

# The post-2015 global development agenda

## Ensuring innovation in health for maximum impact

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) provide an important framework and targets aimed at reducing extreme poverty, including achieving critical advances in human health. The MDG framework has shaped global and national development priorities in a coordinated fashion and formalized the intrinsic link between health and human development.

By establishing a foundation of global agreement around health and development, the MDGs have been instrumental in strengthening political will to address key health challenges, increasing international development assistance for health, and improving health in low- and middle-income countries.

Since the MDGs were endorsed by the international community in 2000, important reductions in deaths from infectious diseases and significant declines in maternal and child mortality have been achieved in many countries. Globally, the number of children under five years old who die each year declined from 12 million in 1990 to 7.6 million in 2010. During that same time period, global maternal deaths decreased by 47 percent.

However, these and some other health gains fall short of the MDG targets set for 2015. Other challenges acknowledged in the MDGs include the use of aggregate data to measure progress by country, which often disguises significant inequities within countries. Additionally, the MDGs' emphasis on disease-specific targets has led to some structural challenges that inhibit health systems from strengthening. And while many great scientific advances were achieved in the past decade, challenges to prioritizing and deploying those innovations—and to realizing their potential health impact—remain.

Even with these challenges, it is critical that we do not lose the momentum created by the MDGs, and the international community must continue to work toward realizing the targets set for 2015. Simultaneously, we must look beyond 2015 and set new global health and development goals to supplement—not replace—the MDGs. In addition we now need to consider the double burden of disease in developing countries caused by the growing epidemic of



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noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). To help ensure long-term and sustainable health gains, PATH has identified two key principles and a set of four recommendations that should be considered, in addition to other health and development priorities, in the post-2015 global debate.

### SUPPORTING INNOVATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF HEALTH PRODUCTS AND INTERVENTIONS

***Principle:** New approaches to health interventions and innovations in product development and delivery lead to increased access to quality care and ultimately to improved health outcomes.*

**Recommendation 1:** Development and delivery of new products, where they are needed, should be prioritized under the new post-2015 framework.

Innovations in technology play a critical role in improving health around the world. Polio, for example, has been eliminated from most of the world, and eradication of the disease is within reach because of the development and delivery of safe, effective vaccines. Still, infectious diseases claim the lives of nearly 9 million people each year, and emerging health threats, such as drug resistance, could set us back if new health tools are not developed.

New and innovative vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, and other health tools are desperately needed to prevent and treat

diseases such as pneumonia, diarrheal disease, malaria, NCDs and HIV/AIDS. To achieve this, we must continue to invest in new health technologies and product delivery mechanisms, while seeking new solutions to complex global supply system challenges as quickly and safely as possible.

To ensure that product innovation and delivery system improvements are supported in the post-2015 landscape, the next set of global goals should:

- Prioritize continued support for the development of new and innovative health products and technologies.
- Facilitate the harmonization and streamlining of regulatory systems across the globe to reduce delays in registration.
- Strengthen health and logistics systems so they can deliver a range of lifesaving health products to all people in need.

#### STRENGTHENING VACCINE SUPPLY CHAINS

Vaccines are one of the most successful and cost-effective public health interventions, and they play a critical role in protecting the lives of children and adults. But even today, many new vaccines are developed for disease strains that primarily affect industrialized countries—not those in low- and middle-income countries. Even when appropriate vaccines are available, health systems in developing countries are often unable to deliver them to everyone in need. Continued and enhanced vaccine product development, introduction, and access must be supported by the new development framework to realize the lifesaving potential of vaccines.

**Recommendation 2:** The framework should commit to strengthening health systems in a way that promotes integration across health areas and encourages and enables innovative approaches to program management and product delivery.

Innovations in new health products, services, and information collection and evaluation hold great promise for global health. But the potential impact of these advancements will not be realized if these solutions are not delivered and used in the countries with the greatest need and highest burden of disease. There is an urgent need for political will, financial support, and creative approaches to strengthen health systems so they can deliver effective health interventions.

Many vaccine supply and logistics systems, for example, were developed 30 years ago and are not equipped to adequately manage vaccine cold chains, storage shortages, or the logistical challenges in delivering vaccines to those in need. But simply meeting today's needs will not be enough. As new innovations are introduced, systems need to be able to adapt to ensure effective and responsive delivery.

It is essential that the new development framework ensures the necessary systems improvements so that critical health products can be delivered safely, effectively, and efficiently to the people who need them. It is also important that the products that flow through these systems are optimized for the contexts in which they will be shipped, stored, and used.

The integration of health services is also a key strategy to advancing the impact of health resources and systems. Increasingly, integration in everything from service delivery—including the use of a single encounter with a patient to address multiple health or social concerns—to policy approaches is recognized as a way to better meet the needs of individuals and health systems. It can also lead to increased funding for health issues that are not prioritized by current funding streams. In addition, integration can help address related or overlapping systems needs across health focus areas. For example, leveraging current care platforms to address emerging issues like NCDs can create efficiencies and support improved cost-effectiveness, streamlined care for patients, increased reach, and greater efficiency for health programs and services.

