

SUSTAINABLE IMMUNIZATION FINANCING

Summary Digest

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SIF Holds Two Successful Sub-Regional Forums in Dakar and Kathmandu

Two recent Sabin-organized events helped put immunization financing on parliamentary agendas in six African and Asian countries. The first of these sub-regional parliamentary briefings took place in Dakar, Senegal on December 9-10, 2009. Sixty-five parliamentarians, ministry of health and ministry of finance officials from Cameroon, Mali and Senegal came together to share ideas and chart a way forward. The second, held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 9-11 February, 2010, generated similar results. Co-sponsored by Sabin and UNICEF/Nepal, the event drew 150 participants from Nepal, Cambodia and Sri Lanka.

The Dakar forum was planned by Sabin Senior Program Officer Jonas Mbwangue and his WHO and UNICEF regional counterparts. The Senegalese Ministry of Health hosted the event. During the first day, participants discussed the various factors affecting immunization financing. One by one, the national EPI managers presented their program performance indicators and expenditure data, focusing on the cost per child fully immunized and sources of funding. The parliamentarians learned just how donor-dependent the programs are. They also realized the three countries face similar situations. On Day Two, the

Examples of Recommendations from Dakar:

- EQUIP the immunization program with the ability to present a budget request that is based on a clear, precise, and realistic evaluation of needs.
- PLACE information on local immunization program performance and operational resource needs at the disposal of relevant parliamentary committees and businesses.
- INSTITUTIONALIZE a framework for information exchange between parliament and the ministers of finance and economy, particularly for drafting budgets.

Examples of Recommendations from Kathmandu:

- OVERSEE and monitor child-health, nutrition and immunization indicators, and the implementation of program activities, from central to grass-root levels to ensure tangible results, at scale, for women and children.
- DEVELOP a joint workplan, as part of the government workplan, linking related ministries, local bodies, civil society organizations, NGOs and community-based organizations.



Sabin and UNICEF co-hosted a Parliamentary Briefing on Child Health Status and Sustainable Immunization Financing in Kathmandu, Nepal. Photo depicts Nepali Parliamentary Organizers and SIF Senior Program Officer Devendra Gnawali.

parliamentarians formulated a list of specific recommendations (see sidebar) which were later translated into an action plan to be followed jointly by the countries. The Senegalese delegation, represented by Senator Ngoné Ndoye, Chairwoman of Health, Population and Social Affairs, also presented a report to Hon. Mamadou Seck, President of the Senegalese Parliament, and to the ministers of finance, economy and health.

In attendance was Miloud Kaddar, Chief Health Economist with the Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals Division in WHO/Geneva. Kaddar found the interplay of managers, policymakers and legislators intriguing.

“The challenge before us now is to help them carry out these recommendations,” commented Kaddar.

For many of the 150 Asian participants, the Kathmandu meeting provided a welcome respite from constitution-writing, truth and reconciliation and other weighty matters. This was the first time that parliamentarians from the three countries met. Sabin Senior Program Officer Dr. Devendra Gnawali worked with Dr. Sudhir Khanal of UNICEF Nepal and members of Nepal's Parliamentary Committee on Women, Children, and Social Welfare to prepare the agenda. The meeting was chaired by the Honorable Mrs. Snadhya Devi, Chairperson of Women, Children and Social Welfare

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SIF Holds Two Successful Sub-Regional Forums

(Continued from Page 1) Committee of Nepalese Parliament. Dr. Y.V Pradhan and Dr. S.R. Uprety presented overviews of Nepal's maternal and child health programs. Genevieve Begkoyian, Regional UNICEF Health Advisor, summarized the health situation for the South Asian region. Participants also learned about immunization financing issues from health economists Claudio Politi, who recently joined the WHO/IVB team, and Santiago Cornejo of the GAVI Alliance. Following their regional overviews, the three national delegations shared their experiences. For most of the MPs, the forum was their first in-depth exposure to maternal and child health programs and how they are financed. Each Q&A session generated spirited discussions as the MPs pondered their options. The MPs drafted the Kathmandu Declaration for Future Directions in maternal and child health financing (see sidebar) and agreed to meet next in Cambodia.

