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Tools, evidence and research gaps for more effective community health worker performance and productivity

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Diana Frymus, Health Systems
Strengthening Advisor, USAID

Sarah Smith Lunsford, Senior
Advisor for Research and
Evaluation, USAID ASSIST

The Need For Establishing a Global CHW Research Agenda

- Outstanding identified CHW knowledge gaps
- No current platform for keeping track of research efforts or forum to disseminate and exchange new information and evidence
- Stronger evidence-base needed for answering challenging and outstanding questions of policy and programmatic significance

Global CHW Harmonization Effort

3 Working Papers Commissioned by GHWA presented at the 3rd Global HRH Forum:

- Framework for partners harmonized support on CHWs
- Monitoring and accountability framework for CHWs
- **CHW Knowledge gaps and defining a Global Research Agenda**



Purpose: to identify all CHW knowledge gaps and outline recommendations for the way in which research should be conducted to enable greater benefit and utilization of results.

Paper Authors:

Diana Frymus, USAID

Maryse Kok, Royal Tropical Institute

Korrie de Koning, Royal Tropical Institute

Estelle Quain, USAID

Findings

Thematic Area 1: Effectiveness of CHWs in relation to Specific Tasks and Responsibilities

Specific tasks	Further investigation of the effectiveness of CHWs compared with other providers delivering the same intervention in the areas of maternal and neonatal health, drug-based interventions and HIV/AIDS care
Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-investigation of workload, safety and quality of CHWs with multiple tasks compared to CHWs with fewer tasks-investigation of different forms of shift work-investigation of CHWs offering preventive health care compared to CHWs offering curative health care-investigation of CHW productivity in relation to single and multiple health issues focus- investigation of optimal geographic/ population focus

Findings

Thematic Area 2: Systems and Contextual Factors that Influence CHWs and their Performance

Health System Factors

-investigation of health system support (e.g. referral systems, formal linkages with health system functions/entities, supervision, supply chain) and their impact on CHW performance

-investigation of the potential role of CHW associations

Community Factors

-investigation of community support (e.g. community involvement in CHW program design, management, implementation, and M&E, formal linkages with community entities/groups, community incentives) and their impact on CHW performance

Combined Health System and Community Support

-investigation of impact from combined health system and community support on CHW performance (e.g. joint supervision, incentive structures)

***Central Recommendation from USAID-hosted CHW Evidence Summit**

Findings

Thematic Area 2: Systems and Contextual Factors that Influence CHWs and their Performance

Intervention Design Factors	-investigation and increased documentation of how interventions are designed and implemented
<i>Selection of CHWs</i>	-further investigation on optimal selection criteria for CHWs
<i>Training and Continuing Education of CHWs</i>	-investigation of effectiveness of different training approaches
<i>Supervision of CHWs</i>	-investigation of effectiveness of systems of supervision
<i>Remuneration of CHWs</i>	-investigation on different models and combinations of remuneration
<i>Information Systems and Monitoring of CHWs</i>	-investigation of the use of information systems for CHW performance
<i>Use of New Technologies</i>	-further investigation on the expanded use of new technologies for CHW programs with focus on sustainability and scale-up
Broader Contextual Factors	-investigation on impact of cultural differences, economy and political context, geographic location (e.g. urban vs. rural effectiveness)

Example: Uganda Village Health Team Productivity and Performance Study

- Evidence gap on how to quantify productivity of community health volunteers and how it relates to their performance, and what factors influence it
- Evidence needed to inform better policy and programming
- Study questions:
 - How can we measure VHT productivity and performance across multiple roles?
 - What factors influence productivity and performance?
 - What is the relationship between productivity and performance?
- Study of 150 VHTs in one district: observations in community settings, record review, interviews
- Findings expected by April 2014

Example: Ethiopia Community Health System

- Engage community groups to help support HEWs and strengthen the linkage between the facility-based health system and the community-based health system
- Raised the profile, awareness and acceptance of the HEWs in the community and among key leaders in different community groups
- Strengthened the system for community representatives to support and guide HEWs in reaching community members

