



Providing high quality accessible information to policy makers and practitioners working in health and development

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Public-Private Partnerships  
Health systems reporter, 19 August 2008

Feature: [Public-Private Partnerships](#)

Recommended readings:

- Partnerships for malaria control: engaging the formal and informal private sectors
- Multistakeholder partnerships: future models of multilateralism?
- Public private partnerships in health: a global call to action
- Impact of public-private partnerships addressing access to pharmaceuticals in low-income countries: Uganda pilot study
- Health partnerships review focusing collaborative efforts on research and innovation for the health of the poor

Latest additions:

- Innovation for sustainable development: local case studies from Africa
- Migration of health workers in Kenya: the impact on health service delivery
- Writing about equity in health in east and southern Africa: a writing skills manual
- Opportunities and challenges for expanding trade in health services in the English-speaking Caribbean
- Patients without borders: the emergence of medical tourism

Announcements

- The IDS Health & Development Information team **needs your help to improve the services we provide! For a chance of winning a £50 IDS book voucher** for the online IDS bookshop take part in our [user survey](#) There are 18 questions and it should only take a few minutes to complete so why not complete it now? If you have difficulty accessing this web version of the survey, please send an email to [hdi@ids.ac.uk](mailto:hdi@ids.ac.uk) and ask for the email version.
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Feature: Public-Private Partnerships

Most developing countries lack the resources and expertise to develop medicines to enable them to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals. Medicines developed in richer countries may be too expensive or inappropriate for the health needs of developing nations. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) aim to bring together a combination of resources and

complementary skills from: pharmaceutical companies, academics, not-for-profit organisations, philanthropists, governmental and inter-governmental agencies, that can accelerate the development and delivery of new medicines to those in need. PPPs tend to fall into two categories: improving access to or developing new medicines.

In addition PPPs such as the Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunisation (GAVI) have enabled coordination of research and financing. An overarching agency, The Initiative on Public-Private Partnerships for Health (IPPPH), was created in 2000 with the aim of coordinating PPPs internationally. There are many different options for arranging these strategic partnerships, ranging from informal to formal; from large to small; and local to international. PPPs have focused attention on some neglected areas and stimulated action that is bringing new resources and innovative solutions to address particular health problems.

Despite their appeal, concerns have been raised about their negative impact, such as problems around accountability and transparency in how they operate and what they achieve. Operational challenges include managing power relationships in order to achieve participatory decision making.

PPPs work best with shared objectives and decision making, although each partner's role and benefits will differ. A wide range of stakeholders should be involved whilst conflicts of interest between public and private bodies must be minimised. It is critical that PPPs are run for the public benefit, focusing on equity in public health, rather than as revenue generating processes. Greater and more sustainable financing over the longer term is needed as well as better mechanisms for coordination. A set of guidelines and evaluation tools is therefore needed to maximise the effects of these alliances and ensure that public's interest are protected.

More information:

- Overview of Public-Private Partnerships in health:  
[http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?\\_ob=ArticleURL&\\_udi=B75GP-4GTVYS9-2&user=128860&rdoc=1&fmt=&orig=search&sort=d&view=c&version=1&urlVersion=0&userid=128860&md5=07c34553f4c2976667c2ad44b2add4b7](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B75GP-4GTVYS9-2&user=128860&rdoc=1&fmt=&orig=search&sort=d&view=c&version=1&urlVersion=0&userid=128860&md5=07c34553f4c2976667c2ad44b2add4b7)
  - Public-Private Partnerships page on Eldis <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems/global-initiatives-and-public-private-partnerships/public-private-partnerships>
  - Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunisation (GAVI)  
<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems/global-initiatives-and-public-private-partnerships/public-private-partnerships&id=6131&type=Organisation>
  - The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis & Malaria  
<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems/global-initiatives-and-public-private-partnerships/public-private-partnerships&id=6389&type=Organisation>
  - The Initiative on Public-Private Partnerships for Health (IPPPH)  
[http://www.globalforumhealth.org/Site/003\\_The%2010%2090%20gap/004\\_Initiatives%20%20networks/004\\_IPPPH.php](http://www.globalforumhealth.org/Site/003_The%2010%2090%20gap/004_Initiatives%20%20networks/004_IPPPH.php)
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## Recommended readings

