



International Conference on Data for Decision (D4D) in Health in Bangladesh on 1-3 April, 2017

Background: Data for Decision (D4D) encompasses the process of data collection, data processing and data analysis in order to take adequate decisions for managing health services. Relevant data are collected in routine information systems and non-routine systems (e.g. Survey, Surveillance and other research). In response to the increasing demand for reliable and timely data in the health sector, countries are seeking to leverage investments, technologies and partnerships to advance their information systems. Accountability, including performance measurement and resource tracking, compels the participation of both citizens and government, empowering both to take responsibility for developing a strong, effective and sustainable system. Well-functioning data platforms that serve as the basis for reporting, transparent reviews and informed decision-making at all levels can enable countries to drive their own health priorities and improve the wellbeing of their populations.

However, the countries including Bangladesh face considerable challenges including multiplicity of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans, vertical or single topic data collection systems, isolated or parallel reporting systems, disjointed efforts and investments in the use of innovations, disparate and inaccessible databases, lack of institutional capacity, and limited analysis and use of data for decision-making and remedial action. Data from research are not shared in information systems.

In April 2016, development partners, countries and global health professionals joined together in Dhaka at the Regional Conference on 'Measurement and Accountability for Health (MA4H), 2016' as the follow-up of MA4Health Summit 2015 in Washington, DC. In 2016's conference, the regional countries identified a set of priority actions and targets that aimed to strengthen country data and accountability systems, as well as management processes for the SDG3. These included: (i) increasing the level and efficiency of investments; (ii) strengthening institutional capacity to collect, compile, disseminate and use data for decision-making; (iii) improving country data sources; (iv) maximizing effective use of the data revolution based on open data standards; and (iv) enhancing accountability and management systems.

In 2016 conference, Bangladesh published a review with some recommendations: 'The Status of Measurement and Accountability for Health in Bangladesh; and, under the leadership of Director General of Health Services, Directorate of MIS along with the supports from development partners has been moving forward to the aims and targets committed in the 2016 conference to address challenges, and, improve measurement and accountability of the system.

As part of strengthening Management Information Systems (MIS), DGHS, MoH&FW has been using Information Communication and Technology (ICT) for collecting routine data on health services, human resource, logistics, citizen's grievance, and, staff attendance for couple of years by using 'District Health Information System (DHIS2)', 'Human Resource Information System (HRIS)' and few other software. To monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Bangladesh based on real time data from different sources, an ***open visualization system has been developed in 2016 to address the issue of ensuring access to information and the accountability of the system.*** A central data ware house and health



information dashboards have been developed and lodged in the DGHS website, where anyone can view current status of health system. It has been allowing comparing routine MIS data with survey data, national and international targets under a central platform and helping tracking progress. Use of publicly accessed health-information dashboards aims also to strengthen monitoring and supervision of real time health situation, accommodate more data sources from health system for effective decision making.

European Union, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, USAID, icddr,b, Measure Evaluation, MSH/SIAPS, HISP Bangladesh, Vital Strategy, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Access to Information (A2I) Programme, other development partners and private sector have been supporting MoH&FW for a robust health information system in the country. GIZ provided technical assistance since 2009 pioneering implementation of DHIS2 for nation-wide e-MIS in Bangladesh. UNICEF along with other development partners has been working for improving health manager's capacity on information management in all 64 districts and implementing **evidence-based planning and budgeting (DEPB)** using real time information system in 24 districts. **Defaulter tracking system** has been developed and implemented for better planning and decision making. EU funded project at icddr,b has been supporting DGHS, MoH&FW, for enhancing health managers' capacity on use of data, and, data visualization through publicly accessed dashboards.

In this year, European Union funded Supporting Public Health Institutes Programmes (SPHIP) that has been implemented in 8 countries (Bangladesh, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Kenya, Laos, Myanmar and Uganda) will meet in Bangladesh to follow-up on their programs. This will create a unique opportunity to highlight the splendid development of digital Health Information System in Bangladesh. It will enable broadening the views on relations between non-routine information in research and routine information systems. Hence, Director General of Health Services, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh would like to host an international conference on **Data for Decision (D4D) in Health** from **1 to 3 April, 2017** in Dhaka which will also be a follow-up event of 'Measurement & Accountability for Health (MA4H) conference' held in Bangladesh on 26-28 April 2016.

Objective of D4D in Health Conference 2017:

1. Overview of global and regional progress to date in strengthening Health Management Information System (HMIS).
2. **Showcasing innovations** from institutes, academics and development partners working in Bangladesh and across the world towards a robust HMIS, non-routine information systems and data driven decision making.
3. Bringing together government officials from neighboring countries such as Nepal, Bhutan, India & Sri Lanka, donors, development partners, leaders from the private sector, civil society, media and other national stakeholders to present the country status on **ensuring access to information, data visualization, and, the accountability of the system.**
4. Enhance co-ordination and opportunity for financial investment aiming efficient HMIS.

The first two-day of the event will be a high profile seminar involving in total 200 people. The third day will focus on field visit in Dhaka and neighboring districts consecutively.