



*This series of Research Group Fact sheets shows ongoing research projects related to INCLUDE, the Knowledge Platform on Inclusive Development Policies*

## Inclusive growth through social protection in maternal health programmes in Kenya

Because health expenditure in the form of out-of-pocket payments is a driver of poverty and a barrier to development, governments seek to provide universal healthcare services. However, this does not translate to universal and equitable access to these services. To ensure affordability of maternal health services, the Government of Kenya introduced vouchers targeting vulnerable women in 2006 and free maternity care in public health facilities in 2013. Due to lack of evidence on the effectiveness of these two interventions, this study compares the effectiveness of both approaches, and how they interact with existing formal and informal social support mechanisms, such as micro-credits, health insurances, or informal kinship obligations.

<b>Main question</b>	In comparison to the free maternity policy in Kenya, can the voucher system contribute to equitable access to care, better health outcomes, and greater economic resilience at the household level?
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<b>Consortium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Health, Kenya</li> <li>• School of Public Health, Maseno University, Kenya</li> <li>• University of Bern, Switzerland</li> </ul>
<b>Country focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kenya</li> </ul>
<b>Planned activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception workshop for protocol development with all involved stakeholders</li> <li>• Review of the literature, documents and available data on the use of vouchers for maternal care in Kenya and free maternity services in the public sector</li> <li>• Detailed description of the implementation and contextual factors of the voucher programme vis-à-vis the free maternity care in the public sector</li> <li>• Knowledge sharing in two technical workshops and a dissemination workshop to discuss the evidence with various stakeholders in Kenya</li> <li>• Continuous exchange through a Smartsheet application and a blog</li> </ul>