Ugandan Ministry of Health Hosts Second Forum on Sustainable Immunization

On 24 February 2010, SVI Senior Program Officers Diana Kizza and H el ene Mambu-ma-Disu attended the second Sabin-supported Forum on Sustainable Immunization in Kampala, Uganda. The event was hosted by the Ugandan Ministry of Health and was chaired by acting Director General for Health Dr. Francis Runumi. Over 40 participants attended. Among them were fifteen Members of Parliament, including the Chairs of the Budget, Finance and National Economy Committees. Also on hand was Fred Mutyama, Senior Economist in charge of Social Sectors, Budget Division, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Representatives of the Ugandan National Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Private Sector Foundation gave presentations on how the private sector might be engaged in the search for sustainable immunization financing. The timing of the forum was fortunate in that the new annual government budget cycle was just beginning.

In opening remarks, Dr. Runumi described the fiscal problems in providing health care to a population that has grown from 9 million in 1970, to 31.5 million in 2010. Uganda's social and health services budgets have not expanded in proportion to this rapid population growth. Shortages in trained staff present additional obstacles.

Fred Mutyama gave the MPs an in-depth explanation of the budgetary and sectoral allocation process. Achieving financial sustainability for immunization and other health programs, he said, will require both ministries to work together more efficiently. After the briefings, the participants agreed that new guidelines are needed for private sector involvement in health financing.

The forum generated reports in various media outlets, including NTV, UBS, WBS, KFM and The Daily Monitor.

SIF Finds Opportunities in Challenge-Prone Madagascar

When Sabin Senior Program Officer Helene Mambu-ma-Disu and SIF Director Mike McQuestion arrived in Madagascar for an exploratory visit from December 7-13, 2009, they knew they were facing a challenging situation. In March 2009, political instability in the island nation boiled over, resulting in a military coup, the exile of the elected president, violent political protests and the dissolution of parliament. The transitional government has not been recognized by most other nations and Madagascar has seen the suspension of most foreign aid programs.

Despite the situation, Mambu-ma-Disu and McQuestion found hopeful signs that the SIF Program could make a contribution. They met with representatives from WHO, UNICEF, USAID, JICA, the IMF, the World Bank and the Malagasy Government. The latter included the national immunization program manager and the Director of Budget Coordination at the Ministry of Finance. These meetings produced a green light for the SIF Program to begin activities in Madagascar.

The national immunization program continues its work despite budget uncertainties and many staff vacancies. Duress is a daily condition for Immunization Manager Randriamanalina Bakolalao. At the Ministry of Finance and Budget, Harifidy Ranaivoson, Chief of Program Budgeting, warmly welcomed the two visitors. The crisis has put many of his initiatives on hold as well. An example is a continuous performance monitoring system he and his team have been developing with Ministry of Health counterparts. The system will ensure that future budgetary allocations conform to actual program needs.

"Perhaps that work can be resumed with Sabin's participation," commented Ranaivoson.

"The SIF program can offer some stability in a time of great uncertainty in Madagascar by bringing together the right counterparts to work on a positive priority," said Mambu-ma-Disu. "Reducing poverty and improving the livelihood of the Malagasy people through sustainable immunization financing shouldn't be a political issue."



EPI Managers from Liberia and Sierra Leone exchange experiences

An important strategy of the Sustainable Immunization Financing (SIF) Program is peer exchange - visits from one country to another where individuals learn best practices from their peers. On December 20, 2009, Liberian Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) Manager, Thomas Nagbe became an SIF-sponsored peer exchanger when he traveled to Sierra Leone to meet with his immunization counterparts during a four-day trip.

Liberia and Sierra Leone are neighboring countries that share a recent history of lengthy civil-wars. They face similar challenges to achieving sustainable immunization financing.

