



UCLA BLUM CENTER
on Poverty and Health
in Latin America

Health Systems Strengthening: An Approach to Addressing Specific Outcomes

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What is the Health System?

All the organizations, institutions and resources whose primary purpose is to improve health. It needs staff, funds, information, supplies, transport, communications and overall guidance and direction.

The health system includes:

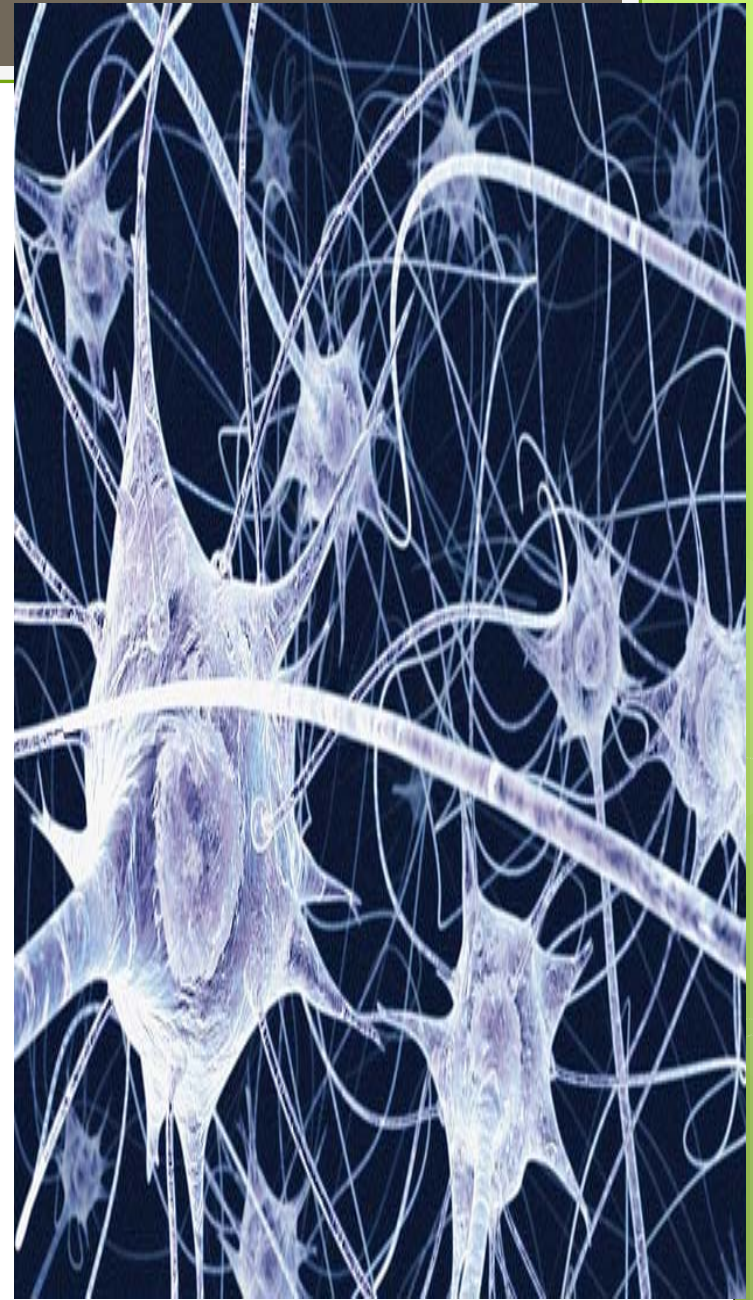
- National level ministries such as Ministries of Health, Finance, Labor, Education and others
- The community , including civil society organizations
- The private sector

- Poor state of health systems is one of the greatest barriers to increasing access to essential health care.
- Problems with health systems are found in rich and poor countries care because of inequities in social protection or escalating costs due to inefficient use of resources.
- To maintain and improve the health of the world's people governments must have sound, efficient health systems that provide effective disease prevention and treatment to all, no matter who they are or where they live.