### **1. Partnerships for malaria control: engaging the formal and informal private sectors**

**Authors:** HLSP institute; World Health Organisation

**Publisher:** HLSP Institute, UK, 2006

This review, conducted by the HLSP institute, examines the role of the private sector in malaria control. The private sector comprises all providers who exist outside the public sector whether their aim is philanthropic or commercial. The paper discusses key interventions for effective malaria control: insecticide treated nets (ITN) and malaria treatment; and assesses how they might be financed, distributed and accessed by end users. It finds that commercial markets for nets exist in many parts of Africa, but they are concentrated in urban areas. Provision of antimalarial treatment is dominated by the informal and formal private sector, and suffers problems including inefficiency, low quality commodities, and counterfeit drugs.

The document discusses options for engaging the private sector in malaria control. Ways of supporting consumers in using private sector providers include voucher schemes, verbal instructions and insurance schemes. On the supply side key options include pre-packaging of anti-malarial drugs; promotion of rapid diagnostic tests; social marketing. The paper concludes that policy makers need to acknowledge the role played by formal and informal private sector providers and integrate them as major actors in health sector development plans and strategies. Commercial sector production of nets is effective, but insecticide treatment requires public-private partnerships and policy interventions to ensure greater equity in access.

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems/global-initiatives-and-public-private-partnerships/public-private-partnerships&id=23642&type=Document>

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### **2. Multistakeholder partnerships: future models of multilateralism?**

**Authors:** J Martens

**Publisher:** Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung e.V. , 2007

This paper gives an overview of how relationships between the United Nations and private actors have changed over time, traces the scale and scope of partnerships, and discusses the limits, risks and side effects of this paradigm shift in international politics.

In recent years, a new form of multilateral cooperation beyond intergovernmental diplomacy has gained increasing importance. In this new paradigm of international cooperation, 'global partnerships', 'multi-stakeholder initiatives' and 'global public policy networks' are perceived as the future of international cooperation, moving beyond traditional nation-state multilateralism.

However, multi-stakeholder partnerships in fact bring a number of risks and side effects with them for the UN, which must be considered in any careful analysis of the approach. These include:

- growing influence of the business sector in the political discourse and agenda setting
- risks to UN reputation through partnering with organisations that contradict UN principles
- distorting competition and the pretence of representativeness
- proliferation of partnership initiatives and fragmentation of global governance
- unstable financing – a threat to the sufficient provision of public goods
- dubious complementarity – governments escape responsibility
- selectivity in partnerships
- trends toward elite models of global governance.

The paper argues that if global partnerships are not to stand in the way of a democratic multilateralism, they need clearly to fulfil criteria that ensure that the long-term interests of the public are not damaged by the particular partnership initiative. This demands both a set of sophisticated partnership guidelines and systematic impact assessments. Such a framework should include the following elements:

- a set of basic principles of engagement with the private sector
- minimum standards for interaction between the UN and the private sector
- systematic impact assessments and independent evaluations
- an ombudsperson as the UN contact point for complaints
- an intergovernmental UN body for relations with the private sector

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems/global-initiatives-and-public-private-partnerships/public-private-partnerships&id=24467&type=Document>

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### **3. Public private partnerships in health: a global call to action**

**Authors:** S Nishtar

**Publisher:** Health Research Policy and Systems, 2004

This paper, produced by Health Research Policy and Systems, outlines key challenges in public-private arrangements in health care and makes a Global Call to Action to address these challenges. The author establishes several ethical challenges in public-private partnerships. These include: a lack of global norms and principals, threatened impartiality of health care due to poorly designed partnerships, the risk of abandoning social safety nets for vulnerable groups, and conflict of interest due to ‘for-profit’ demands of the private sector. Other ethical issues consist of redirecting national health policies, fragmentation of the health system, contribution to common goals and objectives, and lack of contributions to improvements in quality and efficiency.