“In both Liberia and Sierra Leone, you will notice that the national immunization programs are under-funded, very donor dependent, and it’s often difficult to access allocated funds,” said Cliff Kamara, Sabin Senior Program Officer who works with both countries. “Many of the key decision-makers, like ministers of health and finance, are not yet informed on the importance of ensuring sustainable immunization financing.”

During his Sierra Leone visit, Nagbe observed how that country manages and finances its immunization program. Nagbe also wanted to see how Thomas Samba, Sierra Leone’s national immunization manager, and his parliamentary counterparts work together. Sierra Leone has held two parliamentary briefings to date. Liberia held its first briefing in late March. Nagbe also met with key parliamentarians in Freetown who successfully pushed for an increased 2010 immunization budget. The visit culminated with a press conference.

“The visit was very worthwhile and successful,” said Nagbe. “I know that Samba and I will continue to keep in contact and work together to ensure that our nations can achieve sustainable immunization financing in the near future. We are in this together.”



From Left to Right: Mr. Peter Sam-Kpakra (Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Sierra Leone); Ms. Angeline Tarr (EPI Communications Officer, Liberia); Honorable Edwin P. Gaye (Chairman, House Standing Committee on Health and Social Welfare, Liberia); Honorable Mrs. Bintu Myers (Chairlady, Parliamentary Health Committee, Sierra Leone); Mr. Clifford Kamara (SIF Program Officer); Honorable Tokpah H. J. Mulbah (Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives, Liberia)

African Immunization Experts meet in Harare: Financing an emerging theme



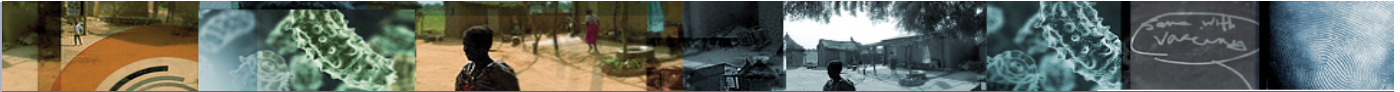
SIF Senior Officers attend the Annual Region Conference on Immunization in Harare. From Left to Right: Helene Mambu-ma-Disu, Clifford Kamara, Jonas Mbwangue & Diana Kizza.

The WHO Regional Office in Africa convened its annual regional conference on immunization in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 14-17 December 2009. The meeting drew around 150 participants, including the members of the expert WHO Regional Task Force on Immunization. SIF Program Director Mike McQuestion and SIF Program Officers Clifford Kamara, Helene Mambu-ma-Disu, Jonas Mbwangue and Diana Kizza also attended.

Though mainly a technical meeting, this year’s agenda treated several immunization financing issues. Summarizing the African scene, WHO/AFRO’s Programme Manager for Immunization, Dr. Deo Nshimirimana, observed that countries are increasingly using data for decision-making and are preparing better immunization program budgets. Immunization managers are starting to make strong investment cases based on actual program performance, he added.

One impetus for this innovation has been the Sabin-organized parliamentary briefings, which have involved eight African countries to date. Another factor is the improving quality of data reported from the field. Participants heard Dr. Popsy Mugenyi, Uganda’s EPI Manager, describe how recently deployed district-level biostatisticians are making this happen in his country. Financing innovations are also coming from the donor side. Beginning in 2010, external partners GAVI, the Global Fund and the World Bank will form a single integrated budget for each project country, reported GAVI’s Head of Country Support, Mercy Ahun.

During the meeting, participants were introduced to several new TFI members. Among them are two health economists, Dr Obinna Emmanuel Onwujekwe of Nigeria and, from Kenya, Dr Germano Mwabu. With their addition, WHO/AFRO is keeping the spotlight on immunization financing.



