

## **Lessons learned from the INCLUDE workshop and PASGR forum, Nairobi May 2015**

**Research project:** “Comparing Free Maternal Care & Free Primary Care with a micro health insurance programme in Nandi County, Kenya, in terms of cost effectiveness”

**Consortium:** AIID, APHRC, HPP, PAI and AIGHD

The INCLUDE workshop held in Nairobi from 11-12 May 2015 provided consortium members for the research project “Comparing Free Maternal Care & Free Primary Care with a micro health insurance programme in Nandi County, Kenya” with the opportunity to meet and discuss the project. Consortium members reviewed the research proposal once more and made plans for data cleaning and analysis. This research project compares the cost effectiveness of free maternal and primary health care with a micro health insurance programme in Nandi County, Kenya in terms of its impact on targeting, use of health care services, the quality of health care and out-of-pocket health expenditure. As Kenya seeks to achieve universal healthcare, this project will offer relevant insights into “what works” in improving access to quality health care for the poorest in a sustainable way, while at the same time offering social protection.

The workshop taught consortium members how to “pitch” our research to users and how to involve stakeholders to ensure that they take an interest in the research and use the results in policy making. We learnt that policy-makers and other stakeholders should be involved in the research at an early stage. In response, we changed our policy engagement plan to organize meetings with stakeholders at the beginning of this project. These meetings are scheduled to take place during the second week of September in Nairobi and Nandi County. The meetings will officially launch the project and gather policy-makers’ input on the important questions to be addressed by the research.

Finally, the workshop provided an opportunity to join the forum organized by the [Partnership for African Social and Governance Research \(PASGR\)](#), which was attended by representatives of the government, media, NGOs and the academic world. As our research project is taking place in Kenya, the discussions during this forum were highly relevant and useful to our consortium members. We learned two important lessons from the forum: The first is the need to identify which people in the government to target for research results to be used effectively. The second is the need for the coordination of social assistance programmes. The inception meetings planned with policy-makers in September will address the first point and our research addresses the second by comparing different interventions with the objective of improving access to quality healthcare by reducing prohibitive out-of-pocket expenditure on maternal and primary health care. Among the policy-makers we met during the PASGR meeting were people from both the national and county level governments in Kenya, Oxfam Kenya and the National Social Security Fund. All were unanimous in their desire for research they can use.