POLICY WISDOM

WiSDOM-iNFORMED POLiCiES: ACHiEViNG A HEALTHiER FUTURE iN 2030 AND BEYOND

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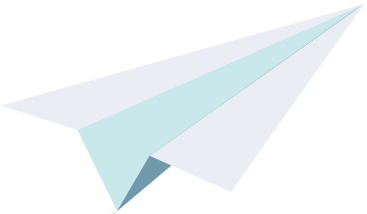


Policy Wisdom is a forward-looking public health policy consultancy committed to realizing whole-system solutions for our interconnected world. Recognizing that health outcomes cannot be improved without concurrently addressing the broader ecosystem, we seek to be a driving force of action. We aim to facilitate the systemic shift needed for all stakeholders and sectors to join forces towards a better future.

The frequently seen reactive policies and knee-jerk responses to emergent issues, the significant delays between the advancement of medical science and an adequate policy response, and the near-constant 'fire-fighting' response apparent in the healthcare sector, compels us to act. To encourage accomplishing the necessary systemic shift, we look to the future and ask bold questions:

- What do we desire the future to look like?
- What will enable us to achieve that desired future?

The urgent need to take smart, strong, and unified action is clear. The social aims of global commitments and health policies have long been criticized for being lofty and unachievable, including those outlined in the WHO's Alma-Ata 'Health for All' (set in 1978, to be achieved by 2000);[1] the UN's Millennium Development Goals (set in 2000, to be achieved by 2015)[2]; and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) (set in 2015, to be achieved by 2030).[3] Each of these ambitious global commitments stimulated priority setting and investment, yet struggled to achieve their ultimate missions. Therefore, we must shift away from a mindset that deems tokenism to be acceptable, towards an accountability mindset that expects policymakers and implementers to take wise, decisive action, to create a more equitable and sustainable ecosystem.



This white paper is intended to be futuristic, bold and optimistic.
We believe that real, systemic change is possible.
If we act now. **If** we act boldly. **If** we act wisely.

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The time to act **wisely**



The time to act wisely

The most pressing and defining policy problem of our time, is that the current *ecosystem*[a] is unsustainable.[4] Global trends – such as increasing interconnectedness and globalization, world population growth,[5] population aging,[6,7] climate change,[8] and flawed financial and monetary systems[9] – make the challenges on our horizon appear insurmountable. The world remains ill-equipped to respond to such key global trends; this is especially true when considered alongside the ambitious SDGs, which the world is not on-track to achieve by 2030.[10]

The first thing we acknowledge during crises such as COVID-19 and the events that follow, is how interconnected the world truly is. Within the period of just 100 days following the first reported cluster of cases to the World Health Organization,[11] coronavirus-related travel restrictions applied to 90% of the world's population;[12] half the world's population was confined to varying degrees of social-distancing; the virus had infected more than a million people and killed more than 75,000; and, the world was threatened by the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.[13,14] Beyond those initial outcomes, measures of mortality and economic impact continue to worsen, and all stakeholders are demonstrating signs of desperation and response fatigue.

The pandemic has further highlighted important systemic weaknesses embedded in complex, interdependent factors that demand multi-entity participation and engagement to inform an adequate response, control, and enforcement. Yet the circumstances challenge decision-makers to act with urgency and with imperfect evidence and information, altering the type and quality of responses. On one hand, we saw what happens when decision-makers do not adequately prepare for crises, act with haste, or fail to engage with experts. We witnessed how a lack of trust and transparency around data usage and privacy can preclude citizen receptiveness to otherwise promising solutions, and we watched powerful world leaders deny accountability for inappropriate responses. On the other hand, we saw leaders act faster than ever to release previously inconceivable funds and rapidly implement policies to respond to emerging evidence and trends.

Crises like these change the course of history. They also provide a critical opportunity to reconsider our broader approach to how our society operates. We recognize there is a unique window of opportunity to make key decisions at all levels about how we live, how we address global issues like climate change and globalization, and how we engage and trust each other.

> This is the time to question: how do we want to be remembered? What do we need to preserve at all costs? What systems are holding us back? What should we do to respond?

In this paper we propose a different approach to policy making: one centered on wisdom-informed decision making, enabled through factors of ***transparency, engagement***, and ***accountability***. We argue how a fundamental failure to apply wisdom to the way we currently operate results in major gaps and barriers to reaching agreed-upon societal goals. We propose that applying *wisdom-informed* policy responses to our current global and systemic challenges will create the most impact and help achieve an equitable and sustainable ecosystem. We therefore urge all stakeholders to consider and put in practice the responses presented herein to advance the systemic shift towards sustainable health systems and a better future for all.



a Our definition of ecosystem includes all living and non-living things including social, cultural, political and economic landscapes; the sea, soil, climate, and atmosphere.

