

## **Mission to Senegal 9-10 May 2013, Anders Nordstrom, Phyllida Travis**

### **Context and objectives**

Participants in the December 2012 IHP+ country teams meeting identified some critical areas where change is needed by all international partners to accelerate progress on the MDGs. There is now a strategic opportunity for accelerated action. At global level, many heads of agencies have agreed to act on a list of seven desirable international partner behaviours that – if improved – would lead to visible and tangible health results. Of course, these behaviours need to be translated into practice in countries. Following a conversation in Washington DC in April, Minister Coll-Seck committed to beginning discussions about how this can be taken forward in Senegal, before the World Health Assembly.

### **Discussions with Minister, senior MOH staff and international partners**

A half day meeting was chaired by the Minister of Health. Participants from the MOH included: Technical counsellors; Directors of Planning, Research and Health Statistics; Reproductive Health and Child Survival; Administration; Prevention; National Coordinator of TB; National Committee of the Fight Against HIV, Executive Secretary. Most international partners were present: USAID; France; Japan; World Bank; WHO; UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNFPA. Details are in the Annex. The Director of Planning made an initial presentation on each of the seven behaviours, analysing the current situation and areas for improvement, that drew on a preparatory meeting of international partners. Some individual conversations were also possible.

### **General observations / conclusions**

The Ministry of Health is in a strong position to strengthen its partnership for better health results.

- Much has already been achieved in terms of improvements in health – for example Senegal has had a rapid and substantial decline in malaria. However there is more to do in terms of reaching the MDGs.
- MOH and international partners have a strong interest in continuing to improve ways of working together. A country Compact has recently been signed. Concrete follow up of many issues discussed in this short mission can be part of the planned 'feuille de route' for the Compact, as well as part of the annual workplan (PTA).
- A new MOH organigramme has recently been approved. Its implementation is expected to help address some of the internal MOH reporting issues raised in the meeting.

A recurring theme was communication issues between international agencies, and the need to improve the coherence and consistency between policy and practice across different levels.

### **Key issues and proposed follow up**

All seven behaviours were discussed. Three were particularly prominent: resources being on budget and in line with priorities; financial management, and procurement. A fourth area was less prominent during the meeting but is prominent in the Compact: there is a recognised need and opportunity for better coordinated monitoring of implementation and results.

For three behaviours - resources on budget, financial management, and joint monitoring - there appear to be opportunities for rapid progress. Procurement is complex but there could be significant efficiency gains from both local and global action, and more work is required.

The following summary is organised by behaviour, in order of apparent priority and feasibility of action in Senegal.

## **1. Resources recorded on budget, and in line with national priorities and commitments**

### **Key issues raised**

- There was a strong call from the MOH for **more predictable funding and improved transparency**.
- Some agencies were cautious given the difficulty of providing definite figures, but all agreed that they could do better and that **provisional estimates can be made available** and would be useful: most agencies have 4-5 year plans with approximate budgets including UN agencies.
- The Minister emphasized the benefits to the MOH of **resources being recorded on budget**. Given the global commitment to be more transparent about expenditures, countries should demand it. At the same time, Ministries of Finance also need to provide timely financial information.
- **Resources being in line with priorities**. First, international partners are broadly working in line with priorities, but the MOH is sometimes offered funds for activities outside its priorities which it does not refuse.
- **Funding modalities** The Minister was clear that budget support is preferable to earmarked funds, as it allows flexible allocation against national priorities. There are developments by international partners which may provide opportunities in Senegal. USAID is reported to be exploring whether it can move to broader programme based funding. In Senegal, World Bank and USAID are developing a Results Based Financing programme and will create a common fund. USAID plans to eventually channel around 30% of its budget through this.

### **Follow up proposed**

- **In Senegal:**
  - Predictability is already a commitment in the Compact and should be translated into action by partners providing information on projected resources.
  - A 'table ronde' - where plans, budgets and all available resources are discussed - received support from MOH and partners, and the MOH will consider further. This could help address predictability issues, and help to increase resources on budget.
- **Global:**
  - International partners should translate the global commitments to be on budget into action. For most it should be an easy action to take, at least with provisional figures.
  - Agencies will need to see if internal procedures need changing.