Example: Madagascar CHV Program

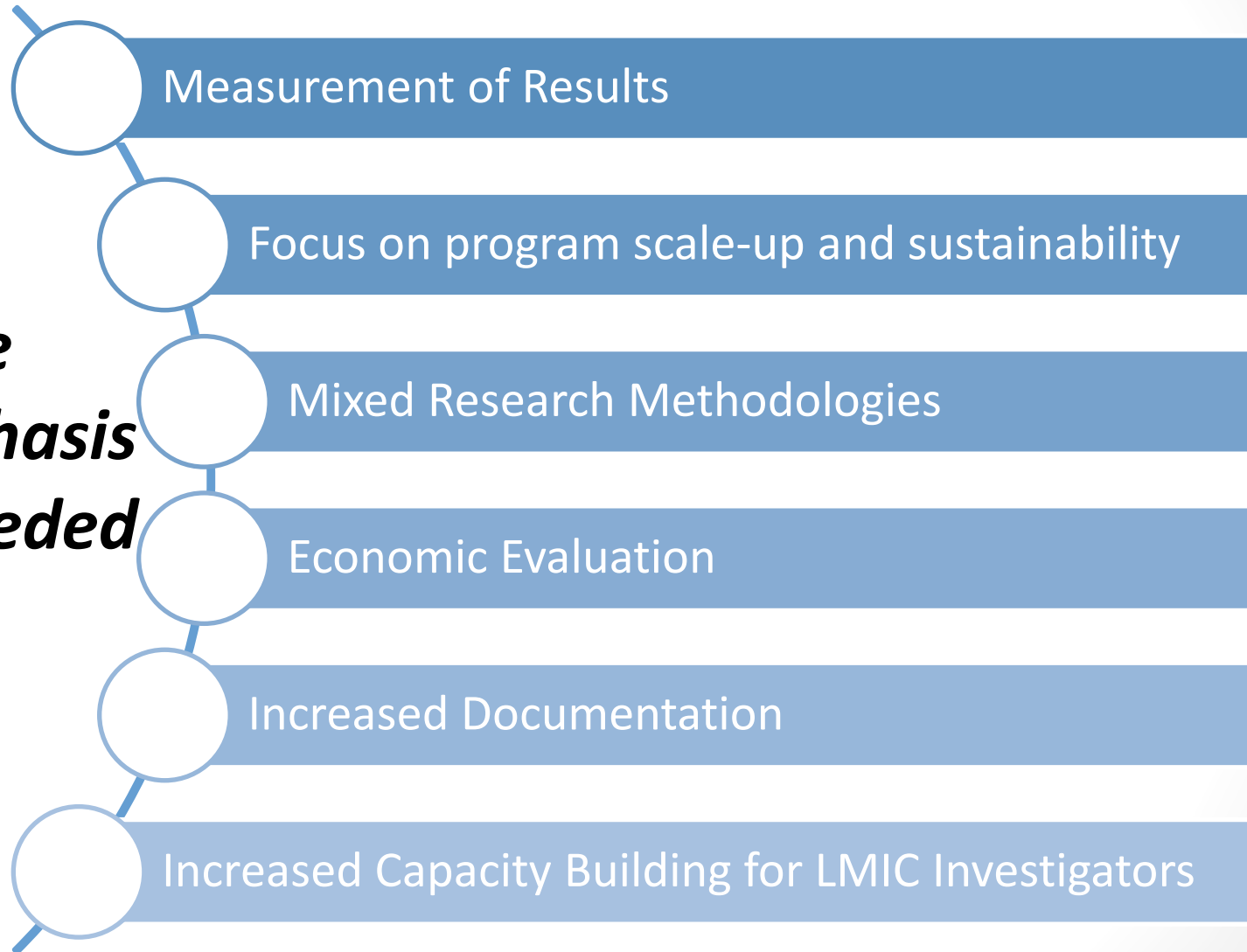
Functionality and Performance

Strengths	Weaknesses
Recruitment (best practice)	Equipment and supplies
Initial training	Individual performance appraisal
Community involvement	Country ownership
Opportunities for advancement	
Documentation and information management	

