



SESSION 1: Resource Mobilization and Prioritization

Co-organized with the support of the Revisiting Health Financing Technical Initiative of the Joint Learning Network (JLN)

Date: Tuesday July 7, 2020

Hour: 7:45 to 9:00 am EST (USA and Canada)

OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic has required countries to immediately increase spending on their health response while trying to maintain existing essential health services. At the same time, government revenues have fallen because of the associated economic slowdown due to declining levels of business activity, employment, trade and investment. Resilient health financing needed to meet these challenges.

To kick off the Forum, this session will examine resource mobilization and prioritization in the context of the pandemic. In particular, the session will look at forecasts of the economic and fiscal impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, and the likely effect on health spending, as well as a diverse range of country experiences in dealing with potential increases in health spending and the reallocation of resources towards the COVID-19 response. Lessons for the future will also be considered to help countries determine the best types of actions that can be taken to develop greater health financing resilience and sustainability moving forward.

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- a. To understand the implications of the current forecasts of the declines in GDP per capita on government health expenditures (i.e. from obligatory prepaid and pooled sources) in 2020 and 2021.
- b. To identify whether and how countries have managed to increase spending per capita on the COVID-19 health response to date, from:
 - I. The release of emergency funds, domestic or external;
 - II. Increased development assistance for health;
 - III. Increased government spending funded by greater public sector borrowing;
 - IV. Reallocation of funds from other sectors to health; and/or
 - V. Reallocation of funds within the sector to COVID-19 from other types of services.
- c. To explore the relative importance of demand (e.g. patients choosing not to use health services) and supply (e.g. governments deciding to shift money, staff, hospital beds) on influencing shifts in resources to the COVID-19 response from other health services.
- d. To share lessons learned on revenue generation and how to reprioritize resources in the face of a possible second wave of COVID-19 or if there is a prolonged recession.

Options exist to increase government expenditures on health even during the dual shocks of a pandemic and a recession, but it is unlikely that pre-pandemic levels of spending will be able to be increased or maintained without deliberate decisions by governments to give more priority to health. Where additional funds are not sufficient to finance the pandemic health response and maintain existing essential

health services, a fair process for deciding which services could be put on hold and which ones need to be continued at all costs is preferable to allowing these decisions to be made ad hoc.

CHAIR:

Dr. Somil Nagpal, Senior Health Specialist, Health, Nutrition and Population Global Practice, World Bank

MODERATOR:

Dr. Kalipso Chalkidou, Director, Global Health Policy, Center for Global Development

PRESENTATION: Dr A. Tandon, Lead Economist, World Bank: “The possible impact of the pandemic on health spending”

PANELISTS:

- Dr. Tamar Gabunia, First Deputy Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs, Georgia
- Dr. B.A. Pungkas, Head of Health and Nutrition, National Planning Agency (Bappenas), Republic of Indonesia
- Mr. Ben Akabueze, Director, General Budget Office, Federal Republic of Nigeria