## **2. Financial management system harmonized and aligned, and capacity building done or underway and country systems strengthened and used**

### **Key issues raised**

- The Senegal Compact has a number of commitments by MOH and partners on strengthened financial management, and on increased alignment by international partners.
- The joint financial management assessment (FMA) conducted by MOH/MOF/World Bank/USAID that is just being completed is an important step towards more harmonized international partner activities. The question is whether it could involve others, or whether others could use the findings and so avoid doing their own FMAs.

#### ***Follow up proposed***

- **In Senegal:**
  - More transparent reporting was identified as a particular area for improvement by both MOH and international partners
  - The findings from the recent joint FMA could usefully be discussed by the whole partners group.
- **Global:**
  - The Global Fund and GAVI in particular should be informed about the joint FMA in Senegal, so they can explore how to capitalise on the work done by the World Bank and USAID.

### **3. *Joint monitoring of implementation and results based on one monitoring and accountability platform***

#### ***Key issues raised***

- There is a heavy reporting burden from international partners.
- The last two years have been challenging for the information system. A two year strike of the health trade union which affected data reporting has just ended. There are multiple programme based information systems. The new Department of Planning and Monitoring cannot yet obtain and synthesize information from different sources. There is a sector performance framework, but it is unclear if there is mutual agreement on it. Altogether, there would seem to be room for simplification and improvement. This is recognised in the Compact, which also flags the need to strengthen the monitoring capacity of MOH staff.
- A new initiative which requires quality data is the Results Based Financing programme supported by the World Bank and USAID. One question is whether and how this can help strengthen information for sector performance monitoring as a whole, including in joint annual reviews (RAC).
- There is a second initiative, to improve information and accountability for Women's and Children's Health. A road map for strengthening data quality and its use in policy dialogue including joint annual reviews, has been prepared. It will be important to see how both these initiatives can contribute to building a stronger, more coherent monitoring platform.
- Lastly, there was a message that international partners need to be held more accountable for their commitments and actions in country.

#### ***Follow up proposed***

- **In Senegal:**
  - The Joint Annual Review (RAC) in June is an opportunity to move towards one monitoring and accountability platform, and how different initiatives can contribute, and also to initiate some form of reporting by partners against their commitments. The identified areas for improvement included joint reporting, and harmonized reports for GAVI and Global Fund.
- **Global:**
  - Provide feedback on the burden of reporting requirements particularly to the Global Fund

#### 4. *Procurement/supply systems harmonized and aligned, and country systems strengthened*

##### ***Key issues raised***

- Both local and global sources of difficulty were identified in this complex area, which was a major focus of the discussion. The national procurement system was described as functioning but complex and slow. An additional problem is that international partners are still using different rules in - for example - equipment purchase. It was suggested that this could be improved by more strategic guidance from the MOH.
- On global procurement, the benefits of economies of scale and quality were recognised, but a question was raised of whether procurement procedures could be simplified and made more responsive to country needs.
- New initiatives such as the Commodities Commission can create additional complexity in an already complex area by having separate procurement and funding channels.

##### ***Follow up proposed***

- **In Senegal:**
  - The main priority was simplified rules and procedures for equipment purchase
  - Explore the possibility of a special review mission of on-going efforts in this area
- **Global:**
  - Simplified procedures for global procurement by countries needs to be explored and linked to national systems for planning and projection of needs

#### 5. *Joint assessments that lead to agreement on priorities reflected in the national health strategy, and a reduction in separate exercises*

##### ***Key issues raised***

- Stronger links are needed between planning, assessment and review of sector and sub-sector strategies, and with multi-sectoral strategies; NGOs are important providers and need to be more involved.
- More effective engagement by international partners in strategy development and adoption is needed. At the same time, it is possible that some processes could be simplified or dropped. The HIV/AIDS experience with the Three Ones in Senegal was given as an example of the benefits from greater harmonization and alignment.
- Given the increased commitment by international development partners to use national strategies as the basis for funding, 'table ronde' discussions with all parties could be useful.

