Innovation & Learning

In order for health systems to remain relevant, effective, and responsive to changing population health needs, there must be processes, organizations, and a culture in place that enable them to be innovative and flexible and to adapt and modify behavior, practices, priorities, and policies to reflect new knowledge and insights. Innovation and learning is a characteristic of a health system that enables flexibility and iteration in order to continuously improve services and ultimately drive improved health outcomes. The goal of innovation and learning is to stimulate and make use of new and existing evidence, research, and data and to adapt and incorporate these learnings into changes at scale. This requires routine incorporation of new evidence from research or data and routine reviews and discussions of progress and challenges so that lessons from past events are identified and can be used to predict and/or improve response to future threats or changing health needs.

Visual Aid - Innovation and Learning

Adjustment to Population Health Needs includes:

Innovation and Learning

Achieving innovation and learning in a health system relies on having a system, organization, and culture in place to continually iterate and improve across all levels.

Ongoing Cycle of Innovation and Learning

Innovation, ideas, and insights are essential for ongoing improvement and adaptation in health systems.
Innovation and Learning is a component of Adjustment to Population Health Needs

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Social Determinants & Context (Political, Social, Demographic & Socioeconomic)
Innovation and Learning is a component of Adjustment to Population Health Needs

- Surveillance
- Priority Setting
- Innovation and Learning
What can you learn about Innovation and Learning from the Improvement Strategies?

**SECTION 1**

What is Innovation and Learning?

*What it is:* Learn more about the core principles and goals of Innovation and Learning and its role in PHC improvement.

**SECTION 2**

How do I assess my performance?

*What it is:* Learn more about some indications that improvements might be relevant in your context and what you can achieve by focusing improvements on Innovation and Learning.

*Vital Signs Profile:* Use the information in your Vital Signs Profile to help determine relevant areas for improvement.

**SECTION 3**

How do I get started?

*What others have done:* Learn from implementation approaches and challenges in other country contexts.

*How to succeed:* Consider your country context, what elements are not functioning properly, and what needs to be in place to support effective improvements.

*What to ask:* Use guiding questions to help determine how you might begin to plan and enact reforms in your country context.

Guided by the above considerations and relevant resources, start to build out an improvement plan with your CE lead and/or focal point.
What can my country achieve by focusing on Innovation and Learning?

Goals & Outcomes

✓ **Supports** health systems to be innovative, flexible, and responsive to future threats and changing health needs

✓ **Stimulates** generation and makes use of evidence and learnings that can be used to improve services and ultimately drive improved health outcomes at scale
Innovation and Learning – How do I assess my performance?

Learn more about whether you should focus on Innovation and Learning in the Vital Signs Profile.
How do I assess my performance?

Use the information in the Vital Signs Profile to help determine relevant areas of improvement.
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How do I assess my performance?

Use the information in the Vital Signs Profile to help determine relevant areas of improvement.
What are indications that Innovation and Learning might be an appropriate area of focus?

Other Indications

The elements below are poorly functioning or not in place:

- Mechanisms to learn from new and/or existing evidence, research, and data (i.e. existence of a national knowledge management or evidence review process)

- Formalized, systematic, and transparent mechanisms to recognize, evaluate, and scale successful innovations beyond the pilot level (i.e. agencies for supporting or evaluating innovations)

- Systematic mechanisms to share learnings across stakeholders at different levels of the health system (i.e. national institutes for innovation and research and development)

- System-wide culture around learning and innovation in primary health care
Innovation and Learning - What is it?

Learn more about the core principles of Innovation and Learning and what you can achieve by focusing improvements in the What it is section.
What is Innovation and Learning?

Innovation and learning is defined as having a system, organization, and culture in place that allows for flexibility and adaptation to modify behavior, practice, priorities, and policies to reflect new knowledge and insights.

Innovation involves interrelated changes in technological, organizational and institutional elements of healthcare.
What is Innovation and Learning?

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Why it’s important

**Ensure relevance and adherence to best practices**
Mechanisms for innovation and learning help to ensure current policies, plans, and practices reflect new and emerging global evidence, research, and data, ultimately to improve PHC.

**Health system performance**
Innovation and learning is an important force for building a health system’s capacity to develop context-specific, evidence-based solutions to improve PHC performance.

**Health system resilience**
Cultivating a system of continuous improvement is important for building resilient health systems that can effectively adapt and respond to changing population health needs and demands.
What is Innovation and Learning?

Innovation and learning is defined as having a system, organization, and culture in place that allows for flexibility and adaptation to modify behavior, practice, priorities, and policies to reflect new knowledge and insights.

Innovation involves interrelated changes in technological, organizational and institutional elements of healthcare.

Key steps and considerations

- **Develop systems** to generate new knowledge and insights (external or from within the country) and **use learnings** to improve existing behaviors, practices, priorities, and policies.

- **Create a culture** that supports continuous iteration and improvement, backed by a **high-level commitment** to innovation and learning.

- **Engage stakeholders** at all levels of the health system, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

- **Establish mechanisms** to recognize, evaluate, and scale successful innovations beyond the pilot level and systematically share learnings across stakeholders.
Innovation and Learning

Achieving innovation and learning in a health system relies on having a system, organization, and culture in place to continually iterate and improve across all levels.

Effective innovation and learning uses global and local evidence, research, and data to gain insights that can be operationalized and incorporated into changes at scale.

