



Contribution ID: 12

Type: Abstract for Research Paper

## Media and The Big Four Agenda: Analysis of the media coverage on Universal Healthcare

The health sector in Kenya has experienced tremendous changes since the introduction of the Big Four Agenda. In 2018, the government piloted a universal health coverage program in four counties, where there was abolition of all fees, more than 200 community health units were opened, 7700 community health volunteers and over 700 health workers recruited (MoH, 2020). In their assessment, the Ministry of Health underscored the need for improvement in accelerated staff recruitment, better links between local and higher-level health facilities, timely funding and supply of medical commodities as well as coordination and management. The government in its efforts to achieve the Big Four Agenda is in the process of scaling up universal health coverage and reforming the national hospital insurance fund and establishing a mandatory universal health coverage scheme.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the ability of health systems to provide uninterrupted health services. It is increasingly becoming difficult to respond to the ever-growing health needs and the increasing costs of health services. This is because improving healthcare coverage depends on the availability, accessibility, and capacity of healthcare workers (WHO, 2020). Media reports have highlighted the growing gaps in the supply of and demand for health workers, demonstrated the invaluable role of the healthcare workforce, the importance of expanding investments in the health sector, and to leverage partnerships that provide decent working conditions.

It is against this backdrop that this paper seeks to examine media coverage on the Universal Healthcare projects under the Big Four Agenda; establish the role played by the media in achieving universal healthcare coverage, and, establish the challenges faced in implementing Universal Healthcare.

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**Track Classification:** Media and the Government's Big Four Agenda' Between 2017 and 2022.