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HST.939 Designing and Sustaining Technology Innovation for Global Health Practice
Spring 2008

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**HST.939 Designing and Sustaining Technology Innovation for Global Health Practice
Spring 2008** **Notes taken for OCW by student**

Lecture 7: 3/18/08 Health Systems Strengthening

For today:

Systems

Human Resources in Health

Informatics

Financing (both of the system, and of insurance/user fees)

Logistics and supplies

Quality assurance

Interactive Cases

Main projects from here in Tanzania:

- diabetes
- mental health
- orphans

Interactive discussion time:

Starting a project in HST.939 is kind of like building a start-up. You should have a long-term work plan, with milestones – you shouldn't think that you can come in and change everything at once.

- Investors will mostly assume that your technology works – they're more concerned with how you plan to implement and market it and whether they think it will be successful.
- You need to reach out to people experienced in your country of interest to get data on consumers there and what strategies work, how the systems already in place work.
- The process of breaking down your plan into smaller and smaller chunks until you get pieces of a size that will actually work in a short time frame is actually quite difficult.

Discussion of a HSS initiative: Improve child health to reduce child mortality rates by 20%

Proposed activity: create satellite centers to help diffuse bottlenecks at district hospitals

Outputs:

- key stakeholders: existing hospitals (actually proposed adding satellite centers, because they won't lose money, and can't treat all the patients), patients, doctors (how are we going to staff the satellite centers? Issues surrounding (de-)incentives for doctors to go work there; maybe would use nurses and community health workers – but there are strict policies about who can prescribe drugs, etc)
 - o You could triage people at the satellite centers to see who needs to go to the actual hospital.
 - o Another stakeholder is the insurer.

- HSS impact areas (HRH, information systems, procurement of supplies)
 - o Information systems: connectivity (communication between centers and hospitals, especially re: patient's condition)
- assessment components: what's the actual reduction in child mortality?
- key challenges: (not yet covered) from OB/GYNs at national hospitals, saying we'll never come up with proper standards to run these types of facilities; if something were to go wrong at one of these centers, it would be completely blasted in the media

If this initiative is successful, it raises the question: what will the effect of 20% larger population be on the system, then? (The health care system, the economy, etc.) "This is the kind of health care system 'problem' I would relish." – Jeff

"When will we be human, like you?" – Tanzanian woman, to Jeff's wife, re: the availability of health resources