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Financing health care in Sub-Saharan Africa through user fees and insurance.

Author: Shaw RP; Griffin CC

Source: Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1995. vii, 99 p. (Directions in Development)

Abstract: This book was written as part of a broad search for ways to improve the effectiveness of World Bank support for health in Africa. In this volume, ideas are presented to stimulate a more informed discussion, offer new perspectives, and challenge some widely held assumptions about cost recovery. A rethinking of user fee policies is emphasized because this may lead to appropriate ways to improve quality and equity in the delivery of health care. There is, in fact, growing evidence that well-designed user fees and self-financing insurance schemes offer new opportunities to develop better health care systems in Africa south of the Sahara. The introduction to this book provides an overview on mechanisms for 1) mobilizing resources, 2) setting prices and anticipating effects, 3) implementation and future performance, and 4) partnerships in cost-sharing. The book is then divided into 2 sections. Section 1 covers user fees and discusses 1) their goals (mobilizing resources, promoting efficiency, fostering equity, reinforcing decentralization and sustainability, and stimulating private sector development), 2) the ability and willingness of users to pay fees, 3) the tradeoff between price and quality, 4) exemption policies, and 5) their administration and collection. The following recommendations are then made about user fees: 1) an explicit policy on user fees should be formulated; 2) the targeting of subsidies should be reconsidered; 3) the efficient management of facilities should be emphasized; 4) facilities should be permitted to retain a portion of the fees collected; 5) communities should have a voice on the boards of local health

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recommendations which arise from this discussion are 1) to focus initially on cities, 2) to tap the formal sector, 3) to implement user fees as a prerequisite, 4) to stress catastrophic care, 5) to pay attention to the "uninsurables," 6) to explore alternatives such as prepayment schemes, 7) to maintain consumer choice, and 8) to build an information base for policy analysis.

Language: [English](#)

Year: [1995](#)

Region / Country: [Africa](#)

Keywords: [Health Services](#) | [Fees](#) | [Health Insurance](#) | [Developing Countries](#) | [Delivery of Health Care](#) | [Health](#) | [Financial Activities](#) | [Economic Factors](#)

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