY IN HEALTH SERVICES

No country will achieve UHC without investing public money in the health system as a whole. 'Scattered initiatives, and problems related to donor assistance for health - like volatility, fungibility, and distortion of priorities - are not bringing us closer to universal and equitable access to health services.



citizen

I don't think it's worth walking 20 miles to the health post for professional help if I don't even know whether someone is there to help, whether there are medicines, or what the costs are?



health worker

As a doctor I want to serve my people, but there are no jobs for me in the public health system. Maybe I should work for a project, a private business, or go abroad?



government official

Most of my time is spent managing funds that fill gaps in our health budget or finance other health programs. We need a proper budget to achieve UHC!

WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN?

A POOL FOR A PLAN

We must pool funds from domestic resources, like taxes and insurance payments, for risk sharing, cross-subsidization and to strengthen the foundations of the health system, like its workforce. It should all be part of one realistic plan, tailored to each country's checks & balances.

For many low-income countries, available domestic revenue will not be sufficient for UHC in the near future. The international community should act by adding resources to the pool and address issues in international trade, finance and taxation that limit countries' fiscal space.

