



# Policy Development

*Improving Health through Policy Change*

## PROGRAM AREAS

- ▶ *Population and Family Planning*
- ▶ *Sexual and Reproductive Health*
- ▶ *Maternal and Child Health*
- ▶ *HIV and AIDS*
- ▶ *Infectious Diseases*
- ▶ *Gender*

## TECHNICAL SERVICES

- ▶ *Policy and Advocacy*
- ▶ *Research and Strategic Information*
- ▶ *Health Markets and Private Sector Engagement*
- ▶ *Modeling and Economic Analysis*
- ▶ *Health Informatics*
- ▶ *Strategic Consulting*
- ▶ *Program Management*

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Policies are essential to the success of any long-term health program. They determine the priorities, objectives, roles and responsibilities, standards, operational mechanisms, and resources needed to develop and implement a program, as well as evaluate its effectiveness.

Futures Group International assists in the development and implementation of policies designed to create an enabling environment, ensure human rights, and improve public health. We use policy change to facilitate the achievement of important public health and social development goals.

Policy change can include developing new policies, reforming existing policies, or eliminating policies that serve as barriers to effective programs and services. Through policy change, Futures is committed to helping our clients improve access to high-quality services, increase resource allocation for public health and social development programs, safeguard human rights, strengthen collaboration, and, most importantly, achieve long-term sustainability.

## Current Projects and Success Stories

### USAID | Health Policy Initiative

Establishing a strong policy foundation is essential for achieving the goals of the U.S. government's leading international assistance efforts. The USAID | Health Policy Initiative (HPI) strives to foster an improved enabling environment for health—especially for family planning/reproductive health, maternal health, and HIV programs.

Futures, in collaboration with the Centre for Development and Population Activities, White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood, Futures Institute, and World Conference of Religions for Peace, is responsible for implementing Task Order 1 of the USAID | Health Policy Initiative. This work builds on the legacy of the USAID-funded POLICY Project, which assisted government and civil society partners in policy advocacy and formulation in more than 30 countries across Africa, Asia and the Near East, Europe and Eurasia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

HPI helps countries and organizations translate policies, strategic plans, and operational guidelines into effective programs

### Our Policy Development Work Includes:

- Multisectoral policy work
- Workplace policy development
- Advocacy and policy dialogue promotion
- Planning and finance assistance
- Modeling and forecasting (SPECTRUM suite of policy models)
- Policy-relevant research
- Institutional strengthening
- Capacity development



and services, especially for the poor and other underserved groups. It also focuses on policy dialogue to empower new partners to participate in the policymaking process while promoting effective and equitable resource allocation, multisectoral coordination, and evidence-based decisionmaking.

HPI works in more than 25 countries, and with four regional programs across Africa, Asia and the Near East, Europe and Eurasia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Within the first 18 months of the five-year task order, HPI's assistance resulted in the formulation and adoption of 13 national laws, policies, and strategic plans, and the creation and capacity building of 11 advocacy networks in eight countries. HPI has also helped local NGOs generate more than \$500,000 to support local family planning, reproductive health, HIV, and maternal health programs. Examples of specific achievements include adoption of a plan to improve efforts to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV in Ukraine; establishment of a legal clinic and hotline to redress discrimination experienced by people living with HIV in Vietnam; formation of a civil society network that will promote the reproductive health needs of Mayan women in Guatemala; and allocation of \$900,000 by the Jordanian government to procure contraceptives.

Recently, in Mali, HPI's support led to the passage and implementation of important reproductive health legislation, as well as the engagement of two key stakeholder groups—religious leaders and parliamentarians. HPI partnered with parliamentarians to secure passage of key administrative regulations (*textes d'application*) without which the country's reproductive health law could not be implemented. HPI helped the Parliamentarian Network on Population and Development (REMAPOD) launch an initiative to identify barriers to implementation of the law by visiting rural health centers. As a result, one of the poorest communities in Mali will have a chief medical officer who can provide family planning services. HPI's efforts to engage religious leaders in Mali were also highly

successful. Following project training, imams began speaking out in support of family planning in their mosques for the first time and recruiting their fellow imams to do the same. The project also helped the Islamic Network for Population Development (RIPOD) to expand into six new districts, enabling it to reach more religious leaders and strengthening its nationwide advocacy efforts. HPI's ability to secure the support of Islamic religious leaders for family planning is a substantial accomplishment that improves the country's prospects for increasing access to and use of family planning in the long term.

#### Program for Strengthening the Central American Response to HIV/AIDS (PASCA), USAID

The USAID | Program for Strengthening the Central American Response to HIV/AIDS (PASCA) strives to foster a strong, unified regional approach to the epidemic and is guided by three core principles—forging linkages, fostering leadership, and advancing evidence-based decisionmaking. The project uses a combined country and regional approach to achieve its objective and implements country-specific activities in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama, as well as region-wide initiatives that include Honduras and Nicaragua. PASCA provides support for the Central American HIV/AIDS/STI Congress (CONCASIDA), builds the capacity of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism, and provides training and assistance for the design and implementation of Global Fund projects.

In July 2008, Panama's Minister of Health and other government officials launched the National HIV/AIDS Policy. The policy—which focuses on prevention, comprehensive care, community participation, and the protection of human rights—demonstrates the government's commitment to promoting an integrated response to the HIV epidemic. The policy will facilitate the allocation of funds for the national HIV response and assist civil society, government agencies, and international organizations in monitoring that response. Futures' HPI team helped

the Ministry of Health to craft the plan by mapping different actors and sectors involved in the national HIV response, organizing workshops to draft the policy, and facilitating its adoption.

PASCA is a task order under the USAID | Health Policy Initiative, and continues and builds on the work undertaken under HPI Task Order 1, also implemented by Futures.

#### Action for West Africa Region Project (AWARE II), USAID

AWARE II focuses on creating an environment that enables countries to plan and implement selected high-quality health service programs for people of the region. The project works in up to 21 countries to foster regional coordination, create an integrated package of interventions, and promote adoption of positive policies. Futures is responsible for implementing the policy component of this three-year project.

Futures provides technical leadership in the areas of policy and resource mobilization, including leveraging resources in the region from the public and private sectors and other donors to scale up key interventions selected by the project. We are building the West African Health Organization's (WAHO's) capacity for policy development and implementation, while also implementing policy activities at the regional and country level.

AWARE II builds on Futures' previous role on the AWARE-HIV/AIDS project, for which achievements included the development and adoption of a regional HIV/AIDS policy agenda, adoption of a HIV Model Law as a regional template for development of national HIV laws, and creation of three new regional networks among youth, journalists, and religious leaders.

#### For More Information

To learn more about Futures and our offerings, please contact:

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