Health in 2030 **and beyond**: Visualizing the impact of wisdom-informed policies



Imagine it's the year 2030, and that we acted quickly, boldly and wisely following COVID-19. We are now looking back on the decade that was, describing our new landscape.

Health in 2030 and beyond: Visualizing the impact of wisdom-informed policies

Below we reflect on the kind of systemic changes we envision if we act now, if we act boldly, and if we act wisely. We illustrate what the year 2030 may look like, and how it could feel, **if we deliberately and consistently applied wisdom-informed policies throughout the upcoming decade**. We visualize how using knowledge, experience, and a systems thinking mindset to make decisions and create policies could improve health for individuals, communities, and society, and positively impact the entire ecosystem.

Envisioning an interconnected world aligned towards equity and sustainability

COVID-19 taught everyone how **complex and interconnected our world is,** so we now collectively envisage a world where all stakeholders are **aligned in their commitment to making equity and sustainability** the core objectives of policy making. As a result, standard practice now includes multi-stakeholder/ multi-sector engagement in policy design and implementation, as well as adequate control and accountability mechanisms to support enforcement of policies.

Leaders in the public and private sector are selected based on merit and their ability to operate in *equitable and sustainable* ways. They **increasingly incorporate knowledge and understanding of interrelated systems in all judgements and decisions**, and specifically take a joined-up, health in-all-policies approach to policy development. Tokenism, buck-passing, and procrastination are no longer accepted at any level of society, and mechanisms are in place to assess the potential impact, validity and ability of implementing political promises, across the short-, medium- and long-term.

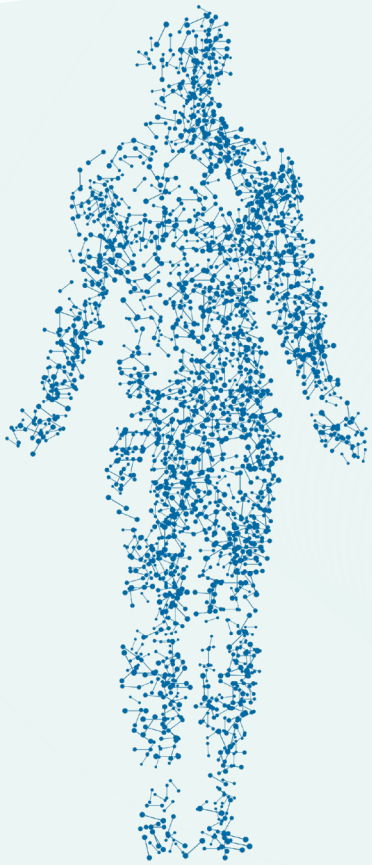
The private sector and financial markets have evolved to include *equity and sustainability* in their company and stock market valuations. As a result, there is **greater pressure on private sector companies to behave in accordance with shared societal goals, and greater rewards for those that do it best.**

Transparency and evidence sharing are paramount in all relations, and **all stakeholders must be empowered and are expected to share their perspectives. Financial systems allow for the transparent flow of funds**, and public and donor budget allocations for all projects are traced and accounted for.

Reforming the whole ecosystem in the decade spanning 2020-2030 made it easier to develop policies that contribute to achieve a more *equitable and sustainable* world. The section below outlines how these improvements manifest at the health system level.



