



SAVING LIVES THROUGH BETTER DATA

Strategies and Tactics from the BID Initiative

Q4 2015

From the Director

Happy New Year!

As 2016 gets off to a strong start for our team, we've taken time to reflect on some of the accomplishments we shared last year.

We've had many achievements, some difficult challenges, and several lessons learned that all brought us to the halfway point of our grant. As I return from medical leave and we charge forward in 2016, we're also taking the opportunity to be thoughtful about what the BID Initiative needs at this stage in the grant, where our efforts are best focused, and how to align the team against our current priorities.

To this end, I'll be transitioning back to the BID Initiative team in a new role as a Senior Global Outreach Advisor. We're at a critical time with the initiative where sustaining momentum and mobilizing additional resources will be key to our success. I'll be focusing my time and efforts on continuing to champion BID and sharing progress so we can continue raising awareness and support for the important work that's taking place and further the BID Initiative's reach and impact. Laurie Werner will become the official Global Director, a role that she was already acting in over the past several months, during my leave.

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The BID Learning Network (BLN) is intended to be a

Laurie and I, together with the BID Initiative team and partners like you, are so excited for the next two years. We're looking forward to pushing ahead in Tanzania and launching roll out activities in Zambia. BLN will also launch study trips and small grants, with a design collaborative to be held later this year. In the next few months, we're also focusing on how best to package BID interventions and sharing lessons from Tanzania and Zambia more broadly.

Thank you for your support! We're excited to share many more successes and lessons learned with you in the year ahead.

Best wishes,



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PATH



Laurie Werner
Global Director, BID Initiative
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BLN Discussion Meeting



In December, we held a BLN Discussion Meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, bringing together partners, funding agencies, and

platform where participants can contribute ideas, share experiences and actively participate, helping each other as you face similar challenges.

[JUMP IN. GET INVOLVED. →](#)

NOTEWORTHY BLOG POSTS

[The Role of Data in the Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[Return on Investment: Strengthening People, Processes, and Technology Improves Supply Chain Performance in Tanzania](#)

[Barcodes Are Beginning to Stick](#)

[Barcodes: Quenching a Thirst for Data](#)

NOTEWORTHY RESOURCES

[BLN Meeting Report & Presentations](#)

[Digital Health Solutions: Driving Better Health Decisions](#)

[Webinar: Logistics management system in The Gambia](#)

[Webinar: TechNet Resource Library](#)

Led by PATH and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Better Immunization Data

country participants from 17 countries, many from West, East, and Southern Africa.

The meeting provided a venue for peer learning and opportunities for creative, collective thinking and innovation between countries that share common problems in immunization service delivery. The four-day meeting enabled a rich exchange of knowledge, experiences, and ideas that will facilitate collaborative links in support of improved data quality, collection, and use in participating countries.

Read the meeting [report and see the presentations](#).

Kick-off Meeting in Zambia



In Zambia, we [kicked off development of the national immunization registry](#) in Livingstone. Our partners from the University of Oslo met with the BID global team, as well as health workers and key national, provincial, facility, and community-level stakeholders within EPI, in addition to global partners working in areas such as birth registration, which touches on immunization data. The discussions informed a shared road map that will guide system development. Opportunities for showcasing the system as it's built will also provide further venues for testing and feedback.

With roll out launching in Zambia, lessons learned from the immunization registry process in Tanzania are being applied to the design process, while tailored to fit the needs of users in Zambia. The refinement of roll out activities in both countries will inform and strengthen the ongoing roll out of BID interventions.

(BID) Initiative is grounded in the belief that better data, plus better decisions, will lead to better health outcomes. Its vision is to empower countries to enhance immunization and overall health service delivery through improved data collection, quality, and use.



Photos: PATH/Trevor Snapp & Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation/Riccardo Gangale.

Facilities Feel Positive Impact of BID



As interventions are introduced across Tanzania, adopters are beginning to feel firsthand the benefits of BID's approach to better data quality, collection, and use. The electronic immunization registry has been in use at Mareu Health Facility for a few months now, and health workers are **excited about the changes** they see. By saving time with streamlined tools, they have been able to see more children. Additionally, tools built into the system have made it easier to track defaulters and follow up with caregivers.

The introduction of new tools and processes has not always been smooth. In some facilities, the use of **barcodes were initially met with concern** by caregivers who worried their children were being tracked by unfamiliar technology. The sustained dedication and commitment of health workers has led to greater awareness and education about this simple intervention and its ability to help health workers quickly and easily access the immunization records of individual children.

Tracking Children's Immunization Records Nationally



At December's BLN Discussion Meeting, one of the most heavily explored topics was the **need for unique identifiers** to track children and their immunization records. While barcodes are being introduced in BID's demonstration countries, participants from outside of these areas discussed the need for national support of uniform systems to register and identify new babies receiving health services, including immunizations. With tenuous identification methods until the age of 16 or 17 in most countries, participants agreed this global challenge affects continuity of care and the quality of health service delivery.

Intervention Spotlight: Supply Chain and Logistics Management

A key component of BID's work is improving the policies, practices, and tools that surround vaccine stock and supplies. In the past, local health facilities in Tanzania have faced stock outs or shortages because of a logistics management system that tracks antiretroviral and other medications, but not vaccines.

PATH is working with the Ministry of Health and other partners to incorporate immunization requirements into a vaccine information management system or VIMS (based upon the existing electronic logistics management information system used in Tanzania).

While these changes are under development, BID is supplying an

interim solution with a stock management component included in the recently introduced electronic immunization registry.

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