



Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage & Primary Health Care Performance Initiative
Virtual Learning Exchange on Understanding & Utilizing Data in COVID-19
Response & Recovery
Call for Expressions of Interest
August 2020

Background

The **Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage (JLN)** brings network members together for productive and high-impact practitioner-to-practitioner exchanges on a variety of health systems topics, often related to health finance or primary health care service delivery. The network is responding to country demand related to COVID-19 related topics by introducing the new JLN COVID-19 Network for Open Dialogue and Exchange, (the JLN NODE). With facilitation by the **Primary Health Care Performance Initiative (PHCPI)**, the “Understanding & Utilizing Data in COVID-19 Response and Recovery Learning Exchange” under the JLN NODE will bring together a group of country health leaders in cross-country virtual engagements to address practical challenges related to data collection and use.

Data plays a critical role both in the rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to effectively maintaining essential services during the crisis. Without surveillance data to identify hotspots or service statistics to warn about reduced utilization of critical services, policymakers and health programmers will not be well positioned to respond effectively or efficiently.

In late June, a rapid scoping working group explored this topic: *In this moment that is marked by a desire to have more frequent and accurate reporting of health statistics to understand the impact that COVID-19 is having on communities and the delivery of health services, what innovations can be leveraged when exploring the use of data in the response to COVID-19?* The rapid scoping included a virtual meeting session and facilitated online discussion. Participants identified that many types of data—data to support contact tracing, testing and treatment; data on medical supplies, medical personnel as well as people seeking services— are required to effectively respond to COVID-19; however, there is a dearth of data being collected and effectively shared and used for decision-making in the context of the pandemic.

Focus of the Learning Exchange

A longer-term (1 year) Learning Exchange will seek to address key questions surfaced in the short-term scoping:

1. How can we foster a culture of data use at all levels of the health system to support better PHC decision-making?
 - How to collect, package and disseminate data that is “fit-for-purpose” to empower frontline workers to make good management decisions.
 - How to improve data availability, analysis and disaggregation to support decision-making by stakeholders at all levels.

2. How to monitor and report on whether the most vulnerable are accessing and utilizing quality PHC services.
3. How can government stakeholders ensure that innovations in PHC data collection and use that are introduced during the COVID-19 response are further tested, adapted and scaled up in the post-pandemic recovery period?

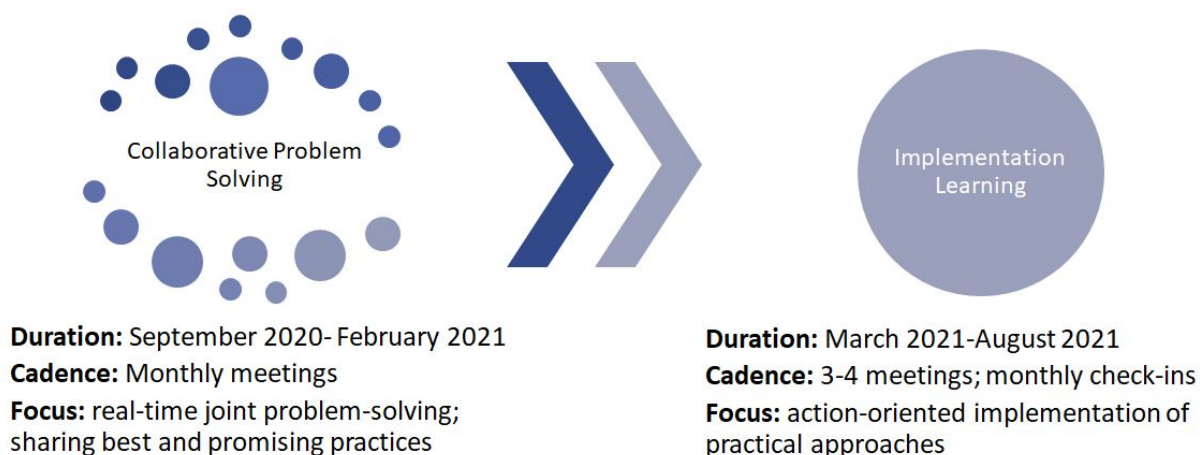
Objectives of the Learning Exchange

This Learning Exchange will enable sharing of best and promising practices related to PHC data collection and use in PHC decision-making, especially during the COVID-19 response. It will promote collaboration to solve challenges brought forward by members on specific implementation issues aligned with the priority sub-themes above. Through participation in the Learning Exchange, participants will access and apply timely, relevant experience and expertise to demonstrate improved decision-making and implementation efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, the strain that COVID-19 is placing on primary health care around the world threatens to further exacerbate health inequality and leave the underserved further behind. This learning exchange will therefore seek to bring an equity lens to the work to ensure vulnerable populations are prioritized in the PHC response and recovery.