Multi-level and multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement and coordination

Create and maintain a standardized process for recognizing, evaluating, and scaling innovations.
Deeper dive: Innovation and Learning in action

Innovation and Learning can occur across a wide range of areas and involves interrelated changes in technological, organizational, and institutional elements of healthcare:

**Technology element:** Changes in the design of services, products, and production processes

**Organization element:** New or improved ways of organizing or administering activities

**System-interaction element:** New or improved ways of interacting with other organizations and knowledge bases

**Conceptual element:** New or improved worldviews, rationalities, missions, and strategies
Innovation and Learning – How do I get started?

Innovation & Learning

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Visual Aid - Innovation and Learning

Derive information from What others have done, What to ask and How to succeed to help determine where and how you might begin to plan and enact forms in your country context.
Planning for improvement in your context

The guidance and recommendations described within the Innovation and Learning module are not intended to provide a one-size-fits-all solution.

The considerations involved in planning and implementing strategies will depend on your local context.

Sample activities

- **Consider** implementation challenges and approaches in other country contexts
- **Consider how the features of your health system**, such as how decisions get made and the role of the private sector, will impact your improvement plans
- **Identify** key elements that need to be in place to support improvements
- **Use the guiding questions in the Improvement Strategies** to spur thinking about Innovation and Learning in your country context and stimulate ideas for improvement
- **Start to develop** an improvement plan
Planning for improvement in your context

While the specific considerations involved in planning and implementing strategies will depend on your context, you might consider...

- **What are some of the elements for establishing Innovation and Learning?**
  - National commitment and investment
  - Culture of continuous improvement
  - Multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement
  - Mechanisms to share learnings
  - Mechanisms to scale innovations

- **What are the key processes for scaling an innovation?**
  - Identifying where opportunities for innovation and learning exist
  - Tracking how interventions are being implemented and if goals are being met
  - Identifying if, when, and how to scale an innovation to achieve a greater level of impact
What elements should be in place to support effective improvements in Innovation and Learning?
High-level commitment to innovation and learning is necessary for developing and sustaining a high-performing system, organization, and culture to innovate and learn. This may be demonstrated through dedicated national strategies, budgets, and research and development capacity.
Making innovation and learning a priority investment as a part of the priority setting process is also important for ensuring innovation activities are in alignment with national objectives and will be prioritized and ingrained into the broader health system.
To ensure a participatory and inclusive process for stakeholder engagement and support a system-wide culture of innovation, robust institutional frameworks for community engagement and social accountability should be in place.
What elements should be in place to support effective improvements in Innovation and Learning?

Innovation and learning is supported by the interoperable information systems that collect, analyze, and share critical information (including surveillance data) and feedback to all relevant stakeholders and facilitate continuous learning.
When a given intervention is relevant to the facility-level, strong **facility organization and management** is an important enabler of the innovation and learning process. To support a culture for innovation and learning that promotes continuous learning and improvement at the facility level, **relevant training and support** should be initiated in pre-service education.
The specific considerations involved in planning and implementing strategies will depend on your local context.

The questions listed may be a useful starting place to determine how you might begin to plan and enact reforms in your context.

Sample questions

☐ How reliable are mechanisms to recognize, evaluate, and scale successful innovations?
The specific considerations involved in planning and implementing strategies will depend on your local context.

The questions listed may be a useful starting place to determine how you might begin to plan and enact reforms in your context.

Sample questions

☐ How reliable are mechanisms to recognize, evaluate, and scale successful innovations?

☐ How are stakeholders engaged in innovation and learning?
The specific considerations involved in planning and implementing strategies will depend on your local context.

The questions listed may be a useful starting place to determine how you might begin to plan and enact reforms in your context.

Sample questions

- How reliable are mechanisms to recognize, evaluate, and scale successful innovations?
- How are stakeholders engaged in innovation and learning?
- How often and reliably are learnings from innovations being operationalized into the system?
### Recap: Innovation and Learning

#### System
- Governance & Leadership
  - Primary Health Care Policies
  - Quality Management Infrastructure
  - Social Accountability
- Health Financing
  - Payment Systems
  - Spending on Primary Health Care
  - Financial Coverage
- Adjustment to Population Health Needs
  - Surveillance
  - Priority Setting
  - Innovation & Learning

#### Inputs
- Drugs & Supplies
- Facility Infrastructure
- Information Systems
- Workforce
- Funds

#### Service Delivery
- Population Health Management
  - Local Priority Setting
  - Community Engagement
  - Empanelment
  - Proactive Population Outreach
- Facility Organization & Management
  - Team-based Care Organization
  - Facility Management Capability & Leadership
  - Information Systems Use
  - Performance Measurement & Management Outreach

#### Outputs
- Access
  - Financial
  - Geographic
  - Timeliness
- High Quality Primary Health Care
  - First Contact Accessibility
  - Continuity
  - Comprehensiveness
  - Coordination
  - Person-centered

#### Outcomes
- Effective Service Coverage
  - Health Promotion
  - Disease Prevention
  - RMNCH
  - Childhood Illness
  - Infectious Disease
  - NCDs & Mental Health
  - Palliative Care
- Health Status
- Responsiveness to People
- Equity
- Efficiency
- Resilience of Health Systems

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Social Determinants & Context (Political, Social, Demographic & Socioeconomic)
Recap: Innovation and Learning

Adapting to population health needs includes...

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