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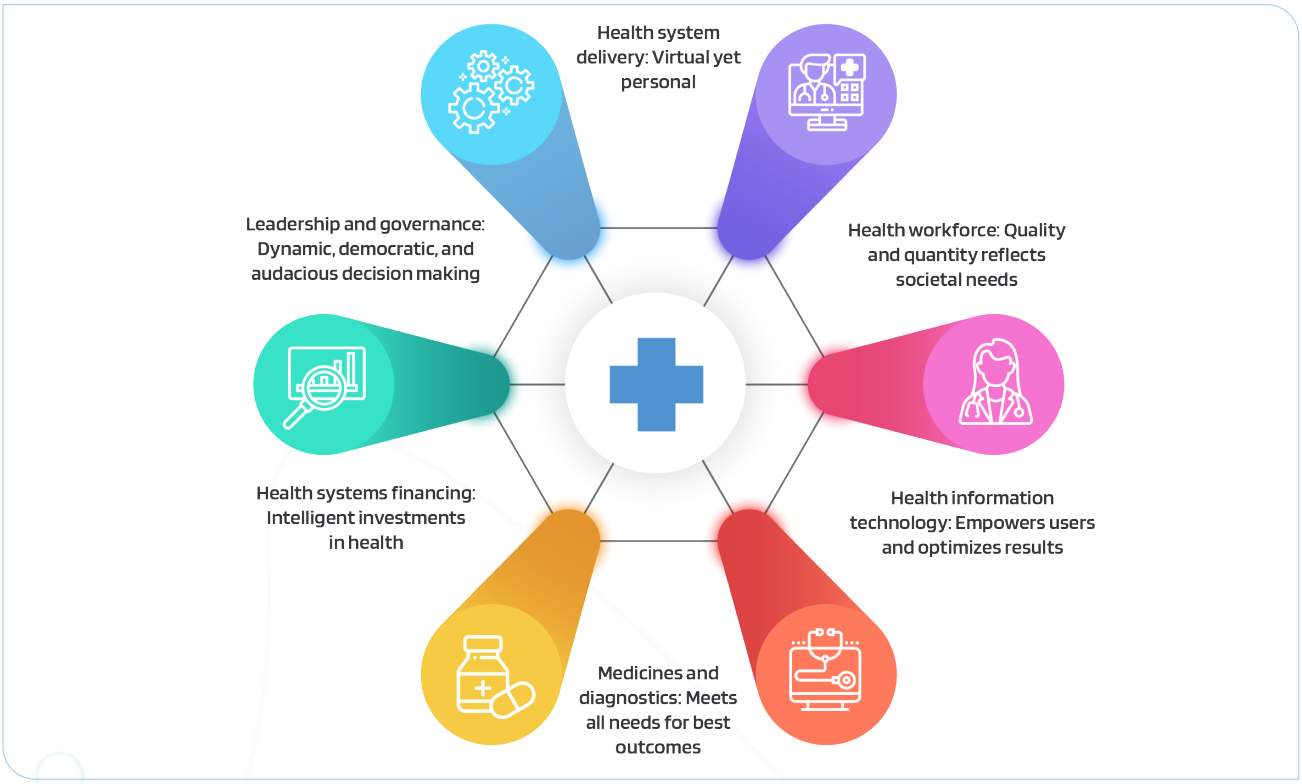


The rise of person-centric health systems

The **primary goal of a health system is to protect and improve the health of the population** that it is intended to serve. Wisdom-informed policies have vastly improved health systems by an increased focus on patient-centric service delivery.

Historically, both markets and governments have failed in healthcare.[b] In 2030, wisdom-informed policies are successfully encouraging private sector stakeholders to deliver innovative, high quality health technologies and services that meet the needs and expectations of patients and payors. Furthermore, payors understand the value of, and provide coverage for, such technologies and services. As such, the redistribution of funds and benefits, and investments in R&D supports efficient and equitable access to the best available health resources.

Having acted quickly, boldly and wisely in the decade spanning 2020-2030, the six health system pillars reflect the following new reality:



b Markets fail in healthcare due to incomplete information and information asymmetry, externalities of health service users and consumer behavior, potentially catastrophic exper and unknown risks, insufficient market size (in the case of rare, tropical and neglected diseases or small market size), and different preferences.

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Pillar #1 - Health system delivery: Virtual yet personal

Primary health services are delivered predominantly via **digital health platforms** which reduce inequities between and within countries, increase access to quality care, and improve compliance and health literacy. In addition to increased reliance on digital health platforms, front-line **professionals are better trained** in **patient centric care** and the **'human aspects'** of healthcare service provision. **Genomics and precision medicine** revolutionize secondary healthcare and treatment and reflect patients' individual characteristics. Patients and their family members are **active participants** in the design and implementation of their care plans.



Pillar #2 - Health workforce: Quality and quantity reflects societal needs

COVID-19 reinforced that the health workforce (HW) is the very core of the health system. A renewed focus on recruitment, education, ongoing professional development, and psychological support, help the HW to better manage the demands of their roles, and to provide better care. HWs are also more respected, and better remunerated. As a result, **health worker supply** has significantly **increased**. The HW is **better distributed, more capable and qualified**, and **more culturally competent**.

Pillar #3 - Health information technology: Empowering users and optimizing results

A connected **Health Information Technology (HIT) system has become a central part of care-delivery**, supported by a vastly improved, fast, reliable global broadband.

Data privacy and transparency regulation supports the evolution of the patient's central part in shared decision making and **increases the coordination between multidisciplinary healthcare teams**. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital health uptake **addresses many access and equity issues**. Civil society and individuals understand and trust in HIT, as well as AI. **They have ultimate control of, and access to, their own healthcare data, on who else has access to that data, and how they can use it**. HIT tools, including 'wearables' play a key role in **empowering individuals to take accountability for their own health** and support them in behavior change pursuits.



Data registries and reporting requirements have evolved to allow **for real time alerts to public health threats**. The uptake of big data has allowed for the development of **many new diagnostic and therapeutic health technologies**. Finally, because access to **real world data** has increased, **policy responses** are more innovative and can be **developed in a timelier manner.**

Pillar #4 - Essential medicines and diagnostics: Meeting all needs for best outcomes

The term 'essential' now encompasses all medicines and diagnostics that citizens need, **regardless of their ability to pay**, and 'medical need' considers the determining factors for **access to diagnostic and medical treatment.** As a result, the old essential medicines (EML) and diagnostics lists (EDL) have expanded considerably, and thanks to other ecosystem changes (like those outlined in Pillar #3), people make healthier choices. The flow-on effect of this, is that lifestyle-related illnesses absorb an ever-smaller proportion of healthcare budgets, **allowing funds to be reallocated** and benefit packages to be broader and deeper.

