Strengthening Public Health Systems

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USAID’s Vision for Health Systems Strengthening (HSS)

This Vision:
• systematizes and focuses our efforts
• ensures USAID’s HSS work is aligned, of high quality, and supporting key priorities
• guides our investments that contribute to health outcomes
USAID’s Overarching Goal for Health Systems

“USAID partners with countries to provide sustained, equitable access to essential, high-quality health services responsive to people’s needs without financial hardship, thereby protecting poor and underserved people from illness, death, and extreme poverty”

Four Strategic Outcomes of Health System Strengthening

1. Financial Protection: Cost of accessing quality, essential health services must neither keep people from using these necessary services nor impoverish them.
2. Essential Services: Essential package of high-quality life-saving prevention, promotion, treatment and care services must be available to and used by all those who need it.
3. Population Coverage: Poor, underserved, marginalized and vulnerable people must have same access to essential health services. Universal health coverage requires a special focus on equity.
4. Responsiveness: Health services delivery must assure dignity, confidentiality, autonomy, quality and timeliness of services for poor and marginalized people.
How it All Fits Together

Six health systems functions (governance, finance, human resources, service delivery, information, medicines) lead to system performance, lead to health

Back office: sometimes seen as competing with direct investments in health outcomes

Prominent concepts: Trust, open information for accountability, health worker safety, basic infrastructure, health emergency risk management, preparedness, infection prevention & control

Goal of resilience: ability to withstand shocks, meet unexpected challenges

- **Aware**: have strategic health information systems
- **Diverse**: can address a broad range of health challenges
- **Self-regulating**: can both contain health threats and deliver basic services, all without causing instability
- **Integrated**: bring together diverse actors, ideas, and groups to formulate solutions and initiate action
- **Adaptive**: can transform in ways that improve function in the face of highly adverse conditions

Kruk, Margaret E., Michael Myers, S Tornor Vargilah, & Bernice T. Dahn.  What is a resilient health system? Lessons from Ebola.  Lancet, 385 (May 9, 2015), 1910-12

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