Mali's Immunization Champion: Ouali Diawara



Sabin SIF's Immunization
Champion,
The Hon. Ouali Diawara

In each pilot country, immunization financing champions are emerging. The Sabin SIF Program would like to recognize one such champion, the Honorable, OUALI DIAWARA, of Bamako, Mali. As Chairman of the Malian Parliament's Financial Committee Hon. Diawara has played a leadership role in opening discussions between the Ministries of Health and Finance on the issue of resource mobilization for the national immunization Program.

Hon. Diawara worked with Senior Program Officer Jonas Mbwangue to plan Mali's first parliamentary briefing, which took place in August 2009. At a September, 2009 African Union meeting on health financing in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Hon. DIAWARA urged fellow parliamentarians to more actively scrutinize their health budgets. Hon. DIAWARA subsequently coordinated parliamentary advocacy efforts leading to an increase in Mali's 2010 immunization program budget. A businessman by vocation, Hon. DIAWARA has been a member of Mali's parliament since 2006.

Sabin SIF News Highlights

- The second SIF Program Partners Meeting took place on 4 February 2010 at the GAVI Office in Geneva. Attending were the SIF Program team and representatives from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, GAVI, WHO, UNICEF and the World Bank. The meeting was chaired by SVI Executive Vice-President **Ciro de Quadros**. Partner representatives described their respective policy and programmatic approaches to immunization financing. Each proposed areas where the SIF Program and partner agencies might collaborate in the coming months. The detailed meeting report can be found [here](#).
- On February 23rd, 2010, the Rotary Club of Chicago presented Sabin Vice-President Dr. **Ciro de Quadros** with the Chesley Perry Award for Distinguished Humanitarian Service for global polio eradication. The award ceremony coincided with Rotary International's 105th anniversary and global call to "End Polio Now." Dr. de Quadros award is in recognition for leading a surveillance and response strategy to eliminate polio from the Americas.
- In January, 2010, SIF Senior Program Officer **Helene Mambu-ma-Disu** received the World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa (WHO/AFRO) Outstanding Service Award in recognition of her over 20 years of service to improve public health in Africa. Dr. Mambu-ma-Disu represents the Sabin SIF Program in DR Congo, Rwanda and Madagascar.
- The Sabin Vaccine Institute is pleased to introduce **Sandra Keller**, SIF Program Officer, as the newest addition to the Advocacy Program on Sustainable Immunization Financing (SIF) team.

Sustainable Immunization Financing Program Activity and Outputs This Period

Milestone/Activity (9.1.09 – 3.31.10)	Goal	Achieved	Details:
Visits to SIF target countries by SIF Senior Program Officers (excluding resident countries Cameroon, DR Congo, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Uganda)	20	23	Cambodia (3), Ethiopia(4), Kenya(3), Liberia(3), Madagascar, Mali (2), Nigeria, Rwanda, Sri Lanka(2), Senegal(3)
National Parliamentary Briefings	12	16	Nepal (5), Cambodia, DR Congo, Mali, Senegal, Liberia, Sierra Leone (2), Ethiopia, Uganda (2), Cameroon* *SVI sponsored meeting of the Association of Mayors
Sub-regional Parliamentary Briefings	9	6	Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, (Dakar, 12/09), Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Nepal (Kathmandu, 2/10)** **Co-sponsored with UNICEF
International Partner Meetings	7	10	• GAVI (Lilongwe,10/09; Hanoi, 11/09; Bamako, 11/09; Windhoek, 3/10) • WHO/AFRO (Harare, 12/09; Addis, 2/10; Ouagadougou, 3/10; Libreville, 3/10) • UNICEF (Dakar, 9/09) • GIM (Geneva, 2/10)
Advocacy activities inserted into cMYPs	8	5	Sierra Leone, Uganda, Mali, Senegal, DR Congo
Peer exchanges involving SIF target countries	8	10	*(See sabin.org/sif for list of peer exchange countries)
National routine EPI budget increased	15	4	Sierra Leone, Senegal, DR Congo, Nepal

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