What is Health System Strengthening?

- **Strengthening** health systems goes beyond **supporting** the system
 - **Supporting** focuses on filling gaps to produce better short term outcomes
 - **Strengthening** is about making the system function better in the long term

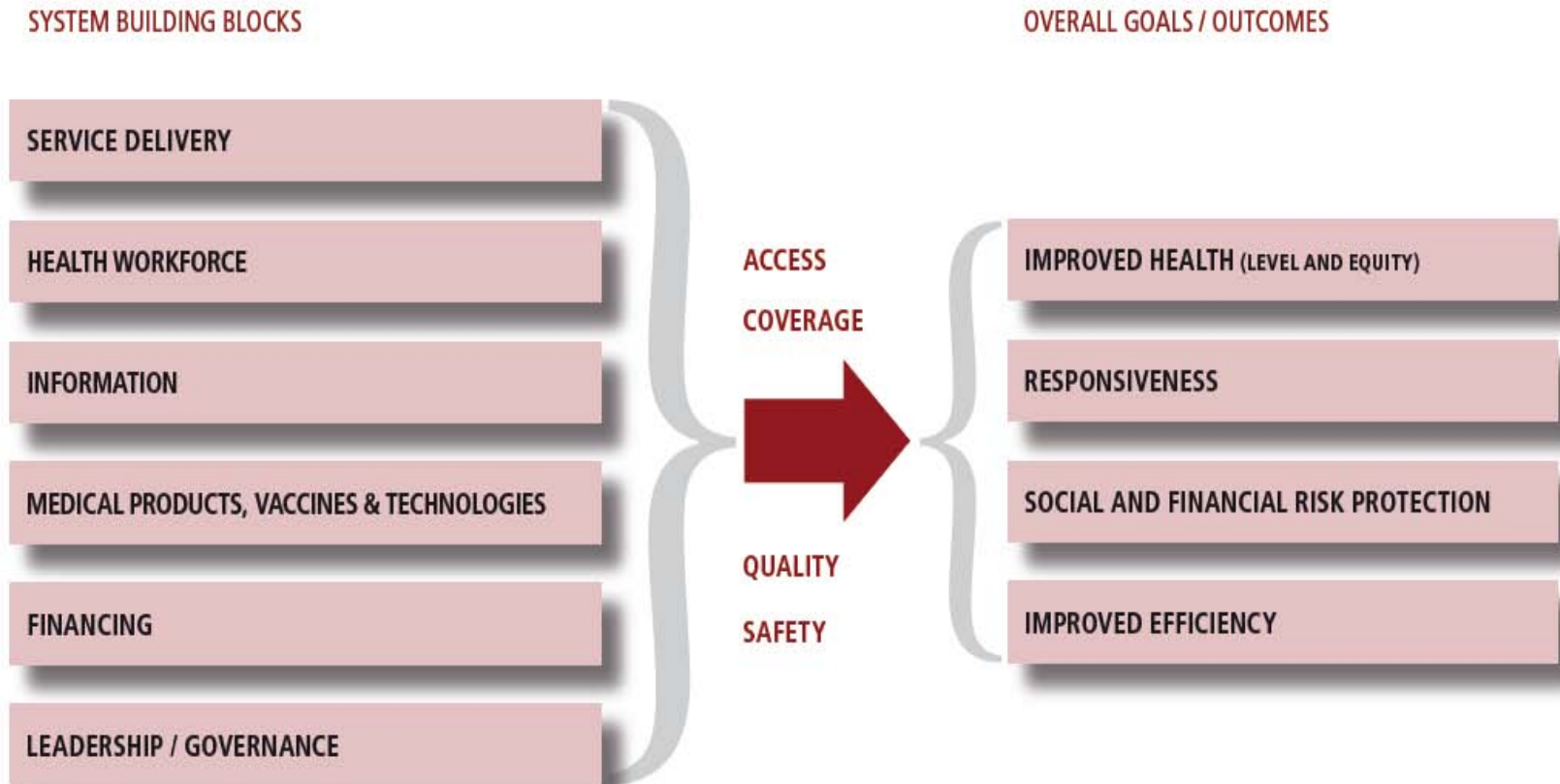


The 6 WHO Building Blocks

- A health system is defined as all of the organizations, institutions, resources and people whose primary purpose is to improve health
 - Government
 - Financing
 - Information
 - Service Delivery
 - Human Resources/
Workforce
 - Medicine/Technology



