



BID INITIATIVE

Better data. Better decisions. **Better health.**

SAVING LIVES THROUGH BETTER DATA

Strategies and Tactics from the BID Initiative

Q2 2017

Letter from the Director

From the BID Initiative's earliest days, we strived to ensure that the role and expertise of the governments in both demonstration countries were front and center, with the understanding that their engagement is critical to successfully improving data quality and use. As the BID Initiative is in its final year, we're making an even more deliberate effort to lead from behind. Government officials in Tanzania and Zambia are responding in-kind, embracing this role and reinforcing their commitment to scale data use interventions beyond our initial demonstration regions. In Tanzania, for instance, the government is increasingly taking financial ownership by funding tablet replacements and will play a lead role in sensitization launch events to commence [expansion to Tanga and Kilimanjaro](#) throughout the year.

Sustainability has always been at the core of our [founding principles](#) and is built into the very fabric of our implementation approach. This includes financial, technical, and political

sustainability. Interventions must have funding streams to continue, policies that encourage data use and data quality interventions that feed into the broader health system, and the knowledge transfer and technical expertise to manage scale-up and ongoing use of the solutions over time.

Even as BID's direct role largely comes to an end next year, what lies ahead is more of a beginning than ending. What does sustainability mean to the BID Initiative? We will measure sustainability by the continuation and scale-up of data use and data quality interventions in Tanzania and Zambia and the degree to which they're adopted in other BID Learning Network countries that have played a critical role in identifying and developing solutions to immunization data challenges.

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Sincerely,



Laurie Werner
Global Director, the BID Initiative
PATH

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Sustainability: The key to long-term success



From the beginning, the BID Initiative worked closely with the governments of Zambia and Tanzania to develop interventions that would address the data challenges that prevent children from being fully immunized against serious diseases. A key objective was to implement interventions that could be sustained for the long term, and continuing to advocate for this sustainability will be a critical undertaking over the next few months.

Sustainability can take several forms and will likely be a staged process. The first step involves governments in either country running and scaling up data use and data quality interventions beyond the initial demonstration regions. The second part requires the governments, with support from cooperating partners, to scale up the interventions nationwide. To assist Tanzania and Zambia in this transition, we have developed a sustainability strategy and resource mobilization plan. A critical aspect to sustainability is understanding the investment and cost savings associated with the shift from paper to digital immunization registries. To help with this, we're conducting a costing study that outlines the cost of implementing data use interventions, in their current form, in one region in both Tanzania and Zambia. Information from this study will help inform decisions to scale up.

"We'll know we've successfully scaled up when both Tanzania and Zambia are empowered to enhance immunization and overall health service delivery through improved data collection, quality, and use," said Monica Mutesa, BID's Technical Advisor for Advocacy and Public Policy, "and when they actually invest in the scale-up, using government resources or access funds, or a combination of the two."

While the Ministry of Health is the key driver of sustaining these data use interventions, they will closely engage other government departments and stakeholders in the health data space. Coordination will include input from a national review group in Zambia comprising various stakeholders, including those in the private sector, and will support sustainability strategy implementation.

Zambia's electronic immunization registry launches in health facilities across Southern Province



This quarter, the BID Initiative, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Ona Data, and other government stakeholders, **released the most recent version of Zambia's Electronic Immunization Registry (ZEIR)**, which will greatly improve nurse workflows around childhood vaccination and growth monitoring. The app is one of several data use and quality interventions, and was expanded from several pilot facilities in Livingstone, to Kazungula and other districts in Southern Province. It will be introduced in 267 facilities by February 2018.

The system is designed to resemble the paper forms health workers have long relied on, to ease the health system's transition from paper to electronic registries. Children are entered into the system, for instance, with a simple interface that simulates paper birth registration forms. The app prompts nurses to document a child's birth weight, date, and if he or she has any siblings, using colors and symbols that make data entry easy.

While ZEIR's primary purpose is to manage and document immunization services, it also has implications beyond vaccination coverage. If the registry were to be linked with birth registration and other government services, as an example, health workers would have complete visibility into both facility and home deliveries across the country, allowing the government to acknowledge, protect, and plan for each individual. Governments, in turn, would be better able to allot funding and resources for education, health, and other basic services. Building upon the data in the EIR will provide the government with many opportunities to support other areas of the health system (such as antenatal care, nutrition and growth monitoring), and also has potential for birth registration linkages.

To date, 1,568 children have been registered in ZEIR and 41 health facilities are implementing data use and data quality interventions.

Participants from Democratic Republic of the Congo exchange learnings in Tanzania



This quarter, BID Tanzania hosted PATH, UNICEF, and Ministry of Health delegates from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for a learning exchange in early May. **PATH leads two advocacy projects in the DRC** that promote the scale-up and sustainable financing of immunization programs, as well as equitable access to vaccines. Nine delegates spent several days in Dar es Salaam, learning how data use and data quality interventions can help alleviate common challenges to immunization. Visitors met with regional immunization and vaccine officers and visited Sombetini Dispensary and Kaloleni Health Center in Arusha City.

“This is very important,” said Dr. Hermann Tchiyane, DRC Deputy Immunization Officer, PATH, of Tanzania’s EIR and other data use interventions. “It makes it easy to monitor the whole program and to master [immunization] indicators through timely reporting, monitoring, and feedback. These steps make a huge improvement in the immunization sector, and this experience may be synchronized with other ministry of health programs in data management and quality assurance in the health sector.”

DRC delegates also met with health workers to understand the user experience at a facility level, including the [integration of Tanzania's Vaccine Information Management System \(VIMS\) and Tanzania's Immunization Registry \(TImR\)](#), which provides end-to-end visibility for immunization, linking vaccine supply data to facility-level utilization and performance data. For Tanzania, this has translated into more cost-effective, efficient, and reliable vaccine management. At Sombetini, health workers demonstrated how they register a child, modeling, for instance, the notifications that alert health workers to missing information or the need for additional services.

"We are looking forward to strengthening the experience exchange between our two countries," said Dr. Tchiyane, "as we seek solutions to our daily struggles in the immunization sector, with the aim of providing good quality service to our clients."

The DRC's recent visit symbolizes the BID Initiative's commitment to sharing its learnings with other countries interested in enhancing health service delivery by improving data quality and use.

CORRECTION: An earlier version of this newsletter incorrectly stated that ZEIR was rolling out to facilities in Lusaka. Data use and data quality interventions are only currently being introduced in Southern Province.

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The BID Learning Network (BLN) is intended to be a platform where participants can contribute ideas, share experiences and actively participate, helping each other as they face similar challenges.

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NOTEWORTHY BLOG POSTS

[Ensuring vaccines reach the people who need them most](#)

[An inside look at Zambia's new electronic immunization registry](#)

[Leading from behind: Celebrating the completion of](#)

Arusha and the start of a new chapter in Tanzania

Vietnam's Digital Immunization Registry: Important lessons and parallels to BID Initiative

NOTEWORTHY RESOURCES

BLN Webinar: Principles of Digital Development

BID Initiative Annual Report 2016–2017

BLN Webinar: Lessons learned in scaling up | How TDH is deploying an m-Health application in 600 clinics in Burkina Faso

BLN Chile Study Visit Concept Note

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Led by PATH and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the 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.
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