COVID-19 stimulated a **greater understanding of the importance of diagnostics, vaccines and precision medicine,** spurring **investment and innovation** in these key areas. Further, vaccine schedules across the entire lifespan attract zero out of pocket expenditures globally. Access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all has increasingly improved, largely by **addressing distortions and perverse incentives in healthcare systems**. This has also become a central component to help all countries achieve UHC.

Quality health technologies are delivered directly, safely and with fewer supply chain mark-ups, also to remote areas, thanks to **improved engagement between the public and private sectors, stronger investments in innovation, greater trust in technology** and data sharing, and greater transparency in government programs and tender processes.

The **list of essential medicines and essential diagnostics expanded rapidly**. This is mainly attributable to:

1. the government's renewed **investments in innovation**, prevention, curative technology, and personalized medicine; and, **collaboration with the health sector's private stakeholders.**
2. the private sector's **renewed efforts to bring truly innovative products to market**, engagement with patient groups, civil society organizations, academia and think tanks, to find new ways to **reduce duplication of efforts in clinical trials**, and to share findings in pursuit of better health outcomes, whilst **still protecting intellectual property.**

Pillar #5 - Health systems financing: Intelligent investments in health

Health care systems globally have made great strides towards introducing **financing mechanisms that support adequate pre-pooling of funds and risks**, so that healthcare can be provided for free or with minimal out of pocket costs, **increasing access to a comprehensive benefits package**, and reducing the risk of catastrophic health expenditure.

Expenditure on medicines and services selection is prioritized according to multiple criteria, patient perspectives, the broader societal value of prevention, cure, innovation, and research and development. A **healthier ecosystem is averting many of the social and health-related ills** (poverty, obesity, violence, respiratory illness), making more funds available for reinvestment **into the health system.**

A 'value-based healthcare approach' ensures that **health technology pricing is fair and reasonable**, and that health **service coverage and prioritization reflects the broader value of health technologies**.



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Pillar #6 - Leadership and governance: Dynamic, democratic, and audacious decision making

Health system leadership and governance benefits from the **reduction in corruption, nepotism and cronyism that held many systems back from achieving UHC.**

Health system leaders at all levels are better able to:

- **balance competing influences and demands**;
- **maintain strategic direction** of policy development and implementation;
- **detect and correct undesirable trajectories**;
- attract investment and adopt decisions that have **positive implications for health systems**;
- **balance the demands** of a wide range of actors – including civil society/patients, healthcare financiers, health service providers and the private sector; and,
- continuously **establish, review and refine transparent and effective accountability mechanisms.**

Collaboration with other sectors, including town planning, education, private sector, and civil society, has become standard practice, contributing towards a **health-in-all-policies approach, and towards vastly improved population health.**

At a global level, **supranational organizations have improved their own leadership and governance by honestly challenging their bureaucratic red tape, effectiveness, expediency,** and by balancing their role as a **diplomatic entity *and* an honest referee** that calls out inappropriate behavior from Member States when it occurs.



Enabling a better future through a wisdom-informed policy approach



Enabling a better future through a wisdom-informed policy approach

We position *'wisdom-informed policy'* (WIP) as the approach required to guide our path towards a better, more equitable and sustainable society. Although there is no 'one size fits all' solution for a perfect policy response for any issue, a framework to respond is possible, and we explain and present this framework below.

Though *wisdom and evidence* are not the same concepts, we believe that WIP is the natural progression from evidence-based policy[c] and evidence-informed policy[d], propelling us in the same direction.

Since WIP is a term coined for the first time in this paper, we hereby define it as: ***the use of evidence, knowledge and experience to make good decisions and judgements with a systems thinking mindset to create policies that stimulate individuals and societies to prosper and thrive.***

In this respect, a path towards an equitable and sustainable society, where all can prosper and thrive, requires three key enablers that underpin WIPs: **transparency, engagement, and accountability.** These fundamental enablers help stakeholders and policymakers act with integrity to achieve a working solution towards an equitable and sustainable world.

For these three fundamental enablers, below we provide:

a. a definition of the enabler
b. the conditions that must exist to fulfil the definition of the enabler, and
c. a selection of wisdom-informed policy (WIP) responses to address the gaps that exist when examining the current situation in policy making alongside the vision established in the previous section.

Wisdom-informed policy recognizes that the broader ecosystem and its inhabitants do not operate in a vacuum; and that competing and vested interests, short-term gains, and unequal distribution of power and of risks, can and do undermine sustainable development, peace, prosperity and good health. WIP further acknowledges that good evidence can be used to justify bad policy, and that sometimes robust evidence does not yet exist to help us solve complex or systemic problems. Thus, a lack of robust evidence should not force us into a state of policy inertia or be used to justify inadequate action.

