



Health Summit 2021

**Lessons from COVID-19 Response in
Building Resilient Systems**

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Introduction



Introduction

- The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the critical importance of a resilient health system in protecting health security
- Health systems globally severely overwhelmed by large surge of patients with respiratory symptoms, lack of space, essential medical supplies and workforce to manage patients



Introduction

- First case reported on March 12th, 2020
- Government outlined its objectives for the response to limit the effects of the pandemic on socio-economic activities.
 - Limiting and stopping the importation of cases
 - Detecting and containing cases
 - Caring for the sick
 - Social and economic responses to protect the most vulnerable
 - Improving domestic capacity and deepening self-reliance



Introduction

- Pandemic took a significant toll on the socio-economic and health sectors in 2020.
- Ghana's GDP growth declined significantly from the target of 6.8% (as expected per regional and global GDP growth estimates).
- Significant shortfalls in tax revenue- **import duties and other non-oil revenues.**
- Local businesses significantly affected- **cost cutting by reducing staff hours and laying off workers.**
- Health sector affected- **OPD attendance, reducing from 32.8 million in 2019 to 29.9 million in 2020.**



Introduction

a- risks

- Less robust health systems with limited capacity to respond to such health emergencies.
- Underfunded health sector
- Inequalities in health infrastructure and personnel
- Urbanization, population densities and mobility

b- Impacts

- Mental and psychological effects as a result of movement restrictions and lockdown
- Financial effects : job losses, companies reduced staff numbers and redesigned for leaner systems.
- Overstretched health system



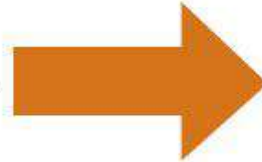
Health System Resilience

The WHO Health System Framework

System Building Blocks



ACCESS
COVERAGE



QUALITY
SAFETY

Overall Goals / Outcomes



Health System Resilience - Concept

Health system resilience **is the ability to prepare for, manage (absorb, adapt and transform) and learn from shocks; sudden and extreme change which impacts on a health system**

- Assessment of health system resilience is crisis- and context-specific.
- Important to employ both quantitative and qualitative metrics to provide a meaningful overall assessment.



Health System Resilience - Concept

Elements for enhancing resilience

- Governance
- Financing
- Resources
- Service delivery
- Community/Stakeholder engagement,
Partnership



Health System Resilience - Governance

- Effective and participatory leadership
- Coordination of activities across government and key stakeholders
- Effective information systems
- Effective surveillance systems enabling timely detection of shocks and their impact.



Health System Resilience - Financing

- Sufficient monetary resources in the system and flexibility to reallocate and inject extra funds
- Stability of health system funding through efficient health financing mechanisms and reserves
- Purchasing flexibility and reallocation of funding to meet changing needs
- Ability to provide comprehensive health coverage



Health System Resilience - Resources

- Appropriate level of skill and distribution of human resources
- Equitable distribution of physical resources
- Ability to increase capacity to cope with a sudden surge in demand
- Motivated and well-supported workforce.



Health System Resilience – Service delivery

- Alternative and flexible approaches to deliver care
- Active engagement and participation of partners, private sectors, stakeholders etc. at all levels of the health delivery system



Pertinent Issues Impacting on Resilience of Ghana's Health System



Leadership and Governance

- Limited effective coordination and integration
- Challenges with translating national health policy into action at sub-national levels
- Weak accountability mechanisms
- Inadequate compliance and absence of standards in some cases



Health Finance

- In ability to achieve Abuja target of 15% of government expenditure to be allocated to health.
- Inadequate domestic and local funding for health
- Persistence of high level of out-of-pocket payments- financial barriers and access
- Limited reserves and flexibility in re-allocation of resources



Community Participation

- Inadequate community involvement or participation in the conception and implementation of some national health policies
 - Making the communities and frontline health providers as key stakeholders for sustainable primary health care services.
 - Mistrust among key stakeholders



Regulatory Systems

- Limited regulatory capacity.
- Challenges with enforcement and transparency in regulatory functions



Health Workforce

- Inequitable distribution of the health workforce
- Inadequate skilled personnel for some specialized care- emergency and critical care etc
- Inadequate skill development to meet health challenges/shocks
- Migration of healthcare workers- post COVID-19, Brexit etc



Health Information

- Poor data quality (coverage, completeness, reliability)
- Delay in data reporting by agencies, units and facilities

Health Technology

- Limited use and application of technology to improve care delivery
- Limited financial investment



Health Research and Innovation

- Uncoordinated research at the national level.
- Inadequate national budget allocation for health research and innovation- where is the National Research Fund Bill ?.
- Many large-scale research driven by external partners -interested in a specific area, not necessarily national priorities.



Health Service Delivery

- Non-priorisation of health activities- where attention is most needed
- Limited investment and support for primary level care- preventive and basic curative care
- Complex disease profile/burden- NCDs, ageing, palliative care, accidents injuries, persistent of infections and epidemic prone diseases



Recommendations and Policy Options



Recommendations

- **Operationalize the UHC Roadmap**
 - increase investment in Primary Level Care
- **Human resource for health**
 - efficient and equitable distribution of human resource
 - strengthen the skill of health personnel in line with implementation milestones of Revised National Health Policy and UHC Roadmap
- **Active involvement in the public health sector by the private sector, academia, civil society etc.** – for service delivery, research, advocacy and community mobilization

Recommendations

- **Increased local investment in the health sector-Ghana Beyond Aid**
 - build capacity of local pharmaceutical sectors- essential drugs, Vaccine development etc
 - sustainable financing- safety net for the poor and vulnerable
- **Strengthen monitoring systems**
 - data collection , data use for decision making, and standards for quality health delivery
 - surveillance and response systems to prevent, detect, investigate, protect against, control the spread of diseases
- **Strengthen capacity of regulatory agencies to protect public safety and quality service delivery**

THANKS!
