
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INFORMATION CULTURE

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN ZAMBIA

BACKGROUND

- **Demography**

- » population: 10 million
- » per capita GNP: US\$370
- » per capita health budget: US\$10.50
- » HIV/AIDS: 20% adult population
- » life expectancy decline:
54 ('90) to 37 ('00)

- **Public Health Administration**

- » policy - Ministry of Health
- » implementation (includes HMIS)
Central Board of Health
- » shortage of financial and human
resources

HMIS Deployment

- **Objectives**

- » support decentralized decision making
- » improve quality of information
- » improve efficiency: single reporting channel

- **Implementation**

- » priority in health reform
- » design / testing: 1996 - 1997
- » training: 1997 - 1998

- **Routine Use:** nationwide since 1999

- » all Health Centres
- » all districts, provinces, national
- » hospitals in 2 provinces

Approach

- **Information pipeline built**
 - » data collection and transfer
- **Emphasis on information use**
 - » human interaction with pipeline
- **Strengthen managers' skills**
 - » use of routine information in decision making
 - » strong feedback loops, review and supervision

Achievements

- **Nationwide deployment (including hospitals)**
- **Small number of indicators (74)**
- **Forms reduced from 36 to 2**
- **Automate district, provincial, national offices**
- **Provincial and national health bulletins**
- **Peer review during district planning**

Challenges

- **Ongoing training at all levels**
 - » high staff turnover
- **Problem solving**
 - » self assessment
- **National advocacy**
 - » information use in national planning
 - » emerging information needs
- **Skills transfer**
 - » identification / dissemination of HMIS best practices

Lessons Learned

- **Achievements**
 - » Constructing an information pipeline
- **Challenges**
 - » Stimulating information use
 - » Lessons from other settings
- **Meeting the challenges**

Achievement Lessons

- **Priority investments in information pipeline**
 - » Design
 - international archive of materials
 - » National advisory board
 - » Training and documentation
 - » Automation
 - » Recurrent costs
 - in Zambia less than USD 0.01 per capita

Challenge Lessons

- **Challenge: to improve -**
 - » information use in decision making
 - » quality of information
- **Meeting the challenge: an example**
 - » positive results in Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine
 - focus on specific technical area
 - extant information culture
- **Lessons from positive results**
 - » measurable improvements through use of information
 - » may not be replicable in different settings

Meeting the Challenge

- **Environment**
 - » integrated national system
 - » no habit of information use
 - » minimal resources
- **Investments: to address**
 - » techniques to stimulate information use
 - » how long does it take?
 - » how much does it cost?
 - » how do we measure where we are on the path