Structure of the Learning Exchange

Acknowledging the fast-changing nature of country needs during the pandemic, this learning exchange builds on initial work done through rapid scoping with two new phases. The **Collaborative Problem-Solving Phase** builds upon the priorities identified via the CCG survey and rapid scoping led by PHCPI. The Collaborative Problem-Solving Phase will use virtual communication methods (monthly virtual meetings, a WhatsApp group, MyJLN dialogue, etc.) to build community and to facilitate peer support, rapid information sharing, and continuous learning both during and between monthly meetings. The **Implementation Learning Phase** will take forward the discussions and decisions made by participants in the Collaborative Problem-Solving Phase through more focused action and learning at country level.



1. **Introductory Session (September):** At the introductory session, country participants will discuss prioritization of sub-topics to be covered in future sessions as best/promising practices. The aim will be to select data utilization “how-to” topics that are actionable within the institutional

mandates and policy frameworks that exist - to support rapid, incremental improvements in this ongoing period of crisis/COVID response. The Facilitation Team will introduce the collaborative-problem solving model to be used in subsequent sessions.

2. **Collaborative Problem-Solving Sessions (October-February):** This phase will consist of monthly 90-minute meetings that feature a 30-minute presentation and discussion around a best/promising practice followed by 60 minutes of facilitated problem solving. The facilitated problem-solving will be modeled after Feedback Labs LabStorm. One country team will bring forward a challenge they are facing and pose 3 questions to the group, who will, in turn, draw on their own knowledge and expertise to provide reflections and possible solutions. Facilitators will work with the country team in advance to prepare for the session. These resources from Feedback Labs explain [how](#) and [why](#) this type of collaborative problem-solving model works.
3. **Implementation Learning (March-August):** During this phase, country teams will apply learnings gathered through the previous phase to work on problems related to *Understanding and Utilizing Data for COVID-19 Response and Recovery*. This phase is intended to be implementation- and application-oriented, but the specific nature of activities remains flexible at this point. Sub-groups may decide on a set of projects or products to be co-produced with help from the technical facilitator and experts, or continue regular themed discussions geared toward implementation of the ideas they have encountered. As one illustrative example, a set of countries might agree to analyze and share a set of data to look at the equity impacts of PHC utilization in the time of COVID, and address questions such as: What indicators to focus on? What are the best sources of data? How best to present the results for policymakers and the public? Teams could share data and exchange examples of how they are using and communicating results (for peer feedback). Alternatively, countries might each bring forward a relevant use case related to understanding and utilizing data in their context, and test and monitor the application of a specific best practice to that use case while seeking group feedback on their experience.

This group will convene in 3-4 virtual meetings over the 6-month timeframe. Participants will receive more targeted and ongoing peer and facilitator coaching as they implement. On a monthly basis, the facilitation team will offer virtual “office hours” and participants will be expected to update the Implementation Learning Progress Tool with progress, milestones, and key questions or challenges where they need support. These inputs will inform the agenda for subsequent virtual meetings which will seek to address common implementation challenges and promising practices that are identified.

Expected outcomes

Participants can expect to get the following benefits through participation in the Learning Exchange:

1. Collaboration with a network of practitioners who are facing similar challenges
2. A facilitated approach to soliciting feedback from others to address challenges in your own work
3. Support from a dedicated technical facilitation team who can help you and your group to identify the right resources and solutions to your context
4. Opportunities to access the experience and expertise of PHCPI partners
5. Periodic updates from the facilitation team synthesizing the learning and collating relevant learning and resources for the community.

Level of effort/Expected contributions

The Learning Exchange will convene between September 2020 and August 2021.

Phase 1: **Collaborative Problem-Solving** will run from September 2020-February 2021

Phase 2: **Implementation Learning** will run from March 2021-August 2021

We aim to cultivate a consistent community of participants across both phases, but as we move into the Implementation Learning phase will have an inflection point to re-consider continuing into the next phase, and may also be able to accept additional participants at that time.

Over the course of the exchange, participants will be expected to:

1. Attend and actively participate in all the virtual meetings
2. Participate in discussions via discussion board and online polling
3. Identify data-related challenges and openly share progress and obstacles in real-time as they implement solutions
4. Engage with, and be responsive to, the technical facilitator(s) via email, MyJLN, Whatsapp groups and other social media platforms previously discussed with the technical facilitator

Participant Profile

The group will be comprised of approximately 8-10 country teams. Country core groups and PHCPI focal points may nominate up to 4 individuals to participate in the learning group. Individuals may also apply.

As we consider data flows and needs, it will be helpful to have participants who:

- Collect and use data for program management
 - i.e. those typically closer to PHC service delivery
- Analyze data at the central level for planning, advocacy and policymaking
 - i.e. HMIS experts and others supporting PHC within the Ministry of Health, health regulatory agencies, or provider associations.

How to Submit an Expression of Interest

The technical facilitation team welcomes all JLN CCGs and PHCPI country partners to submit an Expression of Interest for interested participant(s). Participants should submit the EOI application [in this link](#).

Please submit your response via the MyJLN submission form or email by **Wednesday, September 9th**. All applications will be reviewed, and decisions communicated by **Wednesday, September 16th**.

In the event that you are not able to access MyJLN, please write to the JLN network manager at jln@msh.org for alternative arrangements to submit your EOI. For any questions related to the application, please contact Emma Stewart, at estewart@r4d.org.