##### ***Follow up proposed***

- **In Senegal:**

Four broad areas for improvement were identified

  - more systematic sector policy dialogue;
  - greater participation in planning, dissemination and adoption of national policies and strategies;
  - improved quality of partners' participation in joint exercises including monitoring of the sector strategic plan (PNDS); and
  - improved follow up of recommendations from events such as joint annual reviews (RAC), annual internal monitoring committee enlarged to include partners – this links to the discussion on joint monitoring of implementation and results above.
- **Global:**
  - International partners without country staff should increase their participation in joint country planning, assessments and reviews.

## **6. Systematic learning between countries developed and supported**

### ***Key issues raised***

- There is a significant amount of experience to share, and better ways of doing so are needed. Study tours on specific issues have been the most usual approach to date.
- One new, promising approach are the regional thematic Communities of Practice supported by HHA. Other ideas were to encourage more peer review activities between countries, and virtual support networks of senior managers / policy makers facing similar challenges.

### ***Follow up proposed***

- **In Senegal:**
  - To develop ways to capitalise further on existing experience
- **Global:**
  - an expert consultation is planned by IHP+ during 2013, to better capture and review the range of different approaches to south-south cooperation

## **7. Technical cooperation strategically planned and well-coordinated**

### ***Key issues raised***

- This did not feature as a major issue in the meeting, though partners did agree improvements could be made. Some commitments are already mentioned in the Compact. Two points raised were that the Ministry needs to be clear what it needs, based on the PNDS, and communicate this to all partners, and second that all technical co-operation should be provided in a way that strengthens local capacity.

### ***Follow up proposed***

- **In Senegal:**
  - Map current TA provision, to identify areas of duplication and neglect.
- **Global:**
  - This is another area where an expert consultation is planned by IHP+ in 2013.

## **Next steps**

The discussions showed that there is a real interest in Senegal in accelerating progress by tackling the seven behaviours. It showed that they are all relevant, but some are more of a priority than others in Senegal.

It confirmed that there are real opportunities to make rapid improvement. It confirmed that this will involve both country and global action. There was also a sense of realism – that change is possible but not easy, and it will require sustained commitment from all parties, as well as appropriate and timely support. In particular, some progress on the ground depends on action by the headquarters of international development partners.

The note captures the broad outlines of proposed follow-up. Many of the issues raised are already reflected in Senegal's recently signed Compact. Part of planned follow up on commitments made in the Compact was to develop a feuille de route, which these discussions can feed into. MOH Senegal and its partners need to agree which from a quite ambitious list of actions can be realistically taken forward, how and by whom, with a timeframe and expected results. This note will be shared with heads of agencies currently contributing to health development in Senegal, so that they can take appropriate action also.

## Réunion : Rencontre avec les Partenaires techniques et financières du MSAS

No.	Prénoms et Nom	Structures
1	Cheikh Ndiaye	DGAS/MSAS
2	Christophe Lemiere	Banque Mondiale
3	Abdoulaye Bouso	CT/ MSAS
4	Ndeye Cowuba O. Drame	DHGE/MSAS
5	Farba Lamine Sall	OMS
6	Amadou Djibril Ba	DPRS/MSAS
7	Al Hadji Mamadou Ndiaye	DP/MSAS
8	Jerôme Clouzeau	CT/CF MSAS
9	Alimata Diarra-Nama	OMS
10	Phyllida Travis	OMS/IHP+
11	Awa M. Coll-Seck, Minister	MSAS
12	Alice Soumare	OMS AFRO/HHA
13	Matar Camara	DGS/USAID
14	Ibra Ndoye	SE/CNLS
15	Demba Kone	ONUSIDA
16	Boureima Diadie	UNFPA
17	Mari Nagai	CT Cooperation Japonaise/MSAS/JICA
18	Xavier Crespin	UNICEF
19	Khalifa Mbenque	OMS
20	Marie Sarr	PNT/MSAS