

## EXPLORING PATHWAYS FOR UNIVERSAL COVERAGE IN COTE D'IVOIRE

Recent conferences and organizations have set universal health coverage as a goal to reach for health systems.

In many countries where there exists a weak social security net, there is a need to conduct a reform of the entire health system. Designing a universal health insurance scheme can be difficult in a heavily indebted country in a post-conflict context. In Cote d'Ivoire, a recent attempt of the government to provide for health care for all the population has resulted in a high debt. Some questions can be raised: Can Cote d'Ivoire afford a public health insurance scheme in the next three years? Is it possible for the government to ensure care for all people who cannot afford to pay a contribution? Which option will be more equitable?

The aim of this paper is to explore possible pathways to universal coverage in Cote d'Ivoire.

Using simulation technique, two main scenarios, one with lump-sum contribution and another with a mixed contribution scheme, are tested and compared in the SIMINS software on the basis of equity and financial sustainability criteria.

A large range of macrodata on economic

performances, health care utilization, costs and population dynamics are used.

Preliminary results suggest that unless the government progressively complies with the Abuja Declaration, it will not be possible to introduce such a scheme without increasing public debt. In addition, the country could wait for two more years before introducing the scheme to run a completely sustainable scheme from the first year of launch. Besides, all the poor can receive health care without paying for it. Formal sector pensioners need to receive special attention because their total out-of-pocket spending could be very high. Finally, using a lump sum contribution doesn't appear to be the best option.