WHO's perspective on private sector engagement for UHC, it's all about effective governance

Engaging the private health service delivery sector through effective governance of mixed health systems
The current situation

• The SDG 17 emphasizes the importance of partnership between governments, the private sector and civil society to attain health related goals and Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

• Member States have adopted the SDG agenda, but will not be able to achieve these goals through public sector service delivery alone.

• Many lower- and middle-income countries have a large and growing contingent of private sector health service delivery actors that have historically been weakly governed and poorly coordinated. They are often the main source of primary health care services to the poor and the underserved globally.

• There are many challenges including a very weak evidence base about the ways and means of working with the private sector to achieve government’s health goals.
EMRO Outpatient and Ambulatory Services

EMRO Health Services Utilized by Poorest Quintile

Primary Care Services for OECD Countries

Initial Presentation of Disease Symptom in SEARO

AFRO Source of Outpatient Health Care by Wealth Quintile

SEARO Source of Inpatient Health Care by Wealth Quintile

The private sector provides the majority of outpatient and ambulatory services and is highly utilized by the poorest quintile in the Eastern Mediterranean region. The private sector is a major source of outpatient and inpatient health care for the rich as well as the poor.

Context | A 2019 WHO study found that the private health sector is an essential source of health-related products and services, especially for primary health care for the poor.

Sources:
7. OECD survey on health system characteristics. 2016.
9. Montagu D and Chakraborty. Analysis of DHS and MICS surveys from 27 AFRO countries representing 732.7M people; and eight SEARO countries representing 1,880M people. 2019.
PRIVATE SECTOR

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

All individuals and organisations that are neither owned nor directly controlled by governments and are involved in the provision of health-related goods and services. These consist of formal and informal healthcare providers ranging from drug shops to specialised hospitals, comprising for-profit and non-profit entities, both domestic and foreign.

Sources:
**PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT** | Is the meaningful inclusion of private providers for service delivery in mixed health systems

**OPERATIONAL DEFINITION**

The meaningful inclusion of private providers for service delivery in mixed health systems using dialogue, policy, regulation, partnerships and financing. Effective engagement involves the successful application of six governance behaviours.

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Sources:
**SCOPE |** Focused on governance to support effective private sector engagement in line with WHO’s mandate on health systems and global health.

- Set the norms and standards for private sector engagement for UHC
- Provide the evidence base support for WHO and member states about where to concentrate their governance efforts.
- Guides practical and effective support for the **implementation** of private sector strategy for UHC at country level
- Provides the basis for learning and evidence generation about effective private sector engagement for UHC
The GOAL | Supporting member stated efforts to operate well-governed health systems in which public and private actors collectively deliver on the realization of UHC.

HOW | Building consensus and an evidence base around the means and strategies of engaging the private sector in health care service delivery.
THE STRATEGY | Supports the strengthening of governance behaviors to assure the private and public sector work together to drive UHC in ways that promote equity, access, quality and financial protection for all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private Sector</th>
<th>Governance Behaviors</th>
<th>Public Sector</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For-Profit Formal Service Delivery</td>
<td>Build Understanding</td>
<td>Foster Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not-For-Profit Service Delivery</td>
<td>Enable Stakeholders</td>
<td>Align Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For-Profit Informal Service Delivery</td>
<td>Nurture Trust</td>
<td>Deliver Strategy</td>
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</tbody>
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Given the heterogeneity of the private sector, different behaviors would be prioritized for different groups

Countries would focus on developing different behaviors relative to the maturity of their health systems and the role of the private sector. Failures and setbacks are to be expected in the process. *

Work on private sector governance should also strengthen governance in the public sector. **

* none of the behaviors act in isolation and no hierarchy exists between the behaviors

** All stakeholders in the system – not just the government – need to drive the system
COVID-19 presents many challenges, particularly for countries with weak governance of mixed health systems...
COVID TOOLS | We have produced multiple guidance documents, case studies and discussion notes in support of private sector engagement during COVID-19

SUPPORTING PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT DURING COVID-19: WHO’S APPROACH

David Clarke is a senior health systems advisor at WHO HQ in Geneva. David works in areas on COVID-19 and engagement and support to implement Universal Health Coverage (UHC), supporting countries in strategically engage the private sector in service of UHC and developing preventative approaches to mitigate the risk of health system disruption.

The COVID-19 pandemic is overwhelming health systems across the world. The need to effectively address this surge in healthcare demand has forced initiatives of health in lock step the public health service delivery system, so the private health sector. Countries with a prevailing mechanism of private sector engagement were able to do this more efficiently than those without established mechanisms of engagement. Both can benefit from central, harmonized, tailored guidance to effectively work with the private sector during the COVID-19 crisis. Private health providers too are looking for ways to contribute but are not well positioned to work effectively with the government.

TOWARDS A WHOLE SYSTEM APPROACH FOR MEETING HEALTH NEEDS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Goqold Bloom is a member of the WHO Advisory Group on the Governance of the Private Sector for UHC.

Many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) have relaxed health systems in which people seek care from different types of public and private healthcare providers, although note governance issues made commitments to progress towards the sustainability development goal of universal health coverage (UHC).-public and private health systems have operated in parallel, with little effort to governments to influence the other. There is an increasing recognition that this will need to change if UHC ambitions are to be achieved.

THE SHIP TO DIGITAL HEALTH HAS SAILED, ARE WE READY TO STEER IT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

Mistella Hustler is a member of the WHO Advisory Group on the Governance of the Private Sector for UHC.

COVID-19 has catalyzed digital health technologies in a range of contexts, including low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). There have been rapid responses to the overwhelming demand placed on health systems by surges in COVID-19 cases, and the promotion of home-based care to reduce transmission through hospital visits. This has demanded behavioral change from patients and physicians alike as technologies have substituted for more traditional care pathways. Governments have raced to develop regulations on the use of such technologies including third-party apps for telehealth communication. Insurers too have been quick to find ways to reinforce digital health services. On the demand side, patients have embraced self-care apps as a means to safely meet their healthcare needs.

ENABLING THE PRIVATE HEALTH SECTOR IN THE NATIONAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19: SIX CURRENT POLICY CHALLENGES

Barbara O’Hanlon and Mark Hellowell

May 2020

OPTIONS HOW TO ENGAGE THE PRIVATE HEALTH SECTOR TO TACKLE COVID-19

Barbara O’Hanlon and Venkat Raman

June 2020

uHC2030

Our mission. What we do. Be

An effective response to COVID-inclusive response: the case of Uganda

13 July 2020

By Robnah Kariuki, Executive Director of Uganda National Health Consumers’ Organisation (UNHCO) and member of the WHO Advisory Group on the Governance of the Private Sector for Universal Health Coverage.