6 Building Blocks of the health system and link to health outcomes



Source: World Health Organization. Everybody's Business: Strengthening health systems to improve health outcomes—WHO's Framework for Action. Geneva: WHO, 2007, page 3.

1) Service Delivery

Good health services delivery...

Quality

Drugs, supplies, and equipment in stock

Health workers paid, supervised, motivated



Access

Equitable and efficient financing

Rational planning, professional management based on data

2) Health Workforce

A well performing **health workforce** consists of...

- HR Management;
- HR skills
- HR policies



Adequate drugs and supplies
for effective workforce

Data tracking of human
resources

Financing to hire adequate
staff in National budget

3) Health Information System

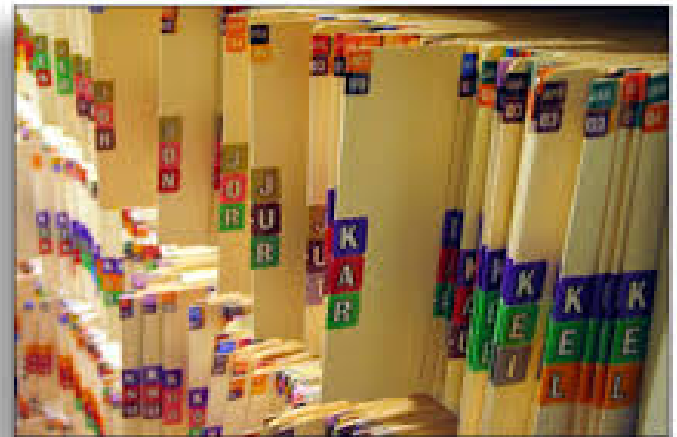
A well performing
**health information
system**

- Ensures the production, analysis, dissemination and use of timely and reliable information

**National Health Financing
information informing policy**

**Link use of data to resource
allocation, measurement of
health worker performance**

Share data with community



4) Medical Products, Vaccines and Technologies

Procurement and supply programs need to ensure...

- Equitable access
- Assured quality
- Cost-effective use.

Health workers trained in cost-effective prescribing practices

Pro-poor financing of essential products

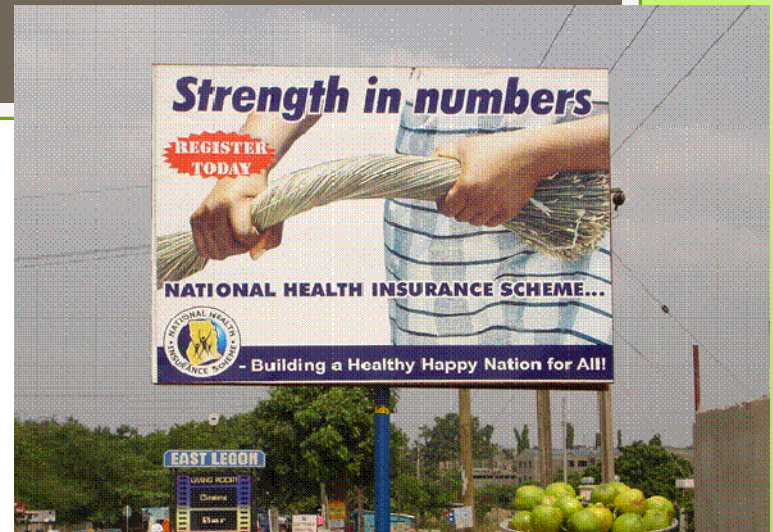
Local capacity to enforce regulations



5) Financing

A good **health financing** system...

