Engaging the private health service delivery sector through governance in mixed health systems

What is the strategy?

The **vision** of the strategy is a well-governed health system in which public and private actors collectively deliver on the realization of UHC.

The **mission** is to facilitate a new way of governing mixed health systems by building consensus around the means and strategies to engage the private sector in health care service delivery.

How was this strategy developed?

A WHO Advisory Group was convened based on their expertise in different elements of private sector engagement. They served to provide advice and recommendations on regulation and engagement with the private sector, and to ultimately develop this strategy.
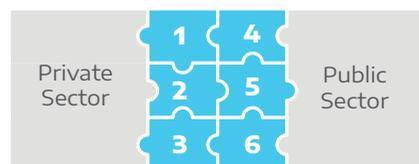
What is private sector engagement?

The meaningful inclusion of private providers for service delivery in mixed health systems using dialogue, policy, regulation, partnerships and financing. Effective engagement involves the successful application of six governance behaviours.

Why is this important?

Many lower- and middle-income countries have a large and growing contingent of private sector health service delivery actors that have historically been weakly governed and poorly coordinated. They primarily deliver health care services to the poor and underserved globally. To achieve Universal Health Coverage, countries need to take ownership of healthcare, irrespective of where a person seeks care.

COVID-19 is exacerbating the consequences associated with lack of governance in mixed health systems. Countries need to adopt a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach as they immerse in the battle against COVID-19 in which the private sector is engaged. The utilization of this strategy can help countries in their journey to get there.

Six governance behaviours are critical to private sector health service delivery. Together, they represent a fundamental shift that requires us to do business in a new way.

Private Sector — [1][4][2][5][3][6] — Public Sector

1 Build understanding
Collection and analysis of data to align priorities for action.

2 Foster relations
Working together to achieve shared objectives in a new way of doing business.

3 Enable stakeholders
Institutional framework that empowers actors.

4 Align structures
Organizational structures to align with policy objectives.

5 Nurture trust
Mutual trust amongst all actors as reliable participants.

6 Deliver strategy
Agreed sense of direction and articulation of roles and responsibilities.

To catalyze strategic action, four priorities are put forward by the Advisory Group to the WHO. They underline the importance of building capacity within WHO, governments, and the private health sector itself to work effectively together to address healthcare needs.

Convene to build political will
Use WHO's convening power to build political will for governance of mixed health systems

Embed governance behaviors
Embed the six governance behaviors by defining clear roles and responsibilities to take the work forward

Set norms and assure accountability
Set global norms – rules and policy – around the governance of mixed health systems.

Support learning and technical guidance
Set the agenda on learning and ensure that technical guidance is aligned with the governance behaviors.

IMPACT FOR HEALTH