

# Parallel Session 3.2

Health Information Systems  
Data Sources, Information  
products and health statistics

# Outline

- Overview
- Obstacles and barriers
- What African countries should be doing
- Priority Actions
- Required donor input

# Overview

- *Information of interest:*
  - service utilization, health system inputs and allocation, health status, risk factors and determinants and inequities
- *Key data sources:*
  - Census, VR, Household surveys, routine service statistics, HFA, DSS, etc

# Obstacles and barriers

- Human resource capacity
  - data collection, analyses, etc
- Lack of standardization
  - tools, analysis, assumptions, etc
- Vertical programs and lack of feedback to local actors
  - lack of triangulation of data and often heavy reliance on a single source, mainly survey data
- Lack of integrated national health information strategies and plans
  - censuses, more integrated surveys

# What African countries should be doing - 1

- Encourage more evidence-based decision making
- Link health research and health information/statistics
- Build analytical and data management capacity through long term & on the job training
- Encourage development of national health information strategies using the HMN framework
  - Assessment of nation HIS using the HMN tool
  - Develop long term costed strategic plan for strengthening the system

# What African countries should be doing - 2

- Establish regional health observatory
  - Countries can review and update their national statistics
- Strengthen routine system (service statistics) including validation of the data
- Establish/strengthen other sources of data including VR, DSS, regular census, etc
- Learn from best practices in the region and beyond
- Limit political interference

# Priority Action

- Human resource capacity – no statistician
- Document existing capacity & identify gaps
  - Who is doing/can do what?
- Review existing systems and adopt systems that can support comparability
- Include information on inputs – resource allocation (wastages)
- Start somewhere – the needs are huge but unless we begin, we can't get to our goals

# Required Donor Input

- Technical skills and training
- Support harmonization of HIS and fund national plans to strengthen HIS
- Support institutional capacity for health research
- Support more regular censuses, surveys and other systems
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