#### INTEGRATING POLICIES AND PROGRAMS ACROSS DISEASE AREAS

The two leading causes of death among Cambodian children—pneumonia and diarrheal disease—are preventable. To strengthen the potential health impact, PATH, in collaboration with the Cambodia Ministry of Health and others, established the Enhanced Diarrheal Disease Initiative in 2011. The program employs a two-pronged approach to build the political support required to strengthen policies related to diarrheal disease and pneumonia, and to implement a new integrated package of services within rural communities.

The program demonstrated the importance of integrated diarrhea and pneumonia programming, and it expanded access to new prevention and treatment interventions to making a significant and sustained impact. These lessons learned can be applied more broadly with other development sectors and should be actively promoted in the new development framework.



PATH/Eric Becker

## IMPROVING DATA AND EVALUATION FOR IMPACT

**Principle:** *Data generation and analysis to inform product development, policy planning, and prioritization of health interventions helps health systems effectively allocate resources and be accountable to their citizens, ultimately leading to greater impact.*

**Recommendation 3:** Post-2015 targets and indicators should prioritize improved monitoring and evaluation to support data-driven decision-making.

One of the acknowledged weaknesses of the current MDG framework is that it does not adequately emphasize the need for improved information systems at a country level to measure progress toward the goals. Health and logistics information systems in many developing countries are fragmented and cumbersome, unable to provide answers to basic questions that health workers and government officials grapple with daily: How many people are sick? How many are getting necessary treatments and services? When and where is the next critical shipment of medical supplies expected to arrive? The new development framework should ensure that improvements in the generation and utilization of data are an intrinsic principle to optimize health service delivery.

Health Management Information Systems, Logistics Management Information Systems, and surveillance capacity must be strengthened to better understand unmet needs and areas of success so funding and program priorities can be driven by these data. Health information system strengthening needs to focus on improved tracking of access and coverage data and should include evidence related to product development and new technologies that could enable improved service delivery.

Other uses of data that should be supported in the post-2015 landscape include:

- Collecting and using data from end users to inform target product profiles and policies.
- Using metrics to measure impact as well as coverage and access.
- Strengthening post-marketing surveillance to monitor adverse events and improve delivery of new interventions.
- Using modeling outputs to closely estimate important product attributes and necessary quantities when data are limited or preliminary.

### USING DATA TO DRIVE MALARIA ELIMINATION EFFORTS

Advances in malaria prevention and treatment have markedly reduced illness and death, especially in Africa. Now countries are beginning to shift their target from malaria control to elimination, which requires a well-documented base of experience from national programs.

In just a few years, Zambia cut the number of children infected with malaria in half. Now the country is pioneering the next step: advanced surveillance methods to find remaining cases and bring them under control. In partnership with The Malaria Control and Evaluation Partnership in Africa (MACEPA) at PATH, health care workers use mobile phones to report data, which health officials can access on the Internet, making it much easier to quickly respond to potential resurgences and gaps in intervention coverage.

**Recommendation 4:** Data on the successes and gaps in reaching health targets, including those in subnational levels, should be available to public citizens.

Data quality and reliability are key challenges within the health sector worldwide. The lack of robust data, particularly from developing countries, undermines the ability to tailor services according to need. In addition to improving data collection and reliability, increased accountability for service delivery from governments and implementers is essential to ensuring progress.

Public access to reported data and evidence on progress toward future health goals could be an effective mechanism to increase accountability in developing countries. Sharing data with the public can help better inform governments on how to spend their resources in ways that maximize health impact. Furthermore, it can help citizens hold their governments accountable for their commitments. Releasing health data to the public will also support more strategic financial support and will help the international community continue to identify successful programs to replicate as well as those programs that are not as favorable.

#### **IMPROVING DATA TO SUPPORT SAFE PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH**

Low-cost drugs—including oxytocin, misoprostol, and magnesium sulfate—are available to help prevent and treat the leading causes of maternal death. However, a lack of data on the supply, demand, and use of these lifesaving medicines continues to stand in the way of women receiving the care that they need when they need it. Current data-tracking and reporting mechanisms exist for family planning commodities, which could be expanded to include maternal health medicines.

#### **FULFILLING TODAY'S PROMISES AND CHARTING A PATH FOR A HEALTHIER TOMORROW**

The MDG framework has been instrumental in the international community's ability to achieve unprecedented global health and development progress. Still, some countries are not on target to reach the health-related MDGs by 2015. At this point in time, we must join together in supporting continued investment in reaching the MDGs, but it is also essential to establish a new set of global health and development goals to maintain momentum and achieve greater health equity across the globe.

Health is intrinsically linked to human development. By including the principles of innovation in product development and delivery as well as the generation and use of high-quality data for decision-making in the new targets, additional progress and sustainable impacts can be achieved.



PATH is an international nonprofit organization that transforms global health through innovation. We take an entrepreneurial approach to developing and delivering high-impact, low-cost solutions, from lifesaving vaccines and devices to collaborative programs with communities. Through our work in more than 70 countries, PATH and our partners empower people to achieve their full potential.

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