

Health System Strengthening Programme Evaluation

Ghana

Gavi provided funding for Ghana's health system strengthening (HSS) programme from 2007-2013. The 2015 HSS support evaluation was commissioned by the government of Ghana and conducted by Tetley & Associates.

BACKGROUND

Recognising that achieving immunisation coverage is dependent upon strong service systems the Gavi Board took the first steps to widen Gavi support to HSS in 2005.

Countries are encouraged to use Gavi HSS funding to target the "bottlenecks" or barriers in the health system that impede progress in improving the provision of and demand for immunisation and other maternal and child health (MCH) services.

Ghana's HSS programme focused on human resources at health directorates and facilities, capacity building, cold chain equipment, logistics for immunization, and provided support to civil society organisations (CSOs) to increase Under-5 immunization.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess:

- the extent to which planned objectives of Gavi HSS support have been achieved
- the overall contribution of the supports to the achievement of Ghana's national health sector objectives.

METHODOLOGY

Findings are based on a results-based evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative data collected through document review, questionnaires, field visits, and key informant interviews.

KEY FINDINGS

Challenges with maintaining cold chain equipment threaten the sustainability of gains made by EPI coverage.

The EPI's sustainability depends on deeper and more active participation of local community stakeholders including Metropolitan Municipal and District Assembly (MMDA), traditional leaders, faith-based organisations, as well as private sector businesses.

All health sector indices related to immunization have improved and immunization coverage has contributed to improved health status across the country.

The liaison role of UNICEF in ensuring the effective and efficient procurement of necessary vaccines for EPI cannot be over-emphasised.

The need for immunization is now well accepted across the country thanks to multi-stakeholder collaboration, leadership from the Ghana Health Service, and The Ghana Coalition for NGOs in Health which has been instrumental in community sensitisation and mobilisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Alternative funding arrangements should be commenced now to prevent the roll-back of gains made over the years.

The cold chain maintenance team needs to be further decentralized to the MMDA level, strengthened, and resources should be provided to make sure cold chains are maintained at working levels at all times.

In-service training and career development programmes should be intensified to ensure that skills are improved and updated at all levels.

CSOs should be encouraged and adequately funded as part of the health service delivery system.

The data management system should be improved with adequate training and infrastructure for the management of records, data collection, storage, and retrieval.

The report's final recommendations help inform the country and Gavi Board regarding future HSS proposals from the country.
