Global Advocacy Movement for Universal Health Coverage

National Conference on Universal Health Coverage
Delhi, 12\textsuperscript{th} April 2012

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WHO's Formal Definition of Universal Coverage

World Health Assembly Resolution 58.33, 2005, urged countries to develop health financing systems to:

- Ensure all people have access to needed services
- Without the risk of financial ruin linked to paying at the time they receive care.

Defined this as achieving universal coverage: coverage with health services; with financial risk protection; for all
Global History of UHC

- Most High Income Countries achieved UHC 30-100 years ago – exception of US
- Post independence many developing countries had UHC aspirations but lacked sufficient public funding
- Donor policies of 1980s inhibited UHC
- With notable exceptions (China, Sri Lanka, Kerala, Cuba) UHC restricted to richer countries in 20th Century
A Classic Health Coverage Scenario in a Low or Middle Income Country

- **Poorest quintile**
  - Targeted and covered using tax and aid financing

- **Wealthiest quintile**
  - Covered by social or private insurance, less concerned about paying out-of-pocket

- **The uncovered middle**, mostly in the informal sector - forced to pay out-of-pocket and at constant risk of financial hardship. Jealous of those above and resentful of those below.
An Incremental Strategy Based on Scaling up Voluntary Insurance and Broadening Targeting Criteria

- More groups in the formal and informal sector encouraged to join social and voluntary insurance schemes
- Sizeable population group still uncovered
- Targeted safety net widened to cover more vulnerable groups
Rapid Scale Up Towards UHC Using Public (Mostly Tax) Funding to Cover the Untargeted Informal Sector

Social health insurance contributions collected from those in formal employment

Shift to universal entitlement to publicly funded services using predominantly tax financing

More efficient and equitable if these risk pools can be merged
MICs are leading the global campaign for UHC

- **Brazil** – Unified Health System since 1988
- **Thailand** – UC since 2002
- **Mexico** – Has just achieved UHC
- **China** – Now reporting 96% coverage
- **Indonesia** – Committed to UHC by 2014
- **South Africa** – Just started piloting UHC reforms
- **All** are mostly using tax financing to scale-up to UHC
Recent Developments

- World Health Report 2010
- Global Health Research Symposium 2010
- World Health Assembly 2011, WHA 64.9
- PMAC 2012, Bangkok statement: 
  http://www.pmaconference.mahidol.ac.th/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=524&Itemid=159
- Mexico UHC Conference April 2012
- Watch this: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0mvqipWO-g&feature=youtu.be&a
The World Health Report 2010

www.who.int/w HR/2010
Why UHC Advocacy is gaining momentum

• UHC is relatively easy to understand
• Compatible with human rights agenda
• UHC is an attainable goal – especially as countries make transition to MIC status
• UHC is popular and inherently political
• UHC brings politics into health systems agenda – people receiving services
• Opportunity to celebrate national successes (perhaps at the expense of others failures)
Successful UHC Advocacy

- Address the political economy of health care
- The UHC box represents the different dimensions of politics, economics and service delivery / medicine
- Different stakeholders have different priorities and concerns
- Tailor messages to different audiences eg politicians more interested in political benefits (ie votes!) and MoF wants to see better efficiency
- Need to build alliances and expect and deal with opposition
The Three Dimensions (policy choices) of Universal Coverage

Towards universal coverage

- **Financial protection**: what do people have to pay out-of-pocket?
- **Services**: which services are covered?
- **Population**: who is covered?
- **Coverage mechanisms**
- **Extend to non-covered**
- **Reduce cost sharing and fees**
- **Include other services**
The Most Successful UHC Advocacy Campaign of All Time?

- Watch this: [http://liberalconspiracy.org/2011/10/11/watch-how-life-was-before-the-nhs/](http://liberalconspiracy.org/2011/10/11/watch-how-life-was-before-the-nhs/)