STRENGTHENING PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTH IN AFGHANISTAN

PSE Workshop: September 14, 2022

Key Messages

- PSE in service delivery is the meaningful inclusion of private providers for service delivery in mixed health systems.

- The private health sector includes all actors outside of government, including for-profit, not-for-profit, formal and informal entities, such as pharmacies and pharmaceutical companies, service providers, suppliers and traditional healers

- The private sector continues to grow, showing a five-fold increase in the total number of private hospitals licenses by MoPH over 11 years

- Factors such as poor enforcement of regulatory measures, lack of treatment protocols, lack of responsibility for patient safety, lack of monitoring capacity, poor infrastructure and limited technical competencies can risk the quality of services at private facilities

- In Afghanistan, the effective engagement of the private sector in health can result in several opportunities but is facing multiple challenges.

Opportunities

- increased health investments
- improved quality of services and accreditation-seeking behaviour
- increased access to tertiary health care service
- Increased innovation, expertise, flexibility, resources and capacity

Challenges

- Lack of domestic competition
- Lack of information/sharing of data, political instability and lack of security
- Limited enforcement of regulations
- Reliance on donor funds and lack of established management systems

- Health Stewardship is the most important vital function of a health system

- An Inclusive public health policy framework implies the clarification of the principles and values of overall health policy in terms of the priority assigned to equitable access to health care, overall service quality, the mobilization of resources for health, the efficiency of the health care system, and emergency preparedness and response

- An Inclusive public health policy framework encompasses the Essential Public Health Functions (EPHFs) such as governance, surveillance, Research and communications

- Public health authorities are responsible for the whole health sector, not just the part for which it has direct financial responsibility.

Session 3: Importance of private sector governance in health system (strategic & operational policies)

- Governance practice includes all interactions between public, private and civic actors. These interactions help improve health system performance through public health policy.

- Public health policy is the decisions, plans, and actions that are undertaken to achieve specific health care goals within a society

- By governments being central to these decisions and processes, the health system can be strengthened by improving equity in access to health services; service quality and financial protection; and health security for public health emergencies

- Lack of governance of the private sector threatens the ability of countries to achieve public health policy goals

- Public health policy that is inclusive of the private health sector is important as goals and priorities need to be shaped, shared and implemented across all health entities

- Policy development is typically framed as having a series of sequential parts or stages. The process of policy making does not need to be linear. A common framework for policymaking includes: Agenda setting, Policy formulation, Policy adoption and legitimation and Policy implementation and evaluation

- A well-governed health system is one in which public and private actors collectively deliver on public health goals, health security, UHC and health systems resilience.

- WHO's Strategy serves as a guide for WHO and Member States at various levels of engagement to promote a new way of doing business with the private sector

- The strategy outlines six governance behaviours critical to private sector health service delivery governance. These behaviours are a series of connected actions that should be approached consistently:

Deliver Strategy- Government establishes the priorities, principles, and values for the health system, and works out how to translate this into practice

Build understanding- Government facilitates information-gathering and sharing about all elements of service provision in the health system.

Enable Stakeholders- Government authorize and incentivize health system stakeholders to align their activities and further leverage their capacities, for national health goals

Align Structures- Government takes the required actions to align public and private structures, processes and institutional architecture

Foster Relations- Government establishes mechanisms that allow all the relevant stakeholders to participate in policymaking and planning

Nurture Trust- Government leads the establishment of transparent, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels to build trust

- To support countries with engaging the private health sector, the [WHO Country Connector on Private Sector in Health](#) was established. This is a coordinated platform to support Member State governments, private sector actors, implementors, academics, donors and other stakeholders with technical support and sharing of experiences to ensure country-level private sector engagement policies are based on evidence, good practices and lesson learned from other countries.

- Check out WHO Country Connector's online course on "[Engaging the private sector to deliver COVID-19 tools and achieve Health for All](#)". The course is available in 7 languages, including Arabic and open to WHO Offices, policy makers, and academia.

Session 5: Public-private dialogue process and key considerations

- Public-Private Dialogue (PPD) are ongoing processes where multiple public and private stakeholders come together on a common issue to negotiate, learn, problem solve and make decisions

- Effective dialogue is critical to the realization of health policy goals. This may be constrained in contexts where institutional capacity and financial resources in the public sector are severely limited. Dialogue is thus influenced by the governance arrangements in place for both public and private actors

- A key element of governance is maintaining engagement—through dialogue, facilitating and sustaining communication and information sharing

- There are both benefits and risks of PPD

- The lifecycle of PPD can extend to five years and beyond. The lifecycle includes: (1) *Discovery Phase,* where partners build trust, collaborate and discuss synergies and differences; (2) *High Impact Results,* where partners become encouraged by early results, confident and motivated to work together to discuss and problem solve on difficult issues; (3) *Future Direction*, where partners to decide to institutionalize, transfer or dissolve its structure

- There are six steps to conducting a PPD process:

1. Build Foundation

This includes laying the groundwork for an inclusive dialogue process. This step is dependent on a core leadership group comprised of public, private, and civil society representatives

2. Set Rules- This includes aligning interests, creating group norms, and agreeing on the dialogue process' purpose to build trust, mutual understanding, and shared values.

3. Formalize Process- This includes establishing a formal structure to provide "backbone" support to the public private dialogue to succeed.

4. Set Direction- This includes implementing mutually reinforcing activities ensure that efforts, and activities are aligned towards achieving a common purpose.

5. Orchestrate Partners- This includes orchestrating partners to establish collective ownership, balance tensions around coordination and accountability, negotiate compromises and defuse potentially contentious issues.

6. Decide Future- This include partners to decide whether the PPD process should be disbanded, repurposed, or institutionalized

- Privatization is the transfer by selling state-owned assets or public services to the private sector. Government loses control, and services are delivered more efficiently, on for-profit basis with no political influence, but usually with a higher cost to consumers and a risk of creating a monopoly.

- Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) is a Long-term (contractual) relationship between a private sector entity and the government, for building and equipping health-care facilities, and/or providing services. PPPs are tools that governments can use to advance their strategic objectives.

- There are two conditions for a constructive PPP (Depends on political and social contexts): (1) Enhanced Public Sector capabilities (contracting, monitoring and evaluation); (2) Developed and efficient private sector.

- PPP framework is needed for the government to establish the environment (infrastructure, law system) for the private sector to operate efficiently.

- Supply and demand as well as pricing are left to the market. Wherever the market fails the government intervene for regulation.

- There are risks and benefits of PPPs

- If you decide to go for PPPs, start small

- Success factors for PPPs include the capacity of the government to manage contracts, public payer reliability, The private sector capacity to deliver, consumer empowerment

Session 7: PSE Case Studies

- A successful PPD process can resolve longstanding strategic issues.

- PPPs can lead to catastrophic results if not managed appropriately

- Universal health coverage and Sustainable Develop Goal 3, *Good Health and Wellbeing*, can only be achieved by reorienting health systems towards primary health care (PHC)

- The PHC operational framework is comprised of 14 levers. Those include models of care and engagement with private sector providers

- Models of Care refers to the conceptualization and operationalization of how health services are selected, designed, organized, delivered, managed and supported by different service delivery platform

- There is an ongoing initiative to establish PHC-oriented models of care in selected countries in the region and Afghanistan is planned to join this initiative soon.

- There are four key considerations to take in engaging the private sector as part of the Model of Care Initiative: (1) Engage early; (2) Beware of conflict of interests; (3) Determine who to engage; (4) Plan ahead