Health Systems Program

RESEARCH

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH

JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC HEALTH
The Health Systems Program is a global leader in research, teaching, and strategic collaborations to achieve accessible, cost-effective and healthy outcomes across the lifespan for the world’s families, communities and nations—especially the poorest and most vulnerable.

We apply the tools and skills of research—systematic observation, data collection, measurement and analysis—to yield discoveries that reduce the global burden of disease and disability, enhancing the health and well-being of millions of people.

Health systems are the networks of knowledge, processes and people that can plan, manage and deliver life-enhancing health services, together with their vital infrastructure, from data systems to diagnostics, transport to training.

As global health systems researchers, our mission is to find and share the best evidence for actions, systems and policies that will promote health around the world.

Health Systems Program researchers have worked in more than 50 countries during the past decade. We have particular expertise and deep experience in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, which continue to struggle with widespread severe poverty and unmet health needs. As we maintain global research leadership on the health issues and challenges especially relevant for these populations and regions, we are continuing our work in Latin America, the Middle East, and Central and Southeast Asia, especially in transitional economies. We are also expanding our research footprint in emerging markets such as Brazil, Russia, India, China, Mexico, and South Africa.
More than 150 experts from around the world, including 69 full-time faculty and a network of faculty associates based in Asia and Africa as well as Baltimore, are part of the Health Systems Program. Our diverse mix of expertise and academic disciplines includes clinical medicine, economics, statistics, anthropology, demography, policy analysis, social science, qualitative research, information systems, epidemiology, econometrics, computing, and international relations.

OUR RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

Every year governments, businesses and global non-governmental organizations invest billions of dollars to improve the world’s knowledge of global health challenges and to identify practices with promise to achieve far-reaching, sustainable gains in health and well-being. Our research projects are designed, carried out and reported to optimize these investments.

Major funders of our recent and ongoing research include:

- National Institutes of Health, USA
- USAID - United States Agency for International Development
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- The World Bank
- GAVI Alliance (for Vaccines)
- World Health Organization
- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- Department for International Development, United Kingdom
Mexico
Collaborating with national authorities to influence injury intervention strategies
Our researchers conduct roadside observations of vehicle occupants in Guadalajara and León to better understand risk factors for road traffic injuries. These findings are being used to help the national injury prevention authority develop appropriate interventions.

Kenya
Training Emergency Department staff and ambulance crews
Since 2011, our doctors have trained Emergency Department staff and ambulance crews serving five hospitals in and around Nairobi to maintain trauma registries and use the data to improve the quality of care of the injured. Our researchers have also worked with hospital and health administrators to plan infrastructure improvements including the purchase and equipping of new ambulances.

India
Simulating clinical consultations to respond to physician shortages
In India’s rural Chhattisgarh state, our faculty devised a systematic assessment using simulated clinical consultations to measure the competence of different types of clinical care providers to treat common conditions seen at primary health care centers. Their findings have informed the government’s plans for responding to the shortage of rural physicians.

Bangladesh
Harnessing the power of community health workers to save newborn lives
Since 2000, our researchers have teamed with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other partners to recruit, train and integrate 200 local women as community health workers in a rural health system and track the results. In regular visits to 100,000 women, these CHWs deliver information about pregnancy and postpartum health and other simple in-home interventions that have cut infant mortality by one-third.

Jordan
Interviewing Syrian refugees
Going door to door in more than 100 neighborhoods throughout Jordan in 2014, interviewers trained by our faculty located refugees from the Syrian civil war and asked them about their health status and access to care, recording the answers on tablets. Survey results will inform decisions by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and other NGOs on how best to deliver health services to this distressed and dislocated community.

China
Evaluating the impact of health insurance schemes
Since 2006, we have been working to explore the impact of health insurance schemes on health of people in 3 counties. Working with local counterparts, our faculty have used quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to understand the changing dynamics of social safety nets in rural areas.
Our research creates knowledge, identifies barriers, defines solutions, develops models, and evaluates improvements for effective health systems. Here are a few examples:

**Testing health services delivery and financing**
In Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Nigeria, and Uganda, we have developed and tested innovations in health services organization, finance, and delivery for Future Health Systems, a research consortium of six leading academic and health institutions led by our faculty.

**Health worker incentives to improve maternal and child health**
In Eritrea, Congo, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Zambia, Benin, Kyrgyzstan, and Ghana, we assessed the linkage between health worker incentives and maternal and child health results in a study conducted with national partners and the World Bank for the Results-Based Financing for Health project.

**Prevention of road injuries**
In 24 sites across 10 countries—Brazil, Cambodia, China, Egypt, India, Kenya, Mexico, Russia, Turkey, and Vietnam—we evaluate and implement measures to reduce the burden of road injuries in the Global Road Safety Project of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

**Preventing drowning through socially based interventions**
In Bangladesh, we are conducting the largest study on socially based interventions among 1.2 million people to learn how best to prevent childhood drowning, supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

**Migrant labor and human trafficking documentation**
In Malaysia, we are documenting the health and working conditions of migrant workers, the impacts of labor rights violations—including occupational injury and human trafficking—and the implications for Malaysia’s health system.
In 2013–2014 the Health Systems Program:

- Received more than **$70 million** in awards to fund a portfolio of 37 research projects
- Generated **$15 million** in new research funding for 22 studies in more than 40 countries
- Published **153** peer-reviewed scientific papers in international journals
- Published peer-reviewed results and commentaries on research on 39 countries with more than **500** co-authors in 2013

**HEALTH SYSTEMS PROGRAM**

**JHSPH RESEARCH CENTERS**

- Center for American Indian Health  
  [http://www.jhsph.edu/CAIH](http://www.jhsph.edu/CAIH)
- Center for Refugee and Disaster Response  
  [http://www.jhsph.edu/Refugee](http://www.jhsph.edu/Refugee)
- International Center for Maternal & Newborn Health  
  [http://www.jhsph.edu/MaternalNewbornHealth](http://www.jhsph.edu/MaternalNewbornHealth)
- Institute for International Programs (IIP)  
  [www.jhsph.edu/IIP](http://www.jhsph.edu/IIP)
- International Vaccine Access Center (IVAC)  
  [www.jhsph.edu/IVAC](http://www.jhsph.edu/IVAC)
- Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit (IIRU)  
  [www.jhsph.edu/IIRU](http://www.jhsph.edu/IIRU)

**PROGRAM LEADERSHIP**

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