



## **Leave no one behind;** Political benefits of investing in Universal Health Coverage

### **Introduction:**

Well designed and financed Universal Health Coverage is a vote-winning strategy. UHC means that all individuals and communities receive the health services they need without suffering financial hardship. It enables everyone to access the services that address the most important causes of disease and death and ensures that the quality of those services is good enough to improve the health of the people who receive them. This brief is intended to Politician and interested parties to inform them on political benefits from investing in UHC. When people have to pay most of the cost for health services out of their own pockets, the poor are often unable to obtain many of the services they need, and even the rich may be exposed to financial hardship in the event of severe or long-term illness.

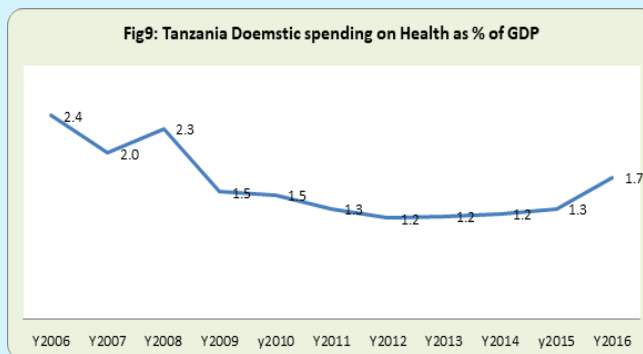
### **Why Universal Health Access?:**

UHC is firmly based on the WHO constitution of 1948 declaring health a fundamental human right and on the Health for All agenda set by the Alma Ata declaration in 1978. UHC cuts across all of the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and brings the hope of better health and protection for the Tanzania's poorest. Our analysis ( Refer to main report) shows that investing in UHC will impact SDG1 povety,SD3 Equitable health outcomes, SDG 4 Quality education, SDG 5 Gender equity and SDG 8 Inclusive economic growth. Directly, it will achieve SDG 3.8.1 and 3.8.2.

- SDG target 3.8: Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.
  - SDG indicator 3.8.1: Coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health; infectious diseases; non-communicable diseases; and service capacity and access; among the general and the most disadvantaged population).
  - SDG indicator 3.8.2: Proportion of population with large household expenditures on health as a share of total household expenditure or income

## % of GDP allocated to health:

In the last ten years, the percentage of GDP allocated to health was highest in 2006 (2.4%) and declined steadily, lowest in 2013 and 2014 (1.2%) before it started to raise to 1.7% in year 2016. Global reconsiderations to achieve UHC is 4-5% of GDP allocated to health. This means that Tanzania is allocating less than half of what is commended.



Source: <http://apps.who.int/nha/database/Select/Indicators/en>

## Political benefits:

A well designed and financed UHC is a vote-winning strategy. Every beneficiary will remember times of illness and appreciate how the Government took care of him/her. UHC reforms can be extremely popular with the public; politicians leading these processes have often seen their popularity increase as a result. UHC reforms are particularly popular with politicians because they can deliver “quick-wins,” benefitting the entire population practically in a relatively short period. Examples of governments who have used UHC reforms and become national heroes in the process include, Japan, Thailand, and Indonesia. President Kenyatta in Kenya has also recently chosen UHC reforms as one of his “big four” priorities as part of his desired political legacy.

In 2006 **President Hu Jintao** presided a high-level workshop and committed to a health care reform by stressing a goal that the Reform is for everyone to enjoy basic health services<sup>1</sup>. As a result China Universal Health Coverage reaches 1.3 Billion<sup>2</sup> in 2011 representing the largest expansion of health insurance in human history. A systematic political and economic study by Hao Yu published by RAND Corporation, USA under Health Reform Monitor documents major reasons why China was able to make such a history. *The overarching reasons are;*

- Renewed political commitment from top leaders,
- heavy Government subsidy,
- Financial and political responsibilities delegated to local government.

**Conclusion:** A well designed Universal Health Coverage is a vote winning strategy

## Recommendations:

- We recommend renewing of highest political commitment on UHC
- We recommend creation of Government financial pool to heavily subsidize health insurance



“Every Life of Mother and Child Counts”

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