This issue of the D4I Monitor highlights our evaluation work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

USAID’s Integrated Health Program (IHP) works in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to strengthen the capacity of Congolese institutions and communities to deliver quality, integrated health services that sustainably improve the health status of the Congolese population.

In 2020, Data for Impact (D4I) partnered with Kinshasa School of Public Health (KSPH) on a mixed methods process and impact evaluation of the IHP in the DRC. The evaluation includes use of routine health information system data, health facility assessments, a population-based household survey, and qualitative data collection; a country research partner capacity assessment and strengthening plan; and three learning agenda studies.

D4I’s comprehensive evaluation approach may serve as an example to others seeking to evaluate complex, integrated health programs, and the findings from the evaluation are helpful to other programs to inform programmatic decisions and funding allocations.

**Evaluation Efforts**

**USAID Integrated Health Program Midline Evaluation**

D4I conducted a midline evaluation using health facility assessment data collected in 2019 and 2021 as part of the performance evaluation of the IHP in the DRC. USAID IHP has three objectives:

1. Strengthen health systems, governance, and leadership at the provincial, health zone, and facility levels in target provinces

2. Increase access to quality, integrated health services in target provinces

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In this evaluation, the midline survey was conducted only 18 months after the baseline survey yet, in general, trends appear positive, particularly for leadership and governance indicators. The percentage of health zone offices that received a supervisory visit was significantly higher at midline (69 percent at baseline and 90 percent at midline). The percentage of health workers who reported being satisfied with their job was nine percentage points higher at midline (48 percent) compared to baseline (39 percent).

The IHP evaluation baseline report can be found here. Results from the baseline report suggest that the government health system faces multiple challenges to effectively plan, implement, and monitor services. These include lack of electricity, cellular communication, and internet; wide variations by province in the availability of medicines and equipment; limited managerial autonomy; variations in the levels of external supervision; insufficient number of staff; and low levels of health worker satisfaction.

**Capacity Strengthening Efforts**

**Evaluation Capacity at Kinshasa School of Public Health: Baseline Assessment Results**

D4I is providing training and other support for evaluation capacity strengthening at the Kinshasa School of Public Health (KSPH), our country research partner. This PowerPoint presentation shares findings from a baseline needs assessment conducted as an initial step in the capacity strengthening process. Data were collected at the institution level and from faculty members and graduate students.

The needs assessment showed that KSPH professors are highly qualified and dedicated, with long average terms and high levels of research activity. Collaboration on projects and proposals was common within departments but relatively rare between departments. The assessment identified technical and non-technical opportunity areas for individual capacity strengthening among faculty and students, such as proposal writing and sampling, respectively. Institutional strategies identified included network and partnership development, among others.

Based on the needs assessment, the KSPH and D4I developed three priority initiatives to strengthen evaluation capacity at the school. The first is creating a grants resource library to aid faculty in assembling applications for funding. The second is development of an online community of practice for evaluation that will be open to faculty, current students, and alumni. The third initiative is providing on-demand e-learning modules related to evaluation and hosted within the community of practice. Pilot testing of the three initiatives is occurring in February, with the public launch scheduled for March 2022.
Learning Agenda

In addition to the evaluation of USAID IHP, D4I is conducting three mixed methods studies that contribute to the program’s learning agenda. The first study is a characterization of health facility supervision in the DRC. The second is an assessment of the country’s medical equipment information system. Lastly, D4I will evaluate the VIVA! campaign, which focuses on promoting health behavior change.

More from D4I

- **Our Work: Year 3 Highlights**
- **Estimating National and Area-Specific COVID-19 Effects on Health Service Use in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**
- **Every Newborn-Measurement Improvement for Newborn & Stillbirth Indicators (EN-MINI) Tools for Routine Health Information Systems**

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