

RHINO Workshop

Issues and Innovations in Routine Health Information Systems in Developing Countries

Working Group 6

Technology: Information Technology, Computers (Hardware, Software), Networks and Internet, Digital devices, Interactive Communications

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Technology Base

Lessons:

- Technology can be a blessing or an impediment (but shouldn't be)
- Devices now are available in wide variety of forms and functions and costs
- New Concepts (data warehousing, data mining, data visualization, interactive communications)
- Health Sector has lagged behind in technology and communication infrastructure and tools

Recommendations:

- Principles - Health Sector should benefit from information technology available from other sectors
- Donor Actions - Donors should support communication platforms and linking of existing information systems
- Country Actions - Share experiences, open their systems to others – study tours

Organization and Management

Lessons:

- Political changes often are faster than implementation process for new systems
- Health system has problem holding IT specialists
- Management in health organizations don't understand how to make policy and investment decisions
- Impact evaluation is difficult but important

Recommendations:

- Principles – Improve incentive and mechanisms for IT professionals
- Donor Actions – Advocate discounts and joint development, expand training opportunities
- Country Actions – promote training of Health Professionals in IT, Data Analysis

Implementation Environment

Lessons:

- Maintaining and upgrading is under supported because focus in on product development

Recommendations:

- Information Technology Project should include maintenance and upgrade support

Information System Infrastructure**Lessons:**

- Essential framework for any routine health information system development

Recommendation:

- Clear definition of objectives, data standards, routines and procedures, and a user-focus orientation