

Unpacking Health System Strengthening

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World Bank HQ, June 25-27, 2009





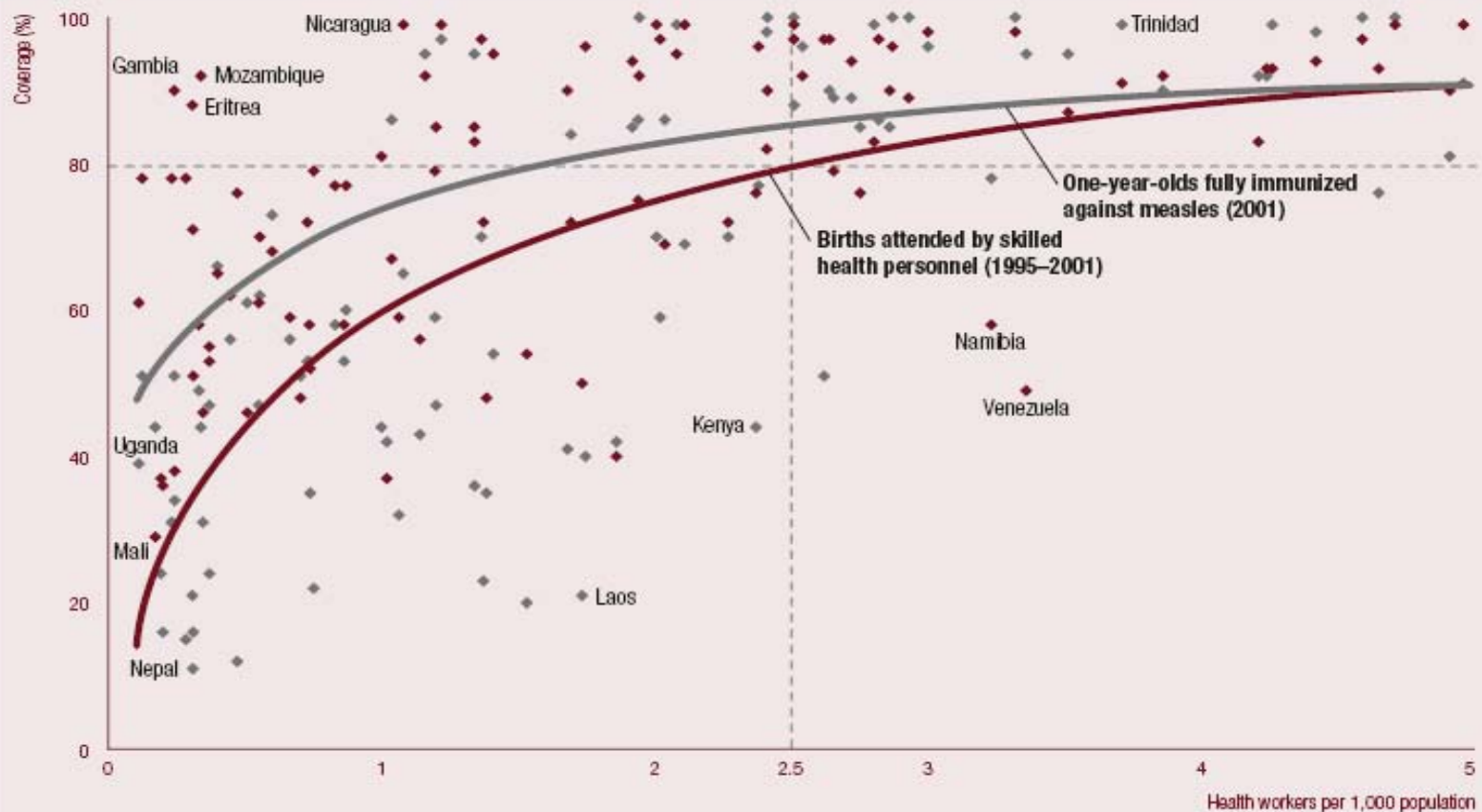
Non-problems and problems

- What is NOT the problem –
 - Building up health systems capacities and improving the performance of health systems is widely agreed as essential for sustaining and increasing outcomes and equity
- Some problems
 - HSS not clearly defined or conceptualized
 - “HSS” (note quotes) has been used as term of convenience by agencies to signal something new and additional – neither rigorous nor consistent
 - Almost any support to health interventions can be considered HSS
 - Inputs-focus risks insufficient attention to process changes needed to improve health system performance



Thinking Beyond Inputs

Figure 1.3 Health service coverage and worker density



Source: Compiled from UNDP 2003 and WHO 2004a.



