





保健関連MDGsに関するアジア太平洋ハイレベル・フォーラム High-level Forum on Health MDGs in Asia and the Pacific

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Promoting Cross Sectoral Actions to Achieve the Health MDGs

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Presentation Statement

By

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We have seen from the two presentations that cross-sectoral interventions can take different forms, depending on country preferences, circumstances and objectives. The Kyrgyz Republic has begun the process of organizing public private partnership for food fortification, while Indonesia attests to the lengthy process of systematic cross-sectoral planning in an increasingly decentralized context.

But there are many challenges in taking a cross-sectoral approach, including a weak regulatory and legal framework, ineffective institutions, lack of capacity, and scarce resources. In such conditions, effective cross-sectoral approaches need to be considered within the overall context of the national planning process with due consideration given to health concerns across the various sectors.

Yet, nobody should expect that everything can be done at once. Therefore, the need for prioritization and careful allocation of resources linked to monitorable results.

Given the significant investments needed to meet the MDGs, appropriate resources – including from the private sector – that contribute to economic growth generally are also important to increase the level of domestic financing available to government. Although economic growth is ultimately the only road to the financial self-sufficiency required to meet the needs of a country's population and human development on a sustainable basis, in the meantime, increased ODA aligned with national priorities will still need to be mobilized by the low income countries in our Region.

There are also choices with regard to institutional structures to deliver results. This may involve the expansion of decision making responsibilities to local governments – as well

as their accountability for results. It should also involve significant participation from those individuals and households who will be directly affected.

In all cases, participation of affected stakeholders has proven essential. This is both the strength and the great opportunity of decentralization: it gives local populations the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process based on local needs. Such participation contributes to ownership and sustainability.

There is a risk, however, that we must be ready to address and mitigate – decentralization requires significant investments in building local capacity. We cannot, at the central level, wash our hands because a project has involved local populations, beneficiaries, or private entities.

Health objectives that directly address the survival of peoples, both within and outside a country's borders, must remain central governments' responsibility. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Health requires all local governments to provide a "Minimum Services Package" of health services. Local governments can provide more services, depending on the local conditions and priorities. But the "Minimum Services Package," which has been identified by experts at the Ministry of Health, must, by law, be ensured.

There are also other significant issues related to public goods – such as communicable diseases and environmental standards – that are not confined within national borders. These regional public goods can be addressed within a regional cooperation framework -- as demonstrated in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Economic Cooperation Program.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have outlined a few of the challenges involved in cross-sectoral approaches. As we move into our discussions, I would like to suggest that – if we do indeed agree that cross-sectoral interventions are necessary for achieving the MDGs – and, more specifically, the Health MDGs – the main question we might usefully address is -- *“How do we institutionalize an appropriate process that ensures consideration of health related MDGs in national strategic plans?”*

That question also raises, in turn, a few others – as examples:

- How can sectoral policies and strategies be shaped to reach their technical objectives while protecting and promoting human health at a high level?
- If existing approaches inadvertently harm human health, how can programs take midcourse corrective actions that improve the healthy life expectancy of the poor?
- What are the key issues and questions that a Minister or program Manager needs to consider in designing an effective and sustainable set of initiatives that promote health as a defining development outcome?
- Beyond the Indonesian and Kyrgyz examples, are there referenced “best practices” for pro-health sectoral strategies and examples of model programs with potential for replication?

Let us now take some time to discuss these questions, and any other issues of interest to you that might affect our shared concern for achieving the health related MDGs.