In this sense, wisdom-informed policymaking encourages all stakeholders to combine the best available evidence and logic about what does and does not work and to advance towards a systems thinking approach.

A WIP approach is genuinely inquisitive, requires intellectual humility, and is always constructive. The WIP approach is collaborative, considers cultural relevance and preference, and seeks the integrability of policies into the societies they are intended to serve.



c Evidence-based policy (EBP) describes situations whereby policy decisions are informed by rigorously established objective evidence. EBP gained momentum under the Blair administrations in the United Kingdom, in 1997. Its use was intended to replace ideologically driven politics with rational decision making.
d In the early 2000's, key public health commentators highlighted the key limitations and reductionist ideas required by EBP and argued for the need to improve evidence use in terms of its rigor and quality. Whilst there is no widely-accepted definition of EIP, key elements of it are inclusive, participative democracy; openness of dialogue and communication involving all stakeholders; high ethical-moral standards; a capacity for learning and reflexive practice informed by research and evaluation, all within a framework of 'practical reason' that seeks to promote 'appropriateness' of action based upon various forms of knowledge (research evidence, practice wisdom and user experience) and consideration of normative implications.

Opacity no more: transparency and openness

DEFINITION

Transparency *is a state of, or environment that fosters trust, promulgates honesty and openness, and results in deepened understanding of complex issues from multiple perspectives.*

CONDITIONS

To ensure transparency and trust are embroidered into every policy, several conditions apply:

- Clear requirements for consultation, evidence, knowledge, and experience to inform good decisions and judgements with a systems thinking mindset.
- The objectives of policies, their legal, institutional, and economic frameworks should reflect the complex and interconnected nature of our health and broader ecosystem.
- The rationale, data and information used in policy decisions must be transparent and policy makers must be formally answerable for their decisions and actions.
- Digital privacy and transparency-related policy should strike a balance between 1) ensuring citizen safety, trust and confidentiality, while reducing corruption and safeguarding national and global security; 2) timely application of technologies and citizen preparedness and acceptance of such applications; 3) protecting intellectual property whilst sharing knowledge to incentivize and support innovation and investments.

WIP RESPONSES

Suggested WIP responses inlclude:

- A 'transparency score' assigned to policy development and implementation, based on:
  - Inter-ministerial alignment: the number of government departments that agree, and the extent of that agreement that the policy is appropriate, clear, and comprehensible.
  - The number of external stakeholders involved in the policy's development that agree that the policy is appropriate, clear, and comprehensible, and the extent of their alignment.
  - Shared implementation: the number of stakeholders actively involved or affected by the policy's implementation.
  - Ecosystem impact: monitoring the policy's impact on all sectors.
- A methodology to 'demonstrate policy intent' requires all policies to outline the:
  - Short- medium-, and long- term objectives and intended impact on different sectors, actors, and social groups, including the impact on society's most vulnerable.
  - Consultation process to explore unintended consequences, ambiguity, and unpredictability.
  - Consideration for cultural sensitivities and potential for discrimination.
  - Level of innovation as determined according to a robust methodology.
  - Roles and responsibilities of government departments/employees and external stakeholders involved in the policy implementation.
  - Clearly stated repercussions for all stakeholders involved, of not implementing the policy according to schedule and/or of not achieving intended goals.
- Formal agreements within and across nations to ensure data privacy is upheld across all stakeholders domestically and internationally.
- A standardized publicly available database that clearly states what type of information is shared and who has access to it, so that citizens understand how their data might be used.
- A methodology that assesses the societal impact of innovations and rewards truly innovative developments according to their impact on the whole ecosystem. Innovators that score highly are rewarded with longer data exclusivity rights and patent terms, advantages in public sector negotiations and a higher stock market valuation.
- Technologies that enhance and appropriately balance transparency and privacy are embedded in all policies as part of the policy setting, implementation, and monitoring process.
- A mechanism exists to support anonymous reporting of suspicious behavior across all stakeholders, so that any concern deserving of investigation can be recorded and investigated.
- A 360-degree review mechanism exists to evaluate all policymakers and key stakeholders against socially accepted/democratically determined standards.

Co-creating and co-delivering health

DEFINITION

Engagement *is a process that ensures democratic inclusion of relevant stakeholders so they can exercise their rights and responsibilities in shaping society, achieving self-determination, aligning, and identifying implications and preferences from different perspectives.*

CONDITIONS

To ensure that engagement involves supranational, national and local level stakeholders from all sectors:

- Collaborations should aim at building trust, commitment, innovation, and systems thinking.
- Multi-sectoral stakeholders should regularly measure and review progress towards shared goals and principles and should be innovative, agile and self-critical enough to adapt their approach accordingly.
- Inspiration, incentives, and milestones should exist to drive progress towards multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement and to maintain goodwill, transparency, and trust in engagement efforts.

