UCSF Global Health Sciences

Social Franchising for Health

a community of practice for sharing innovations

RESOURCES
CASE STUDIES
Case studies on the following franchises are now available on SF4Health.org: PSI/Myanmar's Sun Quality Health Network, MSI's AMUA Network Kenya, MSI's BlueStar Ethiopia, and MSI's BlueStar Pilipinas.

INITIATIVES
HEALTH MARKETS DATA
In June 2010, the DC-based global health institute Results for Development (R4D) launched the Center for Health Market Innovations (CHMI) – http://healthmarketinnovations.org – a publicly accessible global knowledge platform managed by R4D in collaboration with a network of partners including the GHG. CHMI provides access to a wealth of interactive, comparable, and filterable information on health market programs in LMICs.

RESEARCH
The GHG and Population Services International/Myanmar (PSI/M) have joined together for a three-year project on four collaborative studies to measure the four overarching goals of PSI/M's social franchise, the Sun Quality Health Network. The four goals of the Sun Network are: 1) scale, 2) equity, 3) quality, and 4) cost-effectiveness. This project will result in a series of journal articles and all findings will be widely disseminated.

The Role of Outreach Workers in Social Franchises

As of April 2010, at least 30 of the 40 franchises featured in the Global Health Group's (GHG) annual Compendium of social franchise programs incorporate outreach activities in some capacity. Outreach in this case can be defined as client-driven interventions that occur outside of franchisees' facilities. Some outreach workers operate on a voluntary basis and some are compensated; they may be paid a salary or a monthly stipend, or they may earn some kind of sales commission or margin based on products sold or referrals accomplished.

Outreach interventions are generally designed to achieve one or more of the following objectives: (i) increase access to products or services, (ii) increase demand for products or services, or (iii) support quality in the delivery of products and services. In all cases, the role of the outreach activities is to complement or support the work that takes place within the franchised facilities and to increase the overall performance of the franchise network beyond what it would otherwise be with respect to the generic objectives of a social health franchise: access, quality, equity, and cost-effectiveness. The distinction between outreach and the lower tiers of a franchise network may not always be clear or consistent between franchises. Depending on context, some

franchises regard outreach activities as integral to their model, and others view them as ancillary. Outreach activities may thus be: the core of the franchise (as in Living Goods), an extension of the franchise (as in the case of the PSI/Myanmar's Sun Primary Health providers), external to it (as in the case of the paid or volunteer community health workers supporting many Marie Stopes International's (MSI) BlueStar franchises), or even a second franchise (as in the case of Janani's Titli centres).

Engagement of outreach workers raises a number of interesting management issues, such as: how to select, train and supervise them; whether and how to compensate them; how to motivate and retain them; which activities to prioritize; and how to know whether they are achieving their objectives. Franchise managers report that many outreach activities are cost-prohibitive and recommend assessing the marginal cost-effectiveness of such approaches, and weighing such data against equity considerations. Whereas commercial franchises may limit outreach activities to mass-media brand advertising, social franchises dedicated to serving low-income populations typically consider or adopt a range of activities to extend the reach of the franchise beyond that of fixed facilities and/or to increase rural penetration. >>

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SF4Health is an online community of practice where social franchising stakeholders from around the world exchange information and innovations. Building upon existing resources in poor communities, social franchises network together private health providers to add new, higher quality services in exchange for training and support. As part of its larger work on social franchising, the Global Health Group (GHG) at the University of California, San Francisco serves as the secretariat for SF4Health including maintaining SF4Health.org as an independent forum and supporting the SF4Health community by convening meetings and collecting, collating, and disseminating information on behalf of all members. Please contact SF4Health with suggested topics or events to cover in future newsletters.

EVENTS

CORP. COUNCIL ON AFRICA

The Corporate Council on Africa conference on Integrating Business Solutions for Expanding Access will feature a number of speakers on social franchising. It takes place in Washington, DC on **October 4-6, 2010.**

HEALTH SYSTEMS RESEARCH

The World Health Organization is leading the First Global Symposium on Health Systems Research - Science to Accelerate Universal Health Coverage which will take place on **November 16-19, 2010** in Montreux, Switzerland and feature a session on social franchising: "Social Franchising and Private Sector Engagement at Scale: Experiences in Clinical Service Delivery in Developing Countries."

Front: An BlueStar clinic in Malawi

Above: A mother and child in Myanmar wait to see a rural franchise provider

This article draws from a paper written by Guy Stallworthy of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to stimulate discussion at a November 2009 social franchising meeting at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center. The paper features a sample typology of the functions outreach activities seek to achieve broken down by their association to the franchise.

The Challenge of Tracking Quality in Social Franchises

Collecting quality data from individual franchisee health providers is one of the necessary challenges involved with managing social franchising programs. How can social franchising programs learn from each other to better face the most common constraints, including those around ensuring quality?

In June 2010, the Marie Stopes International Franchising Team, with collaboration from the GHG, conducted a brief survey to explore the various reporting approaches that social franchises have adopted worldwide. A short questionnaire was emailed to the 40 social franchises listed in the GHG's Compendium.

Findings of the survey describe the reporting systems and validation mechanisms in use across the globe, and list the most frequent challenges affecting data quality as named by social franchising managers. In addition, social franchising managers shared valuable lessons on how to approach reporting tool development, franchisee training, and franchisee motivation. The lessons learnt can help management teams to predict and plan to overcome the greatest hurdles around data quality and possibly reduce the need for the most costly validation mechanisms. Read more about social franchising reporting approaches, challenges, and experiences here.