



BID INITIATIVE

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



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

BID INITIATIVE BRIEFS



# RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED: BID INITIATIVE BRIEFS

## AN OVERVIEW

Routine immunizations and new vaccine introductions are two best buys in global health. While immunization coverage has increased dramatically in the last decade, more must be done to ensure every child is reached. To bridge this gap, we need reliable, easily accessed and actionable data on the barriers impeding immunizations, coupled with trained data users at all levels of the health system.

The BID Initiative is grounded in the belief that better data, plus better decisions will lead to better health outcomes. It was designed in partnership with countries to enhance immunization and overall health service delivery by improving data collection, quality, and use.

Partnering with Tanzania and Zambia, the BID Initiative developed, tested, and rolled out interventions that address some of the most pressing routine immunization service delivery challenges, such as poor visibility into vaccine supplies and difficulty identifying children who default on immunization schedules. Additionally, through the BID Learning Network, many countries across sub-Saharan Africa participated in the design and testing of tools to help ensure that solutions are relevant for and can be adopted by other countries interested in improving their health programs through better data.

These briefs summarize the approaches and interventions that the BID Initiative rolled out in partnership with the governments of Tanzania and Zambia and shares recommendations and lessons learned for others interested in improving immunization data quality and use.

## THE CHALLENGE

A major obstacle to improving health and optimizing immunization service delivery is that decision-makers at all levels of the health system are not effectively using data to inform decisions in planning, performance management, and the delivery of services. The use of timely, high-quality data is essential to strengthening health systems and services, but many countries struggle with a lack of information system products to collect and analyze data, coupled with the enabling policies and practices aimed at creating a data-use culture. Interventions designed to improve data quality and use will ensure the right information is in the right hands of people making decisions, eventually leading to improved health outcomes.

## THE APPROACH

The BID Initiative takes a holistic approach to address immunization data challenges by packaging together information system products, data management policies, evidence-based practices and people who are empowered to improve decision-making, eventually leading to improvements in the health of people around the world.

The Data Use Culture conceptual framework (Figure 1) illustrates the interplay between the various elements of a health system and how the information cycle contributes to a culture where data and evidence-based decision-making are prioritized, encouraged, and ultimately expected.

FIGURE 1: The Data Use Culture conceptual framework



## THE INFORMATION CYCLE: COLLECT. TRANSFORM. ACT.

A well-performing information cycle requires a highly functional and seamlessly linked data system and decision system to progress through the three stages of the information cycle. This continual and seamless cycle between the data system and decision system is what links the individual to the four P's depicted above. The various stages of the information cycle include:

- **Collect:** Capturing and collecting data related to patient care and the delivery of services can consist of both paper and electronic data entry. Because data entry spans an array of stakeholders from community health workers to facility staff to district information officers, the system's ability to collect and compile complete, timely and accurate data is critical.
- **Transform:** The transformation of raw data to usable information is often done solely to aggregate and report

data to the next level up in the health system. Rarely does the analyzed and synthesized data return to those who actually collected it. The flow of information must be two-directional and sent back to the data collectors in the form of data visualizations and performance specific metrics so they can use it to improve service delivery.

- **Act:** The ability for decision-makers to have insight and visibility into performance metrics positions them to act on trends, ideally in real time. These decisions are intended to improve service delivery and identify efficiencies. The ability for individuals to act on the information available to them allows for better decision-making and enables the information cycle, which then informs and improves the quality of the data being collected.



**BID Initiative**

PATH • 2201 Westlake Avenue, Suite 200 • Seattle, WA 98121 USA

206.285.3500 • [www.bidinitiative.org](http://www.bidinitiative.org) • [bidinitiative@path.org](mailto:bidinitiative@path.org)