




World Bank Group President Urges Countries to Deliver Universal Health Coverage to Help End Poverty

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GENEVA, May 21, 2013 - World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim called on countries gathered at the 66th World Health Assembly to ensure universal access to quality, affordable health services to help end extreme poverty by 2030 and boost shared prosperity. Worldwide estimates are that out-of-pocket health spending forces 100 million people into extreme poverty every year and inflicts severe financial hardship on another 150 million people. "To free the world from absolute poverty by 2030, countries must ensure that all of their citizens have access to quality, affordable health services, said Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group. "We have the opportunity to unite global health and the fight against poverty in action focused on clear goals. Kim said the Bank Group would help countries tackle two major challenges as they advance toward universal health coverage: to ensure no family is forced into poverty because of health care expenses, and to close the gap in access to health services and public health protection for the poorest 40 percent of the population in every country. "Every country in the world can improve the performance of its health system in the three dimensions of universal coverage: access, quality, and affordability, said Kim. He outlined five specific ways the Bank Group will support countries in their drive toward universal coverage: ramping up analytic work and support for strengthening health systems; leading an effort to help countries reach Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 on maternal and child mortality; developing a monitoring framework for universal health coverage, together with the World Health Organization (WHO); deepening work on the science of delivery; and stepping up efforts to improve health through action in other sectors that affect whether people lead healthy lives. The World Bank
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