- Raises adequate funds for health
- Protects people from financial catastrophe
- Allocates resources and purchases good and services in ways that improve quality, equity, and efficiency.



Payment systems to reward health worker distribution and retention

Pro-poor financing of essential products

Use data to allocate resources

6) Leadership and Governance

Effective **leadership and governance** ensures...

- strategic policy frameworks exist
- effective oversight and coalition-building
- provision of appropriate incentives
- attention to system-design, and accountability.

Availability of accurate data for policy and advocacy

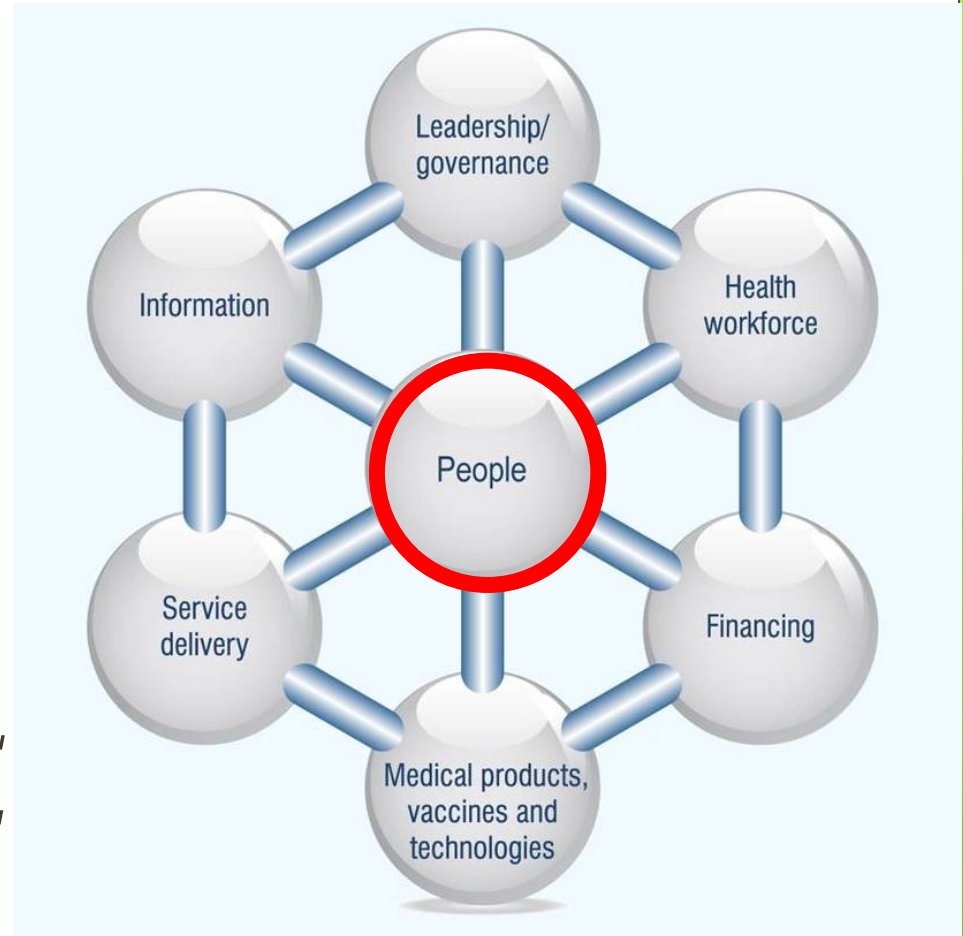
Regulation of health workers and medical products

Accountability to patients
Financing that empowers consumers

The 7th Building Block – People

Individuals,
households, and
communities as:

- Civil society
- Consumers
- Patients
- Payers
- Producers of health through knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and practices



What is Health Systems Strengthening?

