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Supporting Policy Engagement for Evidence-based Decisions (SPEED) for Universal Health Coverage in Uganda

Overview of Progress

SPHIP Meeting

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Supporting Policy Engagement for Evidence-based Decisions (SPEED) for UHC in Uganda

What problem is SPEED Addressing?

1. Limited capacity for policy analysis advice and influence at MakSPH
 - Capacity for policy analysis at MakSPH and partner organizations is a major challenge;
 - Few experts specialized in policy analysis and advising, low capacity for schools of public health to guide national policy decisions about health
2. Incoherence in policies to guide UHC attainment due to pluralistic and less coordinated stakeholder programmes.
 - Convene policy engagements to improve policy coherence for UHC;
 - Generate policy-analyses as basis for advise and influence of Govt decisions;
 - Expand awareness of roles and obligations of stakeholders for UHC realization.



SPEED Project

Objectives:

1. To engage and influence policy makers with contextually adapted evidence for health policy and systems changes to advance UHC.
2. To support policymakers to monitor the implementation of vital programs for the realization of policy goals for UHC.
3. To enhance the expertise, knowledge and resources for policy analysis and advice and influence at MakSPH and partner institutions





The SPEED Approach

1. Convening and engaging stakeholders from different sectors
 - To understand the problems and identify solutions.
 - Processes are supported with evidence production and packaging by MakSPH and its partners
2. Designing and conducting a policy implementation barometer (PIB)
 - To provide feedback to the policymakers and other stakeholders on how the policies are being implemented and their performance.
3. Designing and conducting courses, trainings and mentorship to address the capacity needs of MakSPH faculty and students
 - To enable them provide the necessary policy advice, support and influence for decision making



Objective 1: Major activities

- Situational analysis for UHC in Uganda
 - 2 symposia
 - Prepare edited book with contributions from experts on the health systems
- Organise platforms for purpose oriented dialogue and understanding of Universal Health Coverage.
- Establish purpose-driven coalitions to address high-level policy outcomes that demand institutionalized advocacy.
 - Malaria, Health financing, policy implementation monitoring and UHC book.
- Establish a dynamic communication and visibility strategy
 - Preparation of policy papers and briefs and Media engagements

Major activities under Objective 2

- Establish a Policy Implementation

- Barometer survey

- 2 Survey rounds.
- Policy briefs to address bottlenecks.
- Stakeholder engagement implementation

- Health systems management

- Sponsor operational/implementation by Fellows.

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STUDY PROTOCOL

Analysis of selected policies towards universal health coverage in Uganda: the policy implementation barometer protocol

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Major activities under Objective 3

1. Institutional capacity assessment.
2. Generation of high quality scientific products
3. Mentorship visits by experts
4. Organise seminars
5. Website management for information sharing
6. Enhanced resources and capacity at MakSPH and partners institutions



Key outcomes-Alignment of SPEED and UHC policy agendas

- SPEED is increasingly demanded to provide policy advice to national and international UHC policy developments based on its research evidence and track record.
 - >50 in-country & 15 international engagements annually
 - ~40 requests and responses to UHC per year.
 - Memberships to 13 TWGs and Boards e.g SMEAR, HRH, Malaria, FP.
 - Adoption of SPEED team to National Taskforces e.g RBF and UHC Multisectoral Taskforce.
 - Presentations to MOH Top Management and Key Note Addresses at national and international policy meetings.
 - International Partnerships and Engagements-UHC2030,Lancet Commissions, WHO Afro Governance, UHC Mission in Kenya.
- Thus
 - Its research agenda has been relevant to the sector challenges
 - Mechanisms established to facilitate uptake of such evidence in policy and practice are working.



Key outcomes-Alignment of SPEED and UHC policy agendas

- Through multi-stakeholder engagement and dialogue;
 - Relationships between MoH and SPEED strengthened to improve policy and practice.
 - SPEED has been established as a first point of reference for evidence for UHC policy development.
 - MoH been able to adapt and scale up tools and innovations that solve contextual health challenges based on evidence.
 - Increased stakeholder participation in planning, implementation, monitoring and review of health policies.

Policy Development Road Map for UHC in Uganda

Deliberative engagements to frame the problems and feasible solutions for Universal Health Coverage across stakeholders and Govt sectors

- Health concern dominate national elections 2015 - 2016
- National Planning Authority and SPEED Project Starting work on UHC paper for PEC;
- Vision 2040 – Human Capital
- 2nd National Development Plan
- Health Sector Development Plan

2015- 2016

Presidential Economic Council (PEC) asks for policy paper on improving health

Think-tank meetings and evidence development

- 2015: SPEED Seminars on UHC;
- 2015 Symposium on UHC in 2015;
- 2016: Stakeholders consultation across sectors;
- Draft National Health Insurance Bill;
- Population control and dividend;
- Policy paper on UHC across Govt.;
- Costing of UHC programmes by 2040

UHC book launched – advise;
June 2018: Validation meeting across stakeholders;
Inter-ministerial Committee on UHC
Aug 2018: Presenting the policy paper to Presidential Policy Commission;
Cabinet decision on policy options.

Next Steps



Key Success factors

1. Strategic partnership that leverages mandates and expertise of respective organisations.
2. Embedding SPEED activities within existing organisational work.
3. Membership into MOH technical committees and bodies.
4. Adoption of Advisory board with individuals in strategic positions creates entry in respective organisations.
5. Applied approaches to capacity building-“learn by doing” approaches.
6. Aligning SPEED Agenda to national and sector development aspirations.

3.1.1 HSDP Goal

The HSDP goal is *'To accelerate movement towards Universal Health Coverage with essential health and related services needed for promotion of a healthy and productive life'*.

UHC makes it possible to ensure that *all people receive essential and good quality health services they need without suffering financial hardship.*



Challenges

- **Planning & implementation**
 - Addressing Planned vs emergent issues
 - Sustaining synergies between work streams.
- **Capacity needs**
 - Timely response to requests.
 - Ability to adequately respond to growing needs for policy advice
 - Quality assurance vs urgent evidence needs
- **Managing expectations**
 - Making project deliverables vs capacity development objectives.
 - Managing ambitious agenda at the Project start



Lessons learnt

1. SPEED approach validated
2. Expectations from target group are increasing and need to be managed
3. Leveraging synergies in project components leads to efficiencies
4. Setting realistic targets especially during the initial project phases is paramount
5. Investing in capacity development is an ongoing need:
 1. Capacity needs overt; over assumed capacity.
6. Becoming integral to policy making structures enhances trust and policy influence opportunities.

- The European Union
- SPEED Partnership Members.
- Supporting Public Health Institutes Program (SPHIP)
- MOH and other target organisations in Uganda.





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