Operational and process-related challenges in public-private partnerships include: legislative frameworks, policies and operational strategies; participatory approaches to decision making; governance structures; power relationships; criteria for selection; sustainability, and accountability. In order to overcome these challenges, the author highlights the need to develop a set of global norms and ethical principles. Such initiatives must be rooted in a ‘benefit to the society’ rather than a ‘mutual benefit to partners’ and should centre on equity in health. Partnerships should also be seen as a process, rather than an outcome, and

incorporate third party reviews to ensure transparency. [adapted from author

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems/global-initiatives-and-public-private-partnerships/public-private-partnerships&id=17668&type=Document>

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#### **4. Impact of public-private partnerships addressing access to pharmaceuticals in low-income countries: Uganda pilot study**

**Authors:** K. Caines; J. Bataringaya; L. Lush; G. Murindwa; H. N'jie

**Publisher:** Initiative on Public-Private Partnerships for Health, 2003

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) funded the Initiative on Public-Private Partnerships for Health (IPPPH) to conduct a pilot study in Uganda to assess the health and health systems impact of public-private partnerships (PPPs) for improving access to pharmaceuticals. The specific remit was to examine issues of ownership, integration, coordination, implementation and impact, with a particular focus on the unique strengths and problems of these PPPs as distinct from other comparable programmes where drugs are competitively procured.

This document, produced by IPPPH, reports on the pilot study and its findings. It first discusses health challenges and the health system in Uganda, and then explores drug access PPPs in Uganda for leprosy, lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, and sleeping sickness. The following section explores drug access PPPs in Uganda for HIV/AIDS. The report concludes that there is little evidence to date on how national programmes are making rational choices about who should obtain drugs and what priorities of access there should be. [adapted from author]

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems/global-initiatives-and-public-private-partnerships/public-private-partnerships&id=14300&type=Document>

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#### **5. Health partnerships review focusing collaborative efforts on research and innovation for the health of the poor**

**Authors:** S. A. Matlin; A. de Francisco; L. Sundaram

**Publisher:** Global Forum for Health Research, 2008

Data from every part of the world show that those that are least well off have shorter life expectancies and heavier burdens of disease than those that are relatively wealthy. Subsequently, public-private partnerships (PPPs) have gained growing popularity as mechanisms for increasing access to essential drugs. On behalf of Health Partnerships Review, the Global Forum for Health Research has commissioned this series of chapters examining the characteristics of PPPs that aim to improve the health of the world's poorest people. The authors contribute to the debate about the future role of PPPs and provide pointers to key areas for urgent attention to sustain and increase the momentum to reach the goals towards which PPPs are striving.

Issues highlighted include the roles of different actors in partnerships involving public sector and philanthropic donors, the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, communities and researchers in developed and developing countries. The picture that emerges is multifaceted and complex. The PPP approach has evidently focused attention on some neglected areas and has galvanized action that is bringing new resources and innovative solutions to address some health problems. But many challenges remain if their promise is to be fulfilled, including greater and more sustainable financing over the longer term and better mechanisms for coordination. The authors highlight that the ethical imperative of reducing health inequities, of closing the gap between the health of the poorest and those who are better off, demands the utmost collective effort.

