

DEVELOPING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of an assessment is similar to that of any strategic planning process—a short, high-level statement that describes what the assessment aims to achieve.

Objectives, however, are a bit different. For the purposes of a private health sector assessment, objectives should be specific, attainable and relevant.

Determine what's attainable by aligning the assessment's goal and activities with your constraints (time, resources, people). As for relevance, ask yourself whether each objective contributes to achieving the goal.

Here are some examples from actual past assessments (identifiers removed). The header is the goal and the bulleted list that follows are the objectives. Often the goal statement starts with “to assist Donor X and other stakeholders to ...”

GOAL: Identify and leverage private sector resources for health—whether financial, human or structural—and facilitate greater public-private cooperation, with a focus on HIV/AIDS.

Objectives

- Provide an overview of private health sector stakeholders and their respective roles.
- Assess the level of policy dialogue between the public and private health sectors.
- Describe private sector contributions to key health markets and health system areas, including health financing.
- Identify existing and potential opportunities for public-private partnerships in health.
- Provide recommendations on how best to operationalize public-private partnerships in the health sector.

GOAL: Assess the ability of the private sector to ensure sustained contraceptive supply in Country X.

Objectives

- Assess the current and estimated future availability, affordability, and accessibility of contraceptives in the private sector.
- Provide recommendations for activities and policies that can increase private sector engagement in the contraceptive field.
- Identify specific population groups not likely to be adequately served by the private sector, and suggest strategies to meet their needs while avoiding negative impact on the growing contraceptive market.

Assessment Phase 1: PLAN

GOAL: Develop a strategy for further engaging the private sector in Country X that complements and augments public sector health activities, with a focus on family planning, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS services.

Objectives

- Assess the diversity and distribution of private for-profit providers and health sector entities.
- Identify the demand for private sector products and services for family planning and HIV/AIDS.
- Assess the policy and regulatory environment for private provision of health products and services.
- Identify the leading initiatives in health financing and opportunities for the expansion of private sector provision as part of those initiatives.
- Identify the financing needs of the private health sector, and the extent to which access to credit could improve quality of care or expand service provision.
- Examine the HealthyNGO's shops in greater detail.
- Provide a range of options and recommendations for better use of services and future investment, including identifying potential formal public-private partnerships.

GOAL: Develop a strategy for working in an increasingly complex private sector environment to achieve reproductive health goals.

This assessment will focus on supply channels for products and services and the regulatory environment affecting the quantity and quality of product and service providers. Given its potential to influence the quality and provision of private sector products and services, it will also pay particular attention to the National Health Insurance Scheme and the issues related to its rollout.

Objectives

- Assess the diversity and distribution of private providers of products and services.
- Highlight opportunities for and constraints to private sector participation.
- Assess the capacity of providers participating in health maintenance organization insurance schemes.
- Examine the National Health Insurance Scheme benefit plan and operations, to determine their potential to increase provision and support demand for health services, especially for contraceptives and reproductive health needs.

Assessment Phase 1: PLAN

GOAL: Determine how the private commercial sector can play a larger role in the national HIV response—contributing to a more sustainable health system in preparation for USAID’s eventual withdrawal.

Objectives

- Review the current policy environment and stakeholder perceptions regarding private sector involvement in Country X’s HIV response and health system.
- Provide an overview of the current level of involvement by the private commercial sector (at the level of financier, risk-pooling, and provider) in the HIV response and health system.
- Understand the degree to which partnerships to address HIV/AIDS needs exist between the commercial sector, the public sector, and civil society.
- Identify ways in which partnerships with the for-profit sector could be strengthened or created to contribute to HIV/AIDS and health sustainability goals—also taking into consideration risks and market volatilities that may affect private sector involvement.
- Identify opportunities in which the for-profit sector could help sustain USAID programs (e.g., Supply Chain Management Services, Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems).
- Suggest ways that USAID might support a dialogue—or help broker linkages—between the for-profit sector, the public sector, and civil society.