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Impact of NHIS free maternal healthcare policy on utilization of maternal care services in Ghana

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The National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) free maternal healthcare programme was introduced in July 2008 to help Ghana meet Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 4 and 5 which are to reduce child mortality and improve maternal health. Under the NHIS programme pregnant women are to receive free full package access to antenatal, prenatal and postnatal care. The global MDG 5 target for maternal health is to reduce the number of women who die in pregnancy and child birth by three-quarter between 1990 and 2015. In the period 2007-2012 Ghana had reported maternal mortality ratio of 450 deaths per 100,000 live births (this figure was estimated at 350 deaths per 100,000 by UN agencies/World Bank in 2010). The Government of Ghana declared maternal mortality a national emergency in 2008, developing the MDG Acceleration Framework with the aim of improving maternal health and giving it the level of urgency required. It is in line with this that the government of Ghana through NHIS introduced the free maternal healthcare programme in July 2008 to give all pregnant mothers free full package access to antenatal, prenatal and postnatal care. This study thus seeks to assess the impact of NHIS free maternal healthcare policy on utilization of maternal care services in Ghana after six years of implementation of the policy. The study is intended to improve policy formulation and assist the NHIA to evaluate the impact of the free maternal healthcare policy based on utilization of maternal care services as a measurement of success (or failure) in improving maternal health in Ghana.

Biography

Eric Boateng, is a student (Japan Development Scholarship Fellow on Health Policy) pursuing Master's in International Development Programme at the Graduate School of International Relations, International University of Japan. The above abstract is from proposal on a research he intend to conduct in fulfilment for the award of Master's Degree at the International University of Japan.

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