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems/global-initiatives-and-public-private-partnerships/public-private-partnerships&id=37567&type=Document>

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Latest additions from the Health systems resource guide

### **1. Innovation for sustainable development: local case studies from Africa**

**Authors:** United Nations Publications

**Publisher:** Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, 2008

This report aims to shed light on the way innovative solutions have arisen to address local sustainable development challenges, examining the determinants of success and the scope for replication. The report focuses on the African experience, and contributes to the documentation for the 16th and 17th sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

The volume is composed of ten case studies, selected for their truly innovative nature, effective implementation, significant outputs and generation of real social welfare improvements. Examples include sustainable community-based beekeeping, community water supply initiatives and innovative water governance. They are grouped under five headings: enhancement of agriculture and fisheries, protection of ecosystems, water management, health improvement and sustainable tourism.

Practical conclusions drawn from the case studies include:

- sustainable projects need to link environmental goals to income generation, draw upon local knowledge and ideas, ensure effective buy-in from stakeholders through local community involvement in project design and implementation, and employ financially self-sustaining business models
- external forces which impact on a project and affect conditions for success include international markets and national legislation. In some cases though, local success can provide arguments for more accommodating national policies to facilitate replication and scaling up
- simplicity in project design, committed seed capital and integration of local traditions and cultural heritage appear to be important success factors for innovative local initiatives

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems&id=38653&type=Document>

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## **2. Migration of health workers in Kenya: the impact on health service delivery**

**Authors:** D. L. Mwaniki; C. O Dulo

**Publisher:** EQUINET: Network for Equity in Health in Southern Africa, 2008

Like most other African countries, Kenya is facing a human resource crisis in the public health sector. Many health professionals, such as doctors and nurses, are emigrating to developed countries to seek better employment prospects. This study into the impacts on resource generation, stewardship and service provision was conducted as part of the research agenda of the Kenya Technical Working Group (TWG). The survey included interviews with health workers and the collection of information from governmental departments, professional bodies, and health administrators. The cost of migration of health care workers is estimated and a literature review provided. It is suggested that there are negative impacts on workloads, especially at peripheral facilities and in some rural districts, which may impact on health service provision and on the referral chain.

The authors highlight a need for government to review its current freeze on employing health workers and fill existing vacancies. Policy recommendations include the need for realistic remuneration packages to enhance retention of health workers and the use of a quota system to recruit students from rural and deprived areas. The document suggests that government prioritise investing in a strategic information system on health worker migration that will link indicators of macro-economic and sectoral dynamics that are relevant to health worker migration.

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems&id=37569&type=Document>

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## **3. Writing about equity in health in east and southern Africa: a writing skills manual**

**Author:** R. Pointer; P. Norden; R. Loewenson; Teaching and Research Support Centre

**Publisher:** EQUINET: Network for Equity in Health in Southern Africa, 2008

Equity in health implies addressing differences in health status that are unnecessary, unavoidable and unfair. Equity-motivated interventions seek to allocate resources preferentially to those with the lowest health status. This means understanding and influencing the redistribution of social and economic resources for equity-oriented interventions, and understanding and informing the power and ability people have to make choices over health inputs and to use these choices for better health. [adapted from author]

This manual is intended to help writers develop writing skills and the ability to produce easily understood health information which can be disseminated to a diverse audience. This edition of the manual is a guide for producing scientific reports, peer-reviewed articles, EQUINET policy and discussion papers, briefs and reports.

The manual is made up of 7 modules including:

- Preparing to write
- Writing scientific papers
- Computer skills to aid writers
- Getting feedback and revising your drafts
- Publishing in peer-reviewed journals
- Writing an EQUINET paper
- Writing a EQUINET meeting report

Step by step guidelines are provided on the writing process including planning and structure and how to write specific sections of the paper such as: abstracts, executive summary, methodology, conclusion and how to get published.

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems&id=38206&type=Document>

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#### **4. Opportunities and challenges for expanding trade in health services in the English-speaking Caribbean**

**Authors:** L. Brenzel; E. Le Franc

**Publisher:** World Bank, 2007

English-speaking Caribbean countries are appealing destinations for visitors seeking health services due to their proximity to North America and Europe, low labour costs and good transport infrastructure. This World Bank paper discusses the potential economic benefits from expansion of trade in health services and the challenges to achieving these benefits. Economic benefits include: additional public sector revenues; retention and repatriation of skilled health workers; additional health benefits for local populations; private sector innovation and revenue generation.

