The Political Economy of UHC
accountability and “leaving no one behind”

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Agenda

- Needs assessment for UHC
- UHC and state performance
- Public health’s primary approaches
  - In rich countries: can produce UHC
  - As employed in global health: insufficient for UHC
- Political economy, the state, and accountability
What would UHC mean here?
What does it mean to leave no one behind?
UHC = A functioning state

- Disease-specific interventions
- Disease prevention
- Sanitation, waste removal
- Water filtration and other urban services
- Education, behavior modification
- Land tenure, food, nutrition...
The state and the social contract

- A state-citizen agreement
- Adjudicates rights and responsibilities
- A domestic political process
- Hinges on state responsiveness to citizen need
  - Participation
  - Accountability
How have we done so far?

- Public health and the state
  - Two approaches
- Public health in the development context
Approach #1: State Authority

Edwin Chadwick
Poor law reformer

English, 1800-1890

State Authority
Building codes
Sanitary regulation
Medicines and food regulation
Health behavior regulations
Infrastructure

Source: Wellcome Library of Medicine
Robert Koch,  
Father of bacteriology  
German, 1843-1910  
Proved germ theory  
specific causes  
technical solutions,  
mainly pharmaceutical
Approach #2: Medico-Scientific Authority

Patrick Manson
Scottish, 1844–1922

Insect transmission

Mapped transmission cycles

Disease control by transmission interruption

Source: Wellcome Trust
## Public health in two contexts

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<tr>
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<th>Developed Countries</th>
<th>International Assistance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Authority</strong></td>
<td>Comprehensive public health infrastructure; State assumes vast responsibility for health</td>
<td>Minimally engaged: often undermined by direct service provision, external agenda setting; historically weakened by colonialism and persistent political-economic inequalities</td>
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<td><strong>Technical Authority</strong></td>
<td>Influence the state; influence behavior; develop interventions; individual care</td>
<td>Dominant: disease-specific approaches; embodied in virtually all methods</td>
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Political economy, the state, and accountability

- Political economy
  - The study of state performance
  - Simply defined as “contests of interest”
    - Who has power?
    - What are its sources?
    - How is it exercised?
    - How can it be contested?

- Accountability is underpinned by participation
  - To whom?
  - For what?
UHC, technical version

Population
Services
Pooled finance

Source: WHR 2010
UHC, Bump version

Domestic political economy (Social contract: state accountable to citizens)

Proportion of needed services delivered at right time, place, and quality (Fairness of access)

People covered by public health infrastructure, services (Fairness of protection and risk)

Redistribution (Fairness of financing)
UHC, Bump version

- **International political economy**
  - (Social contract incomplete; accountabilities unclear)

- **Trade regimes, intellectual property, corporate accountability**
  - (Fairness of access)

- **Redistribution: International taxation**
  - (Fairness of financing)

- **Global public goods, eg, environment and natural resources, surveillance, cross border activities**
  - (Fairness of protection and risk)
Thanks for your participation!