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Gaps and Priorities in U.S. Contributions to Global Disease Challenges: What has the U.S. done well and not as well?

Public Health Programming

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July 7, 2008

IOM Working Group Meeting



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Challenges

- ❑ Realizing individual potential for physical development (eg preventing malnutrition) and for cognitive development (eg preventing lost IQ).
- ❑ Avoiding major killers in low income countries and communities: eg noncommunicable diseases, HIV, reproductive health, malaria, tobacco.



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Major Findings

- ❑ Traditional public health interventions (eg EPI, PHCs) are essential, but not sufficient.
- ❑ Early intervention and support throughout childhood: ECD, School Health programs.
- ❑ Education, especially girls education: reduces, for example, fertility and maternal mortality; 7% reduction in HIV risk per year of education.
- ❑ Fiscal interventions to achieve social change: eg tobacco in high and middle income countries
- ❑ Infrastructure: eg water and sanitation



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U.S. Contribution

- ❑ In addition to support for traditional PH interventions (eg EPI, GAVI, polio):
- ❑ ECD and School Health in the US: CDC-led Global School Health Surveys (44 countries, some LICs).
- ❑ Impact studies on health benefits of education, and education benefits of health: deworming, HIV, malaria, life skills.
- ❑ Tobacco control in the North.
- ❑ HIV, malaria and TB prevention in LICs, but secondary to treatment.



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Gaps in Knowledge

- ❑ How to work across sectors
- ❑ How to take good practices in research to scale (eg peer education, life skills)
- ❑ Longitudinal studies on benefits of age-specific health interventions and the key modalities of behavior change.
- ❑ How to apply high income country good practices for ECD in low income settings.



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Recommendations

- ❑ Paradigm change: stronger focus on prevention, on cross-sectoral work, and on promoting a life-cycle approach to development.
- ❑ Key areas:
 - ❑ ECD, School Health and Youth programs as essential public health interventions in LICs.
 - ❑ Noncommunicable diseases: the tobacco crises of China, India and emerging in Africa; the continuing challenge of malnutrition (hunger, undernutrition and obesity).
 - ❑ Education and education systems as key tools for health promotion and for disease prevention.

Strengthening Health Systems

- ❑ The key issue is to strengthen all relevant systems that contribute to health, including the health system.
- ❑ Health systems would benefit in results and in cost-effectiveness by more systematic links with other relevant systems
- ❑ Key “other” sectors are education, social welfare, infrastructure.