



PRIMARY HEALTH CARE
PERFORMANCE INITIATIVE

The Primary Health Care Performance Initiative (PHCPI) brings together country policymakers, health system managers, practitioners, advocates and other development partners to catalyze improvements in primary health care in low- and middle-income countries through better measurement and knowledge-sharing.

Why Primary Health Care?

The last five decades have seen great improvements in the health of populations worldwide. Yet, too many children still suffer or die from largely preventable causes, too many women still die in childbirth, too many people die from treatable chronic conditions, and too many people lack access to quality and affordable health care.

Strengthening health systems – especially at the primary health care level – is central to addressing these challenges, building on health gains and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, especially the goal of quality universal health coverage.

Primary health care forms the foundation of health systems, ensuring all people stay healthy and get care when they need it. When primary health care works, people and families are connected with trusted health workers and supportive systems throughout their lives, and have access to comprehensive services ranging from family planning and routine immunizations to treatment of illness and management of chronic conditions. Health systems built on strong primary health care are more resilient, efficient and equitable. Primary health care meets the vast majority of communities' diverse health needs, and ultimately, saves lives.

Despite its importance, primary health care is all too often the weakest link in the health system. The Ebola epidemic both exacerbated and was partially fueled by broken primary health care systems. Even in the absence of emergencies, the need for stronger primary health care is clear: most child deaths under age 5 are preventable through effective primary health care.



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Spurring Primary Health Care Improvement

To improve primary health care, ensuring adequate funding is critical. Yet, while many countries have identified primary health care as an urgent priority, they lack comprehensive data needed to pinpoint specific weaknesses, understand their causes and strategically direct resources to the areas of greatest need.

To better understand the multiple aspects of primary health care performance, PHCPI will help countries track key performance indicators for their primary health care systems, identifying which parts of the system are working well and which ones aren't. This will enhance accountability and provide decision-makers with essential information to drive improvements. To make data actionable, this partnership will also provide a platform for countries to share lessons and best practices.

PHCPI Approach

PHCPI SUPPORTS STRONGER PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS THROUGH FOUR INTERCONNECTED AREAS OF WORK:

STRENGTHEN PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT.

PHCPI will harness existing and emerging data on primary health care performance to monitor and report on variations across and within countries, promote accountability and guide performance improvement. Specifically, PHCPI's Vital Signs Indicators include measures that, when taken together, provide a snapshot of primary health care system performance. PHCPI will also work with countries to expand data availability and develop additional indicators that countries can use to diagnose and address underlying challenges.

GENERATE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE.

PHCPI will synthesize existing information on effective primary health care delivery models across the globe and generate new knowledge based on how countries have achieved improvements. It will identify drivers of performance and document useful strategies for countries seeking to improve primary health care.

PROMOTE COUNTRY-LEVEL IMPROVEMENT.

PHCPI will work with countries and development partners on an ongoing basis to improve primary health care. PHCPI is supporting countries through partnerships with the Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage and other global networks to collaboratively develop tools to collect, interpret and act on data.

ENGAGE PARTNERS TO BUILD MOMENTUM.

PHCPI will bring together a network of country policymakers, advocates and other development partners who are committed to building momentum around primary health care and supporting improvement efforts. Working together, we will increase the focus on primary health care as a global priority.

Interested in learning more? Visit [PHCperformanceinitiative.org](https://phcpi.org) to explore PHCPI's 25 Vital Signs indicators through an interactive data visualization tool, and access information about primary health care across the globe.

Better Understanding Primary Health Care

To improve primary health care systems, countries first need better information. For example, policymakers typically can access data on the total number of health workers, medicines and supplies available in their countries – commonly measured and important statistics. However, policymakers often lack data on how inputs like supplies and medicines convert to outputs and outcomes, like healthier populations.

What's often not measured is the experience of patients who receive care, health workers who give care and people who may not interact with the system at all. For example, systematic and comparable data on how often health workers are present at health centers and the accuracy of their diagnoses are collected in only a handful of low- and middle-income countries.

Existing research points to the importance of these factors – what happens between “inputs” and “outputs” – in improving the health of communities. With better information on how primary health care services get delivered, countries and their development partners can understand where changes will have the biggest impact.

PHCPI seeks to build on existing data and generate insights to determine the most effective ways countries can improve primary health care performance.

PHCPI PARTNERS

PHCPI was founded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Bank Group and the World Health Organization, in partnership with Ariadne Labs and Results for Development. We are engaging a network of country policymakers, advocates and other development partners to move the initiative forward. To learn more, please visit [PHCperformanceinitiative.org](https://phcpi.org) or contact info@phcperformanceinitiative.org