Identified Research Challenges

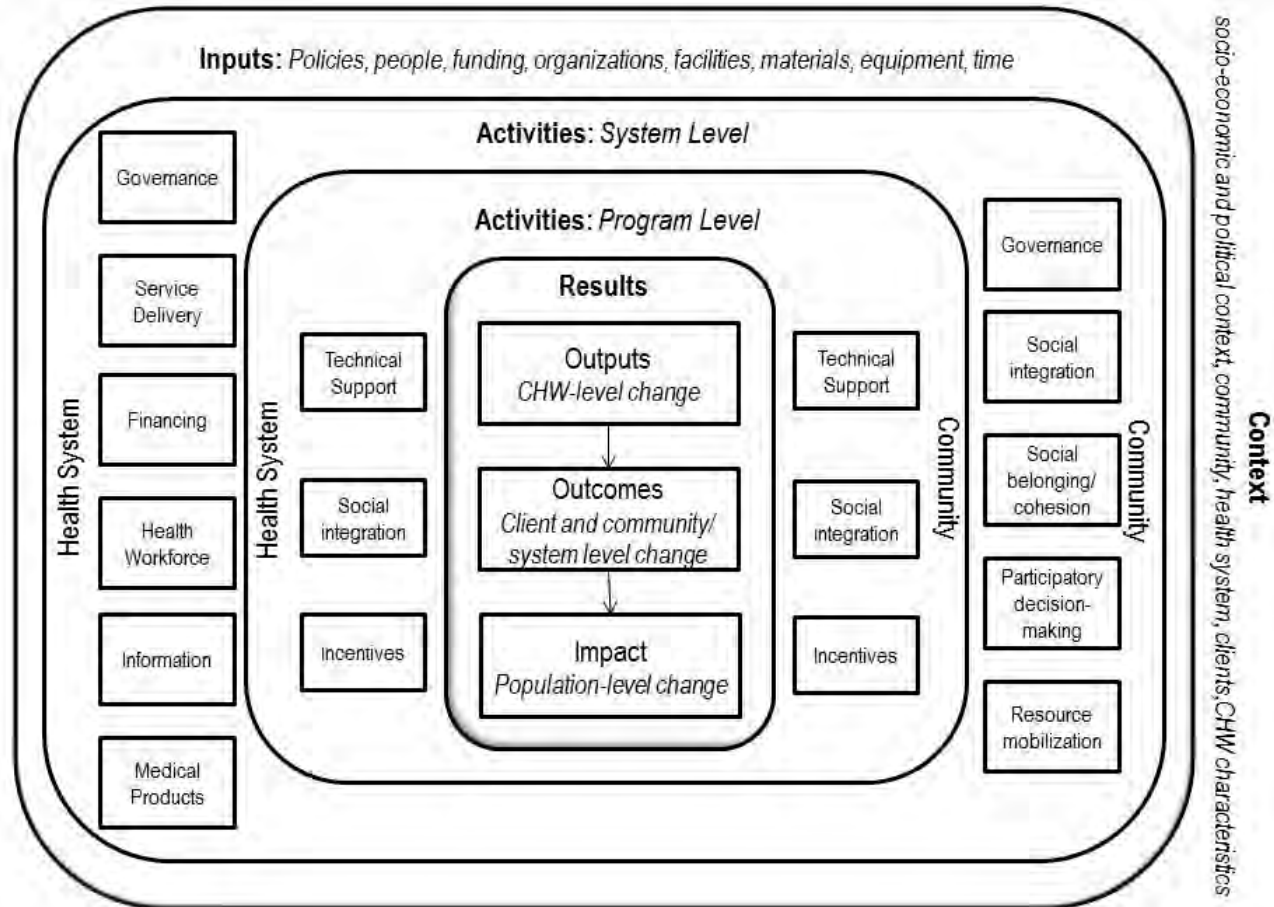
- Defining and reliably measuring productivity and performance
- Accessing CHWs in their communities
- Conducting larger scale research activities
- Capacity of researchers based in LMICs

Research Approaches



***More
emphasis
is needed***

Development of a Logic Model for CHW Programs



Naimoli JF, Frymus DE, Wuliji T, Franco LM, Newsome MH. 2013. A Community Health Worker 'logic model': towards a theory of enhanced performance in low- and middle-income countries. Working Paper. United States Agency for International Development: Washington, DC.

Moving Forward

- Announcement of Commitment to CHWs in Recife (http://www.who.int/workforcealliance/knowledge/resources/chw_output_joint_commitment_2013.pdf)
- GHWA CHW Global Resource Group
- Development of CHW Thematic Working Group for Health Systems Global and 3rd Health Systems Research Symposium (Cape Town, September 2014)
 - Purpose to strengthen the role of CHWs in health system development
 - Bring together a diverse array of individuals and networks involved in CHW programming
 - Encourage the use of emerging evidence base in policy and practice
 - Create environment for shared learning and alignment of research with most identified needs
 - Contact: Kate Hawkins (kate@pamoja.uk.com)

Discussion Questions

- What research have you done around community health workers and what were the key findings?
- What lessons did you learn about how to conduct research about community health workers?