The Private Sector in Health Thematic Working Group
Activities

Activities, which took place in the last 2 years since HSR2016, include:

- **Power, politics and accountability**

In July 2017 the Institute of Development Studies co-organised a major international workshop entitled “Unpicking power and politics for transformative change: towards accountability for health equity” with partners from Unequal Voices, Future Health Systems, the Open Society Foundations, the Impact Initiative, and Health Systems Global.

One theme of the workshop was on accountability responses to the spread of health markets. Members of the PSIH TWG helped organize and run discussions around this theme. National and transnational challenges and responses to the spread of health markets were discussed based on country experiences of Mongolia, China, India, and Brazil. For more information please refer to the following blog on the HSG website written by some of the members who attended the event: [http://www.healthsystemsglobal.org/blog/218/Accountability-responses-to-the-spread-of-health-markets.html](http://www.healthsystemsglobal.org/blog/218/Accountability-responses-to-the-spread-of-health-markets.html)

*Activity Lead: Gerry Bloom*

- **Regulation**

The Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage (JLN) PHC Private Sector Engagement Collaborative is working to develop new learning and guidance on private sector regulation in LMICs. The JLN is an innovative, demand-driven community of policymakers and practitioners that co-create practical “how to” knowledge to accelerate country progress towards UHC.

The Private Sector Engagement Collaborative within the JLN is authoring a practical guide titled *Engaging the Private Sector in Primary Health Care to Achieve Universal Health Coverage: Advice from Implementers to Implementers*.

The JLN shared learnings from their co-developed manual during a webinar on July 7, 2017. This webinar was organized in partnership with PSIH TWG. It attracted over 20 participants including representatives from Meridian Group International, Inc, EU Health and Nutrition Concern Worldwide, JLN country participants, the JLN steering committee, and international consultants and researchers focused on the private sector in health.

*Activity Lead: Cicely Thomas*

- **Implementing improvement and innovation in health services and systems**

The Private Sector Thematic Working Group has been exploring the innovation landscape in the health sector and approaches that stimulate scale-up and social impact of health innovations.
The Innovations for UHC Conclave, organised by the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), Amref Health Africa, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), NITI Aayog, and HSG took place on June 11th and 12th in Bangalore, India.

The Innovations for Universal Health Coverage Partnership was conceptualized by, Dr. Gerald Bloom of IDS, Dr. Priya Balasubramaniam of PHFI and Ms. Desta Lakew of Amref Health Africa - all members of the Private Sector in Health TWG - as a collaboration towards bringing of lasting health change in Africa and Asia. The aim of the Innovation for UHC Partnership is to find ways to leverage the transformational potential of technology based health innovations and new models of healthcare to accelerate progress towards achieving UHC in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) in Asia and Africa.

The event brought together technology innovators, investors, government officials, public and private sector health service providers from India and Africa to share insights and strategies on ways to leverage the transformational potential of health innovations and accelerate progress towards achieving UHC in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) in Asia and Africa.

One strategy for engaging in global debates on innovation has been to edit a special issue of the journal Globalization and Health, that focuses on innovation and health system change in low and middle income countries in a highly globalized world. We encourage people to submit papers for inclusion in this special issue.

The conversation will continue at the Thematic Working Group on Private Sector Pre-symposium Satellite Session, which will be held on the side of the Fifth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research in Liverpool in October 2018, as well as at the Africa Health Agenda International Conference (AHAIC2019) planned for March 5-7, 2019 in Kigali, Rwanda.

*Activity Leads: Priya Balasubramaniam, Desta Lakew and Gerry Bloom*

- **The Private-Sector-in-Health Symposium 2018**

The Private Sector in Health Thematic Working Group has been organizing its 4th Private Sector in Health (PSH) Symposium, alongside the main Global Symposium on Health Systems Research conference in October 2018 in Liverpool, UK. The **Satellite session: Engaging with Private Providers in Low and Middle Income Countries - Strengthening Quality of Care and Effective Regulation** will take place on October 9th. This full-day session will look into the very varied roles and implications of private sector participation in low and middle-income country (LMIC) health sectors.

**Key areas of debate include:**

- How can quality of care be assured and improved among very varied types of private providers?
- How can regulation be implemented effectively and efficiently?
- What are the equity implications of public-private engagement? and
- How is the private sector changing and innovating and what should be the policy response?

**Pre-registration** is required.

*Activity Leads: Phyllis Awor and Catherine Goodman*
Other Activities:

- **Participation on a Live Q&A**
  Two of our PSIH TWG coordinating committee members were among 7 expert panelists participating in a Guardian’s Global development professionals network **Live Q&A: What is the best model to bring healthcare to all?** on 29 June. They talked about how the private sector factors into this.

- **Video: Introducing the PSIH TWG**
  The PSIH TWG produced a video introducing the group and its activities. It has been disseminated through PSIH TWG and HSG channels and has had over 260 views so far. [Watch the video](https://youtu.be/ezPIXOAdRhQ)

- **Participating in UHC Forum**
  Gerry Bloom, Desta Lakew and Gina Lagomarsino participated in the UHC Forum in Tokyo in December 2017. It provided a good opportunity to become familiar with the priorities of UHC2030 and to explore ways that the thematic working group can contribute to the work of engaging with the private sector.

- **HSR2018**
  The PSIH TWG Coordinating Committee has been planning its Business Meeting, its TWG meeting and other TWG related sessions.

- **Communications**
  The group has communicated on a regular basis through a variety of channels including newsletters, emails, social media (Twitter and LinkedIn), as well as blogs on the HSG website.