



# Health Systems 20/20

## Better Systems, Better Health

### Why Health Systems?

Strong health systems are critical to the achievement of better health outcomes. Health Systems 20/20 addresses the financing, governance, operational, and capacity constraints in a health system that impede access to and use of health care:

- Without adequate and well-allocated public and private financing, people must pay for care out-of-pocket or forgo care.
- Without properly trained and remunerated health workers, there is no one to deliver quality care, especially in poor communities and remote areas.
- Without competent governance, informed by input from a range of health care decision-makers, health workers, and communities and individuals, health care financing and operations likely will be inefficient, inequitable, and unresponsive to users' needs.

### Health Systems Solutions and Results

Health Systems 20/20, successor project to Partners for Health Reform *plus* (PHR*plus*), works with USAID clients and country stakeholders to design programs tailored to meet their specific challenges. Depending upon priorities and resources, project interventions might be very broad (helping a country implement a new health worker strategy that uses performance-based financing for providers) or more targeted (strengthening a national association of midwives).



Health Systems 20/20 addresses weaknesses in terms of financing, governance, and operations, meanwhile building capacity that will allow countries to resolve new issues as they arise. The project's team of professionals has technical depth and field experience in these focus areas, and collaborates with partners to link health system improvements to increased service access and use:

- In Yemen, there are 3 million cases of malaria per year<sup>1</sup>; the disease kills more than 30,000 people annually, most of them children under 5 and pregnant women. Health Systems 20/20 and the Yemeni Ministry of Public Health have implemented a health information system (HIS) and use its data to increase transparency and deliver care more effectively. When a sheikh in Marib governorate demanded an extra allotment of insecticide-treated mosquito nets, Marib's director general for health used the Health Database and Analyzer to check the number of children in the sheikh's village. The HIS confirmed the number of children in the sheikh's village and therefore the correctness of his net allotment, and the "extra" nets were sent to villages where nets were needed.
- In Kenya, a National Health Accounts carried out by PHR*plus* and the Ministry of Health found that 51 percent of health expenditures were made out of pocket by the population, 56 percent of whom live in poverty. In response to the National Health Accounts findings, the ministry received a record-setting 30 percent increase in its budget the following year.
- In Peru, PHR*plus* helped two regions to hold "citizens' referenda" so that residents could voice their health concerns. Planners worked to involve rural residents, historically excluded from decision-making. Residents' priority concerns – including sanitation, gastrointestinal disease, maternal health, respiratory infections, and unwanted pregnancies – are now addressed in regional governments' operating plans and budgets. Regions also have established pilot "micro-networks" for health to meet the primary health care needs of some of the poorest districts and are working to build the management capacity of the networks.

<sup>1</sup>World Health Organization: [http://www.who.int/countries/en/cooperation\\_strategy\\_yem\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/countries/en/cooperation_strategy_yem_en.pdf)

## Interventions to Address Health System Constraints

	Constraints	Interventions
Finance	A ministry of health is unable to effectively advocate to the ministry of finance for increased funding.	In Egypt, Health Systems 20/20 builds ministry capacity for National Health Accounts and uses results to design and cost elements of a new social health insurance scheme to generate financial resources for greater availability of health care.
	Allocation of resources and services neglects the rural poor and women.	In Peru, Health Systems 20/20 is helping the Integrated Health Insurance System (SIS) – which covers over 6 million people, two-thirds of them very poor – develop a costing methodology so that SIS can expand coverage of priority health services.
Governance	Ministries of health and local governments do not use data or engage stakeholders in decision-making.	In Senegal, Health Systems 20/20 supports a civil society review of financial subsidy policies to make them better reflect consumer preferences.
Operations	Financial management is weak and/or opaque, reducing health care efficiency, quality, and use.	In Bolivia, Health Systems 20/20 is strengthening financial management of the NGO PROSALUD to achieve financial self-sufficiency and sustainability in its delivery of services to low-income families.
	Human resources are poorly managed, pay is low, and training and supervision are weak.	In Côte d'Ivoire, Health Systems 20/20 is assisting the Ministry of Health to strengthen management skills and pay incentives to retain health workers in underserved areas, as recommended in the new national health worker strategy that was informed by Health Systems 20/20's human resources assessment.
Capacity Building	Ministries of health lack expertise in health financing, leading to weak stewardship and/or dependence on external technical assistance.	Health Systems 20/20 assisted Peru's SIS to establish a Health Economics Unit to institutionalize the technical assistance the project provides.
	The African Field Epidemiology Network of five African schools of public health has limited capacity to attract funding and tap technology.	Health Systems 20/20 is helping to strengthen AFENET's governance structure and its financial and managerial capacities, so its members can better respond to emerging communicable diseases.

Health Systems 20/20 is a five-year (2006-2011) cooperative agreement (No. GHS-A-00-06-00010-00) funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The project addresses the financing, governance, operational, and capacity-building constraints that block access to and use of priority population, health, and nutrition services by people in developing countries. Health Systems 20/20 offers global leadership, technical assistance, training, grants, research, and information dissemination.

Abt Associates Inc. leads a team of partners that includes:  
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