Unpacking HSS Can Help Us To:

- Clarify elements for funding and action in HSS strategies
- Identify focal areas for different GHAs
- Find synergies and complementarities between GHAs and where there are likely to be separate programs of work
- Situate donor-financed and supported HSS fits within larger national policies and plans
- Measure efforts in terms of inputs, outputs, and outcomes for both GHAs and countries.
- Develop better evaluation and knowledge support which can lead to improvement in HSS efforts



Two Dimensions

From Inputs to Reform: More, Better, New Approaches

*Addn'l health system inputs:
HRH, drugs, bldgs, vehicles*



*Reforms to health systems
improving access, quality,
demand*

**More
(Inputs)**



**Better
(mainly govt)**



**New
(mainly non-govt)**

From Single Disease to Cross-Cutting Health System Elements

*Single Disease
or interventions*



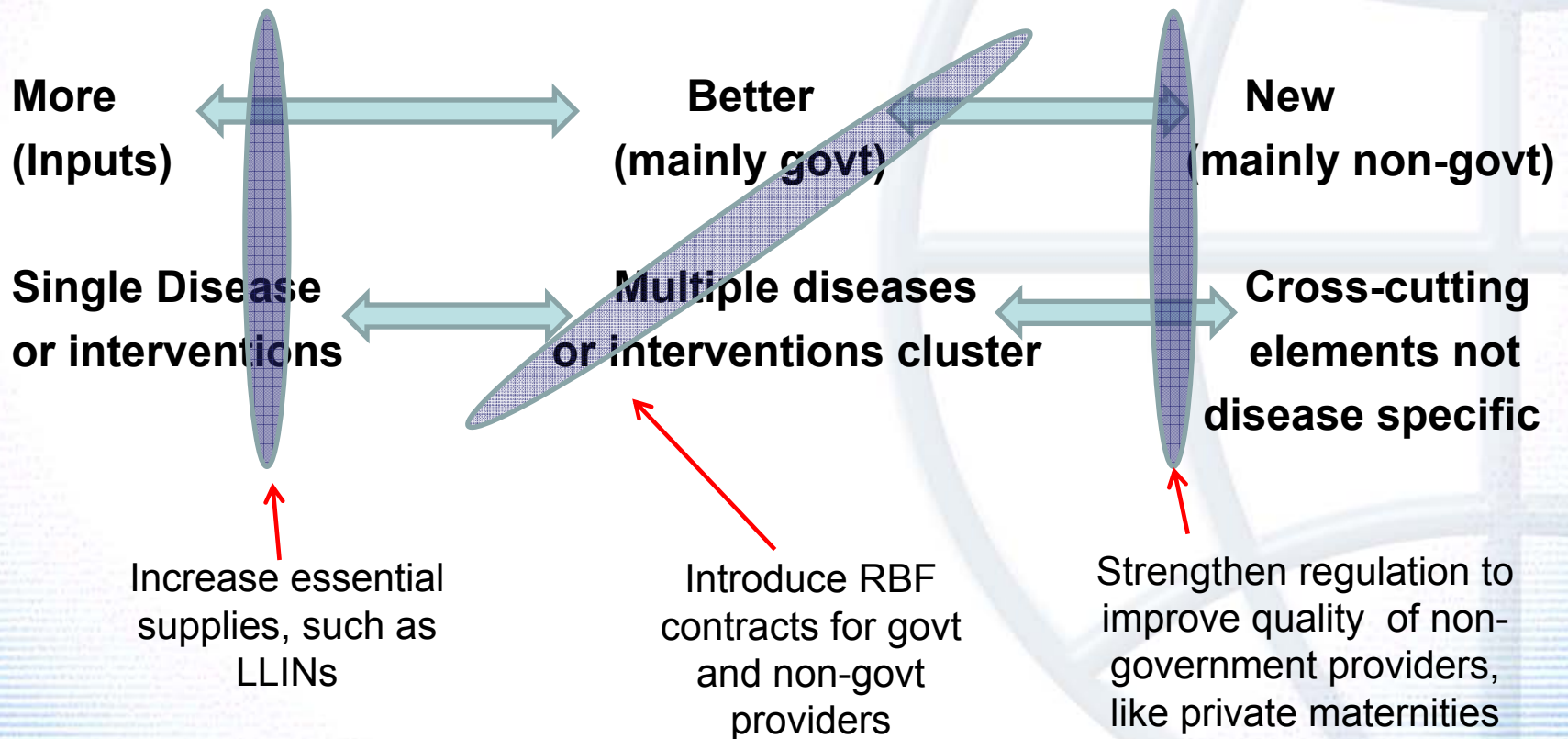
*Multiple diseases
or intervention cluster*



*Cross-cutting
elements not
disease specific*



Combining Dimensions to Delineate the Scope of HSS Actions?





Comparative Advantages of Different Agencies?

More (inputs) ← ----- Better (mainly govt) ← ----- New (mainly non-govt) ----->

Single disease/intervention ↑↓ Related diseases or intervention cluster ↑↓ Cross-cutting elements			



Next Steps? Some questions...

- Wider consultations – how do different stakeholders view the HSS agenda? How to improve definition of the More-Better-New space?
- What are countries doing, and planning to do in HSS? How do external resource flows fit into these national plans?
- How to balance better the inputs and “software” (technical support, capacity building, M&E, research) support to countries?
- How to improve our measurement and accountability for progress and results?