

Health Information Systems



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Strong health systems are central to achieving better health outcomes, and strong health information systems (HIS) are the backbone of strong health systems. A properly functioning HIS gets the right information into the right hands at the right time, enabling policymakers, managers, and individual service providers to make informed choices about everything from patient care to national budgets. Strong health information systems support greater transparency and accountability by increasing access to information. Unfortunately, many low and middle-income countries (LMICs) have a long way to go to achieve these goals.

MEASURE Evaluation works in partnership with global, national, and local partners to strengthen HIS. Dedicated to achieving sustainable improvements in health system performance and health outcomes, the project builds capacity to generate, manage, and use health information

at both national and subnational levels. MEASURE seeks to foster greater ownership and accountability for HIS, and promotes the use of data for decision-making.

The project works with countries at their specific level of capacity with four key desired results in mind:

- Strengthened collection, analysis and use of routine health data. For the least-developed country systems this entails setting up a system where one does not exist, while for more mature country programs our efforts are to “graduate” them so they are maintained with minimal external support.
- Improved capacity to manage HIS. Less mature programs will need help in developing a management strategy or taking on increased leadership while mature programs will have strong leadership in the ministry of health (or relevant ministry) with robust coordination among all stakeholders.

- Information gaps addressed with strong methods and tools. MEASURE Evaluation works to bring countries to a point at which they are assessing their own needs and local experts are developing appropriate methodologies to initiate and scale up effective programs and share information among stakeholders.
- Increased capacity for rigorous evaluation. We work with countries where no demand exists for reliable data or where data is generated by outside experts with the goal to move a country toward the point where in-country research institutions are meeting the government's desire and demand for data. Hallmarks of a mature capacity are a national evaluation system and framework capable of planning and managing rigorous evaluations, a community of data experts and government officials who champion data collection and usage.

How can you access MEASURE Evaluation's resources?

MEASURE Evaluation tools and approaches are available free of charge on the project website:

www.measureevaluation.org. Moreover, the project is available to tailor activities and tools to the particular needs of a country. To explore the possibilities, country governments should contact their local USAID mission. The missions, in turn, can contact the USAID AOR for MEASURE Evaluation, Lisa Maniscalco (Imaniscalco@usaid.gov).

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