Success beyond numbers: The Salud Mesoamerica Initiative's (SMI) results-based aid approach to improve health services for the poorest in Mesoamerica

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What does SMI aim to change?

SMI Areas: Baseline Situation (2012) – Effective Measles Vaccine Coverage

Chiapas: Measles Vaccine Card: 73%

Chiapas: Measles Dried Blood Sample: 68%

Nicaragua: Measles Vaccine Card: 82%

Nicaragua: Measles Dried Blood Sample: 50%
What does SMI aim to change?

SMI Areas: Baseline Situation (2012) – Obstetric Complications treated according to the norms

Honduras: 11%

Nicaragua: 4.4%

Chiapas: 0.6%

Guatemala: 0%
What is SMI?

**Objective:** Reduce inequities in maternal, neonatal, and child health

**SMI:** Innovative Public-Private Partnership

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Carlos Slim Foundation
- Government of Spain
- 8 Mesoamerican Countries
- IDB

**Grants:** US$ 114m

**Domestic Funding:** US$ 55m
SMI approach: critical features

20%

Target the **poorest 20%** of the population

Results Based Aid (RBA) model
SMI approach: critical features

- Evidenced based interventions and systemic approach
- Innovative **demand-side** interventions
- Context specific and action-oriented **technical** assistance
- **Independent measurement** of performance
- Regional dimension and **benchmarking**
SMI Scoring system

‘All or nothing’ rule focuses efforts on all targets, but makes receiving the performance award more challenging.

- All indicators have equal weights
- If indicator meets target scores 1/total
- 9-12 indicators per operation
- Overall score of 0.8 or above is required
- Miss 1-2 indicators at most

Receive Performance Tranche

Miss 1-2 indicators at most

IDB
What do countries commit to?

Example: **Honduras** (select targets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>1\textsuperscript{st} Operation Targets</th>
<th>2\textsuperscript{nd} &amp; 3\textsuperscript{rd} Operation Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Health Centers with permanent availability of medicines and inputs for obstetric</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and neonatal emergencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Health Centers with permanent availability of medicines and inputs for the treatment of diarrhea and pneumonia in children under 5</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional births by skilled personnel</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>+12 PP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of obstetric complications</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td>+ 40 PP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children less than 5 years that received oral rehydration salts and zinc during the last episode of diarrhea</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>+25 PP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anemia in children 6-23 months</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>- 15 PP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We are here. In most countries, the second operation is in progress.
What makes SMI different?

From...
• Beneficiaries and Donors
• Financing inputs: Buying micronutrients
• Thinking about who and what to support
• Risk intolerance and resistance to change
• Assuming we made a difference

To...
• Partners and joint-investors
• Buying Results: Reducing Anemia
• Focusing on leverage points and removing bottlenecks to reach targets
• Taking smart risks, learn from failures and adapt
• Verifying we met our goal
SMI first round of results (18-24 months)

- **Very sizeable changes** in the supply of essential health care in a short period in all countries

- 69% of the **83 negotiated targets** met in 8 countries

- **El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama** and **Costa Rica** received the performance tranche (PT)

- **Belize, Chiapas** and **Guatemala** mastered an **impressive progress** but fell short of the cut off to receive the PT

- **Chiapas, Guatemala** implemented an improvement plan, with their own resources, were re-measured and **achieved all the targets**
Panama: success stories

- Child care
- Antenatal and postpartum care
- Delivery and newborn care
- Family planning
- Availability of staff
- AIN-C registries for children under 24 months
- Communities with water and sanitation plans
- Birthing plans approved by communities
Chiapas: success stories

*All percentages reflect the Performance Improvement Plan Measurement (PIPM) definitions with no stock-out
Taking stock of SMI: voices from the countries*

Positive Aspects

- Overall feedback is highly positive
- Management by results is new and perceived as catalytic and creates new partnerships
- SMI is enhancing Know-How
- New evidence based strategies and results oriented interventions are being introduced.
- Supply systems are being strengthened

Challenging Aspects

- Short Timelines
- Some targets were too ambitious
- Construction of some indicators could be improved
- Initial incomplete understanding of what needed to happen to achieve targets
- Frustration with the country’s own systems and their capacity to move quickly

*In depth interviews with a sample of national and district level leaders of the Ministries of Health (independent evaluation by Rena Eichler and Susan Gigli).
Thank you

www.saludmesoamerica.org