Questing for Sustainable Fiscal Space of UHC in Thailand
Theepakorn Jithitikulchai

Background

- Thailand is a champion of the UHC
- However, there are challenges for equity, sustainability, and sufficiency
- Aging society is a major concern
- National health financing goals: Sustainability, Adequacy, Fairness, and Efficiency (SAFE)

SAFE Indicator and Target (as of 2022)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability</th>
<th>Theepakorn Jithitikulchai</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Total Health Expenditure (THE) ≤ 5% of GDP</td>
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<td>2. General Government Health Expenditure (GGHE) ≤ 20% of General Government Expenditure (GGE)</td>
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<td>3. THE ≥ 4.6% of GDP</td>
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<td>4. GGHE ≥ 17% of GGE</td>
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<td>5. Non-government Health Expenditure ≤ 20% of THE</td>
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Objectives

- To estimate fiscal space for the Universal Coverage (UC) Scheme based on population projection, epidemiological trends, and macroeconomic context
- To consider revenue impacts from an increase in health sector-specific resources, e.g., through sugar and tobacco taxation, etc.

Methods

- Use the National Health Account (NHA) as the framework for financial modeling to evaluate the SAFE goals
- Consider the extent of population coverage by UHC, the health risk profile of the population and their utilization rates, costs of inputs, nature and extent of benefits provided, and how the health system is organized and financed
- Apply both econometric time series analysis and actuarial projections
- Use microdata extensively, e.g., DRG relative weight from inpatient clinical data, cost structure from hospital-level data, Health and Welfare Surveys, Household Socioeconomic Surveys, and ICD-10 prevalence by age group and gender
- More technical details from this link or

Results

- THE as % GDP is projected to 5.5% in 2030 and 7% in 2040
- GGHE as % of GGE is quite worrisome, as it could reach 24% in 2030 and 30% in 2040, given current trends
- Non-governmental THE as % of THE reaches 27% in 2030 and 30% in 2040 but its main driver is the private health insurance
- Using "THE ≤ 5% of GDP" as a benchmark, the additional budget required for UC are 1.1.5 and 6-9 billion THB (in nominal) in 2030 and 2040
- There are possibilities for mobilization of revenues to expand and sustain health financing for UHC

Lessons Learned

- Sufficiency and sustainability are challenges for the fiscal space of UHC
- We can finance the UHC with an increase in health sector-specific resources on the road to an equitable, sustainable, and affordable healthcare system for all people

Acknowledgements

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