

PSS Insight v2.0 – results from a multi-country pilot to measure pharmaceutical systems strengthening in low- and middle-income countries

Maura Soucy Brown, Tamara Hafner, Lauren Herzog, MHM Mahmudul Hassan, S.M. Abu Zahid, Birna Trapp, Samrat Balal, Edgar Lusaya, Reuben Kiggundu, Marion Murungi, Dr. Morries Seru, Vivian Bazanye Twemanye
USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program

