



## **SPECIAL SESSION: The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Private Sector in LMIC**

Co-organized by USAID and the GFF

Date: Monday July 20, 2020

Time: 8:00 to 9:30 am EST (USA and Canada)

Zoom meeting (with French, Spanish interpretation)

### **OVERVIEW:**

The quick spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has required rapid country and government responses. This has included a major upsurge in innovations, such as digital tools and systems, commodities and new ways of delivering services at the frontlines. At the same time, there is a growing realization that regulation and capacity have not kept pace with technological advancement, confirming the need to fully embed digital solutions, commodities and services in health system strengthening efforts.

The private sector, generally, has the ability to be more agile, resilient and quick to act given its access to capital, capable human resources, an unparalleled capacity to develop innovative technologies, and a vested interest in capturing markets. Populations in many countries are already turning to the private sector for health care, in lieu of traditional government systems. However, there have been challenges where host government systems aren't utilizing the private sector or see them as unaccountable, too expensive, or unmanageable.

Are there paths for better synergies with the private sector beyond the COVID-19 crisis? This session will explore the financing of private providers, including reimbursement schemes and viability of private capital, as well as private sector responses to the crisis. It will build on recent case studies, lessons and innovations from Africa and Asia for a vigorous exchange on best practices to date.

### **SESSION OBJECTIVES:**

This session will explore examples of private sector responses to the pandemic in high-need contexts and critical private sector innovations. The session will also examine common policy and capacity barriers to scale-up, innovation financing sources and the sustainability of public-private partnerships beyond the current COVID-19 pandemic.

In particular, the session plans to tackle the following questions:

1. What are the key critical innovations that have emerged to support the COVID-19 response (e.g. in the areas of testing, diagnosing, communications, financing, health worker protection, etc.)?
2. What has been the reach and coverage of these innovations and largely by whom within the health care market? What have been some limitations for its scale-up?
3. What adjustments have been necessary in policy, delivery and administration to enable access to these innovations, especially among poor and marginalized communities?



4. How can these innovations be leveraged to continue essential services during the pandemic, and how could that change the delivery of these services post COVID-19?
5. What is the role and contribution of the corporate sector in COVID-19? What was the uptake of innovations for the public health response and how can this be developed going forward?
6. What are the common policy and capacity barriers to mainstream and scale-up these innovations (including in technology advancement)? How can the private sector inform government policies and build capacity?
7. What are the prospects and sources of financing from discovery to market and scale-up of innovations, what are likely future (diverse and possibly new) sources of financing?

#### **SESSION PANELISTS:**

Opening Remarks: **Dr. Alma Golden**, Assistant Administrator, USAID, Bureau for Global Health

Moderator: **Dr Aye Aye Thwin**, Senior Advisor USAID, Bureau for Global Health

Panelist:

**Florizelle Lizer**, President & CEO, Corporate Council on Africa

**Dr. Amit N. Thakker**, Chairman, Africa Health Business

**Dr. Gijs Walraven**, Director for Health Aga Khan Development Network

**Ajoy Khandheria**, CEO, Optimal Home Health; Director, Emmanuel Healthcare;  
Founder, Gramin Health Care

**Dr. Praveen Gedam**, Addl. CEO

**Charles Dalton**, Senior Health Specialist International Finance Corporation