WIP RESPONSES

Suggested WIP responses include:

- Industry and government standards requiring:
  - That no single stakeholder has exclusive decision-making power, and that decisions are made via a democratic process.
  - That all stakeholders have equal opportunity to participate in decision-making and shaping processes so that diverse viewpoints are heard.
  - A democratic mechanism for public debate and discussion to allow for timely and direct engagement and feedback between all levels and sectors to highlight concerns, communicate the impact of decisions, share real world experiences and recommendations.
  - Policies and projects are assigned measurable targets alongside reporting requirements for diverse stakeholder participation.
  - Policies and projects meet a minimum number of criteria to demonstrate their concern of the ecosystem, alongside their agility, innovativeness, self-evaluation, and flexibility.
- Legislation ensures that (a) consultation takes place to inform all stakeholders of a policy's content/approach and intended impact; and (b) a mediation process is available when stakeholders cannot agree. If stakeholders determine that a policy approach will result in minimal or negative impact, it should be recalibrated until it achieves broad positive impact and stakeholder acceptance.
- Legislation requires that public, private, and not-for-profit companies must share impact statements written by independent multi-sectoral third parties detailing the potential negative impacts that their intended actions will or might produce on the ecosystem.
- Formal 360-degree review mechanisms exist that allow all sectors and levels to review each other and their progress. This creates a culture of equality, transparency, and trust by normalizing critical and constructive reviews at all levels.
  - Government agencies, companies, NGOs, schools, and communities provide an informal communication channel to support transparent and constructive criticism, that allows for solution-oriented and constructive feedback and suggestions for alternative solutions.
  - A formal mechanism exists for government officials and leaders from the private sector, religious and charitable groups, and NGOs, to be directly accountable to the communities that they serve, for example via weekly or ad hoc engagement and consultation forums and broadcasts.

Answerability and integrity

DEFINITION

Accountability *is (i) to act with integrity in pursuit of intended outcomes and in accordance with agreed rules and standards; (ii) report fairly, accurately and with legitimacy on performance results vis-à-vis mandated roles and/or plans; and (iii) accepting potential sanctions for lack of compliance with commitments.*

CONDITIONS

To guarantee that every stakeholder understands their role, responsibility and is empowered and supported to make a difference:

- All key decision-makers must be liable for addressing the down-stream, long-term implications of their actions, especially when another sector or social group absorbs the legacy of these implications.
- All political commitments and declarations should be actioned with integrity and intention, within the possibilities of resource constraints.
- Decision-makers should also be held accountable via less-formal ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders in a manner that is genuinely inquisitive and intellectually humble. Such dialogue should enhance the capacity of governments and industry leaders to take appropriate action to address problems and needs.
- Leadership of all accountability mechanisms must change periodically so that no single entity is permanently in control.

WIP RESPONSES

Suggested WIP responses include:

- Formal mechanisms exist that:
  - Support dialogue and sharing of evidence and theory, so that all levels of society can converse, better understand, and be accountable to their communities
  - Support all stakeholders to work towards the definition and selection of shared goals and principles.
  - Positions inter-ministerial boards to support whole-of-government approaches to policymaking to ensure policy coherence, shared-decision making and accountability, and acceptance.
  - Creates a civil society 'futurist team', representative of different sectors and backgrounds to meet regularly with government officials to discuss the long-term impact of old, new, or suggested policies.
- The existence of policies that:
  - Require that public, private, and not-for-profit companies reduce the risk of and/or extent of damage caused by their actions, and that any damage caused be paid for.
  - Define repercussions of delaying the policy and/or not implementing the policy according to the schedule and plans agreed.
  - Hold all governments, government agencies and their employees accountable for wasted or misappropriated public and donor funds.
- Legislation that:
  - Requires that leadership of accountability mechanisms rotates at global, regional, and national representation levels, to ensure a balance of powers and democracy.
  - Ensures that monetary and fiscal systems support ecosystem sustainability by upholding that (1) government/ tax-payer funded-projects demonstrate sustainability (2) a sustainability element be part of the evaluation of publicly listed companies, and (3) both public and private stakeholders specifically state the long-term financial and environmental impact of all action plans on current and future generations.
- Standards requiring that:
  - Public policymakers, private sector companies and not-for-profit entities must formally demonstrate how their mission contributes to sustainability and especially how actions will impact the ecosystem.
  - All private companies and NGOs conduct their work in LICs and MICs with the same degree of due diligence and sustainability required in HICs.
  - All political candidates and campaigns demonstrate the 'potential for execution' of their commitments and declarations. If found guilty of fabricating evidence and/or making false promises to gain power, adequate and proportionate judicial processes can be applied.
- An indicator substituting or complementing a country's GDP that reflects a long term financial and ecological sustainability plan, including access to education and healthcare; ensuring the opportunity to grow and thrive; and to measure progress, status, and outlook.
- A methodology is implemented to ensure policy progress against agreed goals and schedules, and an independent, external entity that applies the above methodology. This independent organization should be a global team of experts who develop, for all countries in the world, an assessment of the feasibility of political offerings/promises, an assessment of the progress made after a political term is completed, and keeps track of the promises that remain unimplemented.

