



STRATEGIC PURCHASING FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

ABOUT SP4PHC

The Strategic Purchasing for Primary Health Care (SP4PHC) project aims to improve how governments purchase primary health care (PHC) services, with a focus on family planning (FP) and maternal, newborn, and child health (MNCH). The project is implemented by ThinkWell in collaboration with government institutions and local research partners in five countries: Burkina Faso, Indonesia, Kenya, the Philippines, and Uganda. SP4PHC is supported by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The purchasing context in these countries is quite different; large national health insurance schemes cover most of the population in some countries, while ministries of health at the national and sub-national levels dominate the purchasing landscape in others. Across these different geographies, the project is working to strengthen schemes that are critical for improving the delivery of PHC and addressing the needs of the poor, while also improving alignment across different purchasing arrangements within the health system. Through its learning agenda, the project aims to generate and diffuse knowledge about strategic purchasing for PHC to influence policy and practice at the country, regional, and global levels.

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OUR APPROACH

- We implement strategies tailored to the country context.
- We have country-based teams in each of the five geographies, which are at the forefront of implementing country activities.
- We work with the public purchaser and other relevant government institutions in each of the countries to facilitate policy dialogue on strategic purchasing reforms.
- We use analytics to diagnose existing challenges, design potential solutions, and test the sustainability of those designs through pilot studies.

WHAT IS STRATEGIC PURCHASING?

As countries implement strategies to achieve universal health coverage, they are undertaking health financing reforms to mobilize more financing for health and ensure that available funds for health are used optimally and equitably. Strategic purchasing is linked to the second objective. Purchasing refers to how institutions controlling pooled funds – like ministries of health and health insurance agencies – allocate them to healthcare providers. Making purchasing strategic involves basing purchasing decisions on information about provider behavior and population health needs in order to improve health system performance in terms of equitable access, quality of care and financial protection.





SP4PHC is focused on improving purchasing through the national health insurance program in Indonesia, Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional (JKN), which covers over 80% of the population. Due to its escalating costs, there are growing concerns about the scheme's long-term financial sustainability. Additionally, in contrast to Indonesia's positive trends in reducing neonatal, infant, and under-5 mortality, patterns around maternal health are less encouraging and FP progress has stagnated. SP4PHC's goal is to improve how JKN uses purchasing as a lever to increase access to and quality of FP and MNCH services through the full range of health providers, as well as to increase JKN spending on PHC. ThinkWell is collaborating with several government agencies on the following SP4PHC strategies:

STRENGTHENING THE PURCHASING OF MATERNAL, NEWBORN, AND CHILD HEALTH (MNCH) SERVICES

Indonesia suffers from stubbornly high maternal mortality. One contributing factor is that private midwives, a crucial source for delivering reproductive and MNCH services, largely operate outside of the country's national health insurance (JKN) system. SP4PHC is collaborating with the Ministry of Health, Social Insurance Administering Body for Health (BPJS-K), and USAID Health Financing Activity to test policies that improve how quality MNCH services are purchased and to influence ongoing JKN reform decisions.

STRENGTHENING HOW DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICES PURCHASE SERVICES FROM PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Indonesia currently has multiple, fragmented channels for funding health services. Although decentralization gave districts greater autonomy over health programming and budgeting, they lack the capacity and guidance to manage these funds to maximize allocative efficiency. SP4PHC is collaborating with District Health Offices to understand the types of funds given to districts, what purchasing signals they are sending to facilities, and policy options needed to strengthen the public financial management capacity of District Health Offices.

IMPROVING HOW FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES ARE PURCHASED

Progress on increasing the modern contraceptive prevalence rate and total demand satisfied has stagnated in Indonesia. Specific challenges include both low utilization of family planning services throughout JKN and limited access to family planning commodities by private providers. SP4PHC is collaborating with Universitas Gadjah Mada to map the family planning funding flows and to develop policy recommendations for government stakeholders on increasing access to family planning through the private sector.

ALIGNING PURCHASING IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

The national government's response to COVID-19 has implications for service delivery. Issues include how funding for routine essential services (family planning, MNCH, nutrition, and immunization) was impacted and how a lack of public financial management capacity at District Health Offices affected their ability to utilize health funds effectively. SP4PHC is collaborating with the Vice President's Office, the Ministry of Health, and District Health Offices to identify opportunities to improve purchasing mechanisms, which will help the government respond to the current pandemic and prepare for future crises.

For more information, visit <https://thinkwell.global/projects/sp4phc/> or write to SP4PHC@thinkwell.global.

ThinkWell is a health systems development organization with experience designing, implementing, evaluating, and diffusing new solutions to persistent health system challenges. Using tailored strategies that meet context-specific needs, we have supported health financing and governance reforms in over 30 countries. www.ThinkWell.global