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Assessing the sustainability of the expansion of the expanded programme on immunisation in The Gambia

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Abstract

Assessing the sustainability of the expansion of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) in the Gambia. This is a rare policy approach to assessing immunisation programmes in countries where the sustainability of the introduction of new vaccines is particularly important. The review of the literature in this study has demonstrated that while some tools may prove useful for measuring the component of funding sustainability of immunisation programmes, they were insufficient with regard to questions on other aspects of sustainability. To address these issues of sustainability sufficiently in the study, a Stakeholder Analysis questionnaire was identified from the literature for adoption. Selected indicators of financial sustainability in the literature, in addition to country-specific indicators, were incorporated in the Stakeholder Analysis questionnaire. Also, a Resource Map questionnaire was developed, based on the National Health Accounts methodology, to complement the stakeholder analysis tool. This approach provided qualitative information about stakeholders' opinion concerning the issue of whether to use additional resources for improving efficiency in the supply chain rather than introducing new vaccines to determine whose interests should be taken into account, but more importantly to assess where stakeholders think the system works and where it doesn't work, and if different parties have contradictory incentives. It also provided detailed information on the flow and uses of resources within the immunisation system, in addition to data that focus on questions of power, relationships, processes and accountability in the EPI. Thus, this combination of methods can be useful for systematic assessment of the sustainability of EPI systems and the efficiency of having multiple organisations running programmes.

Biography:

Francis Sarr is Head of the Department of Nursing & Reproductive Health, University of The Gambia. In addition to his professional preparation, he was educated at the University of Wales, Cardiff (M.Ed, Curriculum Development & Educational Administration), London University School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (MSc & Post-Graduate Diploma, Public Health), London University Institute of Child Health (Nutrition & Child Health Cert.) and London South Bank University (PhD, Public Health concentration). He is a Fellow of the West African College of Nursing. He has published 5 articles in reputed journals and a book on community health education for health professionals.