

Financing research theme | Kenya, India, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Vietnam

Title	Investigating the purchasing arrangements for health care financing systems in low and middle-income countries
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Background

The issues of health care financing and universal health coverage (UHC) are currently at the centre of global policy debate. A core function of health care financing is purchasing – the process by which funds are allocated to providers to obtain health services on behalf of a population. If designed and undertaken strategically, purchasing can improve health systems performance by promoting quality, efficiency, equity and responsiveness of health service provision and, in doing so, facilitate progress towards UHC. Despite the important role of purchasing in health systems performance, there is limited empirical work on purchasing agreements in low and middle-income countries.

Purpose of the research

This research project aims to critically assess the performance of health care purchasers in a range of low and middle-income countries and identify factors influencing that performance. The countries included in the study are: Kenya, India, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand and Vietnam. The research will examine the relationships between different actors so as to understand the various components of strategic purchasing and the organisational environment within which it operates. Findings from this study will contribute to current international debates on UHC and how to promote effective purchasing arrangements.

Study methods

The research uses a case study approach. The purchasing arrangements/mechanisms in a range of countries are the 'case' in this study and the organizational relationships which relate to a purchaser are the units of analysis. Each country study team has selected between one and three existing purchasing mechanisms for the country study.

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