Evolving roles of stakeholders to drive WIP responses



Evolving roles of stakeholders to drive WIP responses

Implementing WIPs

Wisdom-informed policies respond to the fundamental need of improving *transparency, engagement, and accountability* in policymaking. As underscored throughout this paper, these enablers are essential to the implementation, not necessarily dependent on each other for success. Rather, they should be selected and implemented with the aim to advance their intended goal. It is therefore necessary to recognize that the timing and implementation of WIPs must always consider the context of a particular country or organization, referring here to the political context, the social, cultural, and demographic situation, and to the economic performance. In parallel, it is imperative to consider the internal and external factors that will impact a country's or an organization's ability to implement WIPs. These factors, such as existing resources, capacities, stakeholders, alliances, and others, need to be further itemized and examined in each situation. Additionally, countries and organizations must consider establishing efforts to measure the long-term impact of each response and to ensure availability of budgets throughout all the phases of an implementation plan.

Lastly, every WIP response requires effort to develop and implement. **Challenges are expected, but all WIPs are needed, at one point or another, to achieve a society that is equitable and sustainable.**

What is the Role and Responsibility of each actor to contribute towards 2030?

In practical terms, pursuing efforts that create *equitable and sustainable* impact will require *wisdom-informed* systems and transparent and accountable engagements. Moreover, collaborative multi-stakeholder solutions must leverage financial and human resources, and social and technical expertise. Below we highlight the role and responsibilities that key stakeholders must embrace towards an *equitable and sustainable* future.



Governments

Building on the foundation of protecting and providing, the **role of government in healthcare expands across a spectrum of key responsibilities** including financing, service provision, regulations on quality and safety, monitoring outcomes, building infrastructure and information systems, and developing workforce capacities. The degree to which governments engage in each of these, depends on country-specific contexts and health system structure.

Moreover, there is general acknowledgement that health systems contribute to prosperity and economic growth by fostering longer, healthier lives. Yet, in recent decades these gains have been **challenged by fiscal crises and demographic shifts**, which have caused healthcare costs to soar. Indeed, there seems to be overwhelming agreement on the need to redesign health system financing to create more value by delivering more and better services with the same or fewer resources.

With respect to achieving the SDGs, governments and their policy makers must implement policy frameworks and standards that are key to achieving *equity and sustainability*. **WIP responses should become the cornerstone for all levels of government** and legislative bodies in promoting and advancing sustainable development. In this aspect, leadership at the highest level of government (e.g. presidents, prime ministers, etc.) must elevate population health to the top of the political and economic agenda by leveraging strategies such as health in all policies. This implies:

- ensuring all voices are heard, working across sectors, and seeking synergies to improve the health of all people by incentivizing private sector participation and innovation;
- supporting scale up of achievements carried out by civil society; and
- collaborating with the broader global community on initiatives that advance cross-border social equity and wellbeing, such as those that address climate change, food security, population growth and migration, epidemiological transition, and emerging pathogens that can result in public health crises.

International and supranational organizations:

Beyond providing guidance to countries and organizations, a **key role of international and supranational organizations** is to encourage and provide engagement mechanisms and become true conveners of multiple stakeholders/sectors, ideally with transparency and accountability systems in place. In the realm of health, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, and UNFPA[a] are key global organizations; however, today's global challenges demand a response from more than just the health sector. This means that those supranational organizations play a critical role in ensuring connectivity to and alignment with sister organizations, such as the FAO, WTO[b], World Bank, and others. In fact, an obligation of this stakeholder in advancing engagement opportunities is to also ensure efforts are aligned across the broad network of partners to further bolster responses.