*improving [the] six health system building blocks and **managing their interactions** in ways that achieve more **equitable** and **sustained** improvements across health services and health outcomes*

- Beyond a single disease
- Beyond a single building block - harness the interactions between the building blocks
- Beyond the life of the intervention - sustained improvements
- Country ownership

Stakeholding

- Each component of a strengthened health system should have a stake in the outcome
- Linkages between levels of authority and shared priorities
- A change in the ownership of responsibility for health outcomes to create an environment that can sustain positive changes





Who's Involved?

- National Ministries of Health
- Individual Health Facilities
- Healthcare staff
- Patients
- Universities
- World Health Organization , Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Inter-American Development Bank , USAID, Global Health Initiatives, NGOs



International Needs Include

- Strengthening primary care
- Addressing fragmentation, overlapping responsibilities
- Strengthening infrastructure and workforce capacity



Collaboration in HSS Strategy

- Quantify and assess existing investments
- Set priorities
- Identify gaps and areas of opportunity to link with host governments, other health initiatives and donors
- Increase accountability for results
- Build a more sustainable response
- Maximize efficiencies

Areas for future HSS investments

- Supporting host government leadership and management skills and capacity
- Supporting a formal health systems assessment process where needed
- Expanding the emphasis on monitoring health services and continual quality improvement
- Policy analysis, regulation and strategic planning
- Implementation of health system changes

Workforce Development

- Range of workforce strengthening goals
 - Technical training, support systems, work conditions, incentives, e-literacy, increased autonomy and job structure
- Categories of health workers to be considered:
 - * Health professionals:
 - clinical professionals
 - other health care professionals
 - * Paraprofessionals, auxiliary workers or associate professionals, administrators/management

The value of collaboration

- "The marketplace is not the answer to all questions facing society. Likewise, the public sector cannot solve all social problems. But the combination of public and private efforts, when harnessed together, in an effort to achieve a clear and shared health objective, provides a powerful force that exceeds the sum of its separate efforts."
- Dr. William H. Foege, in *Ethics and the Pharmaceutical Industry* (2005)

Lessons learned about designing partnerships

- Complexity of the issues beyond the ability of any single organization or country alone
- Important to invest in building relationships with key partners and stakeholders – private, public and non-governmental
- Clear common objectives, roles & responsibilities, trust, transparency, mechanisms for accountability, complementary expertise, mutual benefit

Lessons learned about developing partnerships

- Recognize varying capabilities and different ways of working among all partners, including NGOs.
- NGOs bring “on-the-ground” local knowledge
- Private sector approach helps to drive results: business brings expertise, resources, and efficiency-oriented approach, complementing NGO and Government strengths
- Adopting shared principles of partnership will encourage transparency among all partners

Lessons learned about sustaining partnerships

- Achieving agreement on roles aligned with strengths of partners and setting clear metrics for success increases accountability for all partners
- Important to invest in continuous evaluation and improvement:
 - Levels of engagement of partners
 - Commitment of team to solving the problem at hand and achieving results
 - Transparent communication & feedback
 - Accomplishment of overall project objectives
- Critical need for continuing coordination, communication and commitment
- Persistence pays off

What lessons are there?

- High-level political commitment and engagement are critical
- Partnerships have a key role to play in marshalling the necessary resources and expertise
- Programs must be country-led to succeed for the long term
- Building local capacity is also a key element
- A comprehensive approach is needed to make real headway against diseases like HIV/AIDS

Como Puedo Servirle?



- Training programs and skill transfer
- Bilateral learning
 - Lessons can come back to researchers and funder countries from their experiences with both specific outcomes and systems-based approaches
- Feedback loop
 - Researchers can help both find ways to glean information from the system and advise on how to use it to improve service
- Leadership development
 - Increasing autonomy, knowledge base and accountability of individuals
- Challenging the process

HSS is a long-wave event...



“Make haste slowly”

- Milarepa

(12th Century Tibetan yogi)

Requires *both*:

- Immediate, technological and human resource responses

AND

- Long-term commitment to addressing policy, governance, and environmental factors

Gracias/Thank you



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