



Issues in equitable health financing in South Eastern Nigeria: Socio-economic and geographic differences in households' illness expenditures and policy makers' views on the financial protection of the poor

Obinna Onwujekwe ✉, Chima Onoka, Benjamin Uzochukwu, Eric Obikeze, Nkoli Ezumah

First published: 28 January 2009

<https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.1547>

Citations: 1

Abstract

This study examined the socio-economic and geographic differences in illness occurrence and levels of expenditures in South Eastern Nigeria, together with policymaker and healthcare provider views on how to alleviate the financial burdens placed on the poorest by existing payment mechanisms. We found no evidence of differences across socio-economic group in illness occurrence but there was inequity in expenditures, payment mechanisms used and sources of funds to cope with the burden of payments. Policymakers and facility managers were found to assume that households have the capacity to cope with healthcare payments and there is no functioning system of fee exemptions. Policies are needed to protect the poor and other vulnerable groups against the financial risk of ill-health. Copyright © 2009 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

REFERENCES

Asenso-Okyere WK, Anum A, Osei-Akoto I, Adukonu A. 1998. Cost recovery in Ghana: are there any changes in health care seeking behaviour? *Health Policy & Planning* 13: 181–188.

[CAS](#) | [PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Bate A, Witter S. 2003. Coping with community health financing: illness costs and their implications for poor households' abilities to pay for health care and children's access to health services. Save the Children, London.

[Google Scholar](#)

Bennett S, Gilson L. 2001. Health Financing: Designing and Implementing Pro-Poor Policies. DFID Health Systems Resource Centre. http://www.dfidhealthrc.org/publications/health_sector_financing

[Google Scholar](#)

Bitran R, Giedion U. 2002. *Waivers and Exemptions for Health Services in Developing Countries*. The World Bank: Washington, D.C.

[Google Scholar](#)

Breman JG, Alilio MS, Mills A. 2004. Conquering the Intolerable Burden of Malaria: What's New, What's Needed: a Summary. *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 71 (Suppl. 2): 1-15.

[PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Brieger WR. 2003. The Role of Patent Medicine Vendors in the Management of Sick Children in the African Region. Basics Support for Instituting Child Survival 11 (BASICS 11) Arlington, VA.

[Google Scholar](#)

Castro-Leal F, Dayton J, Demery L, Mehtra K. 2000. Public spending on health care in Africa: do the poor benefit? *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 78(1): 66-74.

[CAS](#) | [PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Creese AL. 1991. User charges for health care: a review of recent experience. *Health Policy and Planning* 6(4): 309-319.

[CAS](#) | [PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Federal Office of Statistics. 2001. *Poverty Profile in Nigeria: 1980-1996*. Federal Office of Statistics Abuja: Nigeria.

[Google Scholar](#)

Federal Office of Statistics. 2004. *National Living Standard Survey (NLSS) 2003/2004*. Federal Office of Statistics: Abuja, Nigeria.

[Google Scholar](#)

Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette. 2007. *Legal Notice on Publication of the Details of the Breakdown of the National and State Provisional Totals 2006 Census*, Vol. 94, No 24. The Federal Government Printer: Lagos Nigeria.

[Google Scholar](#)

Filmer D. 2005. Fever and its treatment among the more and less poor in sub-Saharan Africa. *Health Policy Plan* 20(6): 337-346.

[PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Filmer D, Pritchett LH. 2001. Estimating wealth effects without expenditure data or tears: an application to educational enrollments in states of India. *Demography* 38: 115–132.

[CAS](#) | [PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

FMOH. 2006. *National Health Financing Policy*. Federal Ministry of Health: Abuja, Nigeria.

[Google Scholar](#)

Garshong B, Ansah E, Dakpallah G, Huijts I, Adjei S. 2002. A study on factors affecting the implementation of the exemption policy in Ghana. *Bulletin of Health Information* 1: 22–31.

[Google Scholar](#)

Gwatkin D. 2001. Poverty and inequalities in health within developing countries: filling the information gap. In *Poverty and Inequality in Health: an International Perspective*. D Leon, G Walt (eds). Oxford University Press: London; 217–246.

[Google Scholar](#)

Gwatkin D. 2004. *Are Free Government Health Services the Best Way to Reach the Poor? Health, Nutrition and Population*. Discussion Paper. The World Bank: Washington, D.C.

[Google Scholar](#)

Gwatkin D, Bhuiya, A, Victora C. 2004. Making health systems more equitable. *Lancet* 364: 1273–1280.

[PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Haddad S, Fournier P, Machouf N. 1998. What does quality mean to lay people? A community perceptions of primary health care services in Guinea. *Social Science & Medicine* 47: 381–394.

[CAS](#) | [PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Makinen M, Waters H, Rauch M, Almagambetova N, Bitran R, Gilson L, McIntyre D, Pannarunothai S, Prieto AL, Ubilla G, Ram S. 2000. Inequalities in health care use and expenditure: empirical data from eight developing countries and countries in transition. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 78(1): 55–65.

[CAS](#) | [PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

McIntyre D, Gilson L, Mutymbizi V. 2005. Promoting Equitable Health Care Financing in the African Context: Current Challenges and Future Prospects. Regional Network for Equity in Health in Southern Africa (Equinet), discussion paper number 27.

[Google Scholar](#)

McIntyre D, Thiede M, Dahlgren G, Whitehead M. 2006. What are the economic consequences for household of illness and of paying for health care in low- and middle-income country contexts? *Social Science & Medicine* 62: 858–865.

[PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Onwujekwe O. 2005. Inequities in healthcare seeking in the treatment of communicable endemic diseases in Southeast Nigeria. *Social Science & Medicine* 61(2): 455–463.

[PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Onwujekwe O, Chima R, Shu E, Nwagbo DFE, Akpala C, Okonkwo P. 2002. Altruistic willingness to pay in community-based sales of insecticide-treated nets exists in Nigeria. *Social Science & Medicine* 54(4): 519–527.

[PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Ranson MK, Sinha T, Chatterjee M, Acharya A, Bhavsar A, Morris SS, Mills AJ. 2006. Making health insurance work for the poor: learning from the Self-Employed Women's Association's (SEWA) community-based health insurance scheme in India. *Social Science & Medicine* 62: 707–720.

[PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

SMOH. 2003. *State Health Policy*. Enugu State Ministry of Health: Enugu.

[Google Scholar](#)

STATA Corporation. 1998. *STATA Version 6.0: STATA Statistical Software*. STATA Corporation: College Station, Texas.

[Google Scholar](#)

Soyibo A. 2004. *National Health Accounts of Nigeria, 1998–2002*. University of Ibadan: Ibadan.

[Google Scholar](#)

Tibaijuka AK. 1997. AIDS and economic welfare in peasant agriculture: case studies from Kagabiro Village, Kagera Region, Tanzania. *World Development* 25(6): 963–975.

[Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Uzochukwu BSC, Onwujekwe OE. 2004. Socio-economic differences and health seeking behaviour for the diagnosis and treatment of malaria: a case study of four local government areas operating the Bamako initiative programme in south-east Nigeria. *International Journal of Equity in Health* 3: 6.

[PubMed](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Wagstaff A, Van Doorslaer E, Paci P. 1989. Equity in the finance and delivery of health care: some tentative cross-country comparisons. *Oxford Review of Economics* 5(1): 89-112.

[Google Scholar](#)

Wagstaff A, Van Doorslaer E, Paci P. 1991. On the measurement of inequalities in health. *Social Science & Medicine* 33: 545-557.

[CAS](#) | [PubMed](#) | [Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Wagstaff A, Van Doorslaer E. 1993. Equity in the finance and delivery of health care: concepts and definitions. In *Equity in the Finance and Delivery of Health Care: An International Perspective*. E Ban Doorslaer, A Wagstaff, F Rutten (Eds). Oxford University Press: New York.

[Google Scholar](#)

World Health Organization/UNICEF. 2003. The Africa Malaria Report 2003. WHO/CDS/MAL/2003.1093.

[Google Scholar](#)

Citing Literature



Citation Statements beta

Supporting

0

Mentioning

1

Contrasting

0

Explore this article's citation statements on [scite.ai](#)

powered by **scite_**

[Download PDF](#)

ABOUT WILEY ONLINE LIBRARY

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

[About Cookies](#)

[Manage Cookies](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Wiley Research DE&I Statement and Publishing Policies](#)

[Developing World Access](#)

HELP & SUPPORT

Contact Us
Training and Support
DMCA & Reporting Piracy

OPPORTUNITIES

Subscription Agents
Advertisers & Corporate Partners

CONNECT WITH WILEY

The Wiley Network
Wiley Press Room

Copyright © 1999-2024 John Wiley & Sons, Inc or related companies. All rights reserved, including rights for text and data mining and training of artificial intelligence technologies or similar technologies.

WILEY