International and supranational organizations are highly engaged in setting standards, regulations, or guidelines, yet they rarely have the capacity to enforce authority; this remains with the individual Member States. The implications of this design are both the **limitations in applicability of global agreements and the limitations in accountability** that these organizations are able or willing to recognize and assume. Shifting our approach to how we govern, manage, and finance international organizations and the related global agendas is imperative to overcoming such limitations. In this sense, WIP responses steer our efforts to strengthen these organizations in a transparent and accountable manner. At the same time, a WIP approach encourages and stimulates these organizations to actively promote and intensify equity and sustainability measures. More specifically, development aid agencies and banks will be critical in helping governments bounce back from socio-economic difficulties of the COVID pandemic and the setbacks the pandemic brings on SDG advances.

a United Nations International Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund
b Food and Agriculture Organization, World Trade Organization

Private sector/industry:

The private sector plays a key role in shaping the broader ecosystem. For instance, many private sector actors play a defining role in whether towns and cities develop in inclusive and sustainable ways, whether they positively or negatively affect health, obesity, poverty and other drivers of vulnerability and social conflict such as unemployment, exclusion, and instability.[15]

In terms of health care, the private sector plays a crucial role in supporting governments and individuals to improve health and advance UHC. And more recently, global stakeholders have publicly and formally recognized the critical role that the private sector, specifically the biopharmaceutical industry, has played in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. Countries have also relied on an expanding private sector to overcome systemic issues, such as limited fiscal space, lack of government prioritization, and to provide a mix of health-related goods and services. However, in seeking UHC, some countries struggle to effectively engage with the private sector, creating sometimes murky partnerships and mixed results in health outcomes and costs.

Key challenges for the private sector revolve around 1) being excluded from public forums and early-stage engagement for policy development (i.e. not having a seat at the table to communicate their perspective); 2) balancing their obligation to shareholders with that of their employees and society more broadly, and 3) ensuring delivery of high quality, affordable goods and services to consumers and payors, while protecting the environment.

WIP responses have been developed with intent to surpass such challenges, to play a critical role in engaging the private sector in all stages of policy development, implementation, and review, and in holding it accountable for decisions made. Better engagement and more accountability would be supported by improved privacy and transparency mechanisms.

The silver lining of the COVID-19 pandemic is the improved awareness of the biopharmaceutical industry as critically valuable to health. This has opened the door to a broader set of conversations that revolve around access, value, and innovation, rather than a continued, sole focus on pricing. In other words, we are shifting towards a conversation about the *broader ecosystem* that impacts health outcomes and health care, including all stakeholders and pillars that support its structure and function.

Indeed, the private health care sector has tremendous opportunity to build trust through partnerships and collaborations that center on transparency, accountability, and genuine value-add for health. The private sector must continue to innovate and support advances in health, yet with added consideration to the environmental and financial implications that ensure equitable and sustainable outcomes.

Civil society organizations:

Civil society includes the community of stakeholders consisting of foundations, communities, think tanks, charities, academia, advocacy groups, philanthropic organizations, and for the purposes of this discussion, individuals. Notably, the role of civil society in public health policy making has increased in recent years, especially as social media assumes a larger role in communications and interactions.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) play a key role in many global health initiatives. Moreover, international organizations increasingly consult CSOs to get 'on the ground' insights and to partner in health service delivery, or to channel funds in LMICs to avoid corrupt or inefficient government agencies.

This community of stakeholders is innately diverse and unique, each with its own objectives, motivators, and values, and each seeking to voice their distinct views and needs in policies that will impact their experiences. This community is also inherently unequal in size, reach, budget, and capacity, which in turn impacts their extent of influence and representation in policy making. Civil society stakeholders thrive on their independent and flexible approach that drives their actions and activities. At the same time, they sometimes struggle to achieve change on scale while staying mission-driven and independent of a funder's agenda.

Two key challenges are to: 1) ensure that it is not only the biggest and loudest CSO that is seen and heard (which is usually the CSO with the most funding), but that the voices of the society's most vulnerable are truly represented, heard, and responded to; and, 2) to adequately empower civil society organizations to support localities in piloting specific WIP responses and to evaluate impact to advance future scale ups.

In addressing these challenges, WIP responses seek to enable a more equitable stakeholder contribution, helping to democratize the public health agenda. In addition, civil society engagement in WIP responses allows for collective action and social solidarity, which are critical to the pursuit of an *equitable and sustainable* ecosystem.

Each stakeholder discussed herein can leverage their particular strengths to support a more equitable and sustainable world, while also having a particular responsibility in adopting a WIP response.

Looking forward from 2020

The issues that continue to plague our deeply interconnected and often complicated world, and stymie efforts to achieve a more equitable and sustainable society, can be remedied by wisdom-informed policy responses. Further, there are just three enablers (transparency, engagement, and accountability) – simple in theory but complex in practice and execution – needed to shift us towards our shared societal goals.

When these three enablers become entrenched in every policy, and implemented using a wisdom-informed policy response, we will see a more equitable and sustainable ecosystem. The three enablers recognize the disparate agendas, inherent challenges, and crucial interdependencies that all stakeholders have, and the WIPs outlined offer a way to move forward, both collectively and individually, in our day-to-day existence.

Wisdom can happen anywhere and at any time. It does not require a fancy title, an expensive suit, or a multibillion-dollar research grant. Rather, every individual, sector, and leader can become wiser and make wiser decisions every day. We trust that the concepts presented in this paper serve as a springboard for engagement between sectors and stakeholder types, and that the resulting discussions lead to transformative action.



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