The challenges that need to be addressed include: the need for mechanisms to support entrepreneurship; the extent of high quality, accredited medical services; and policy, regulatory, institutional and legislative barriers to both foreign investment and movement of professionals within the Caribbean. The paper proposes ways of overcoming these challenges and provides recommendations, recognising that an incremental approach to expanding trade in health services should be adopted on a country-by-country basis. Specific recommendations include to explore strategic options for training and retaining health personnel in both the public and private sectors and to establish or strengthen mechanisms that can facilitate public-private sector partnerships.

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems&id=38036&type=Document>

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#### **5. Patients without borders: the emergence of medical tourism**

**Authors:** S. M. Wolfe

**Publisher:** Public Citizen, 2006

This article published by the Public Citizen Health Research Group, is the first in a two part series that focuses on medical tourism – travelling with the express purpose of obtaining health services abroad. The article describes a trend, where large numbers of patients from wealthy countries, such as America, are travelling abroad to diverse countries including India, Brazil, the Philippines and Thailand in search of less expensive health care. The article uses examples of India and Thailand to examine the implications of medical tourism in these countries.

It shows that in both countries medical tourism has caused private hospitals to emphasise treatment over prevention, and promote technology-intensive tertiary services at the expense of primary care. This has created distortions in the allocation of resources and spending that doesn't match the needs of local people. The article concludes that the international market in health care can have adverse effects on host countries, in particular, medical tourism can create health inequalities between those who can and those who cannot afford to pay for care.

Available online at: <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health-systems&id=38012&type=Document>

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**Conference:** Second Ditan International Conference on Infectious Diseases, 14 - 17 November 2008, Beijing International Convention Center (BICC), China

This conference organised by the Beijing Ditan Hospital, will focus on the globalisation of infectious diseases. The aim of the event is to provide the opportunity to enhance scientific exchange, provide information updates and experience sharing between countries.

Experts from around the world will talk about the prevention, diagnostics and therapy for viral hepatitis, AIDS, respiratory diseases, bacterial, fungal and parasite Infection.

To register, please follow the full details link and complete the interest form:  
<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health/health-events-and-announcements&id=39087&type=Item>

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**Conference:** International Symposium on Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, 10-13 November 2008, Karachi, Pakistan

Aga Khan University (AKU), Pakistan, is hosting this international symposium on diseases of the tropics in collaboration with the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (RSTMH), UK, and the Infectious Diseases Society of Pakistan (IDSP).

The symposium will highlight important issues of relevance to tropical medicine, and clinical and public health practice in Pakistan and the developing world.

Who should attend?

This meeting will be of interest to all individuals wishing to acquire up-to-date knowledge on developments in clinical and public health aspects of tropical medicine and infectious diseases.

Symposia highlights will include:

- child health and survival
- infectious diseases: challenges of a mega city
- vaccine updates
- recent developments in tuberculosis
- hepatitis
- HIV
- vector borne illnesses (dengue and malaria)
- antimicrobial resistance: an impending disaster
- infection control in resource limited settings
- women and science in developing countries
- tropical challenges.

The international delegate registration fee is US\$ 200. For nationals, it is Rs. 2,500.

For more information regarding this event, please use the full details link:

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/health/health-events-and-announcements&id=39086&type=Item>

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- Health Resource Guide - <http://www.eldis.org/health/index.htm>
- Health Systems Resource Guide - <http://www.eldis.org/healthsystems/index.htm>
- HIV and AIDS Resource Guide - <http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/hiv-and-aids>

The HRC provides access to technical assistance and information for the Department for International Development (DFID UK), and its partners, in support of pro-poor health policies as well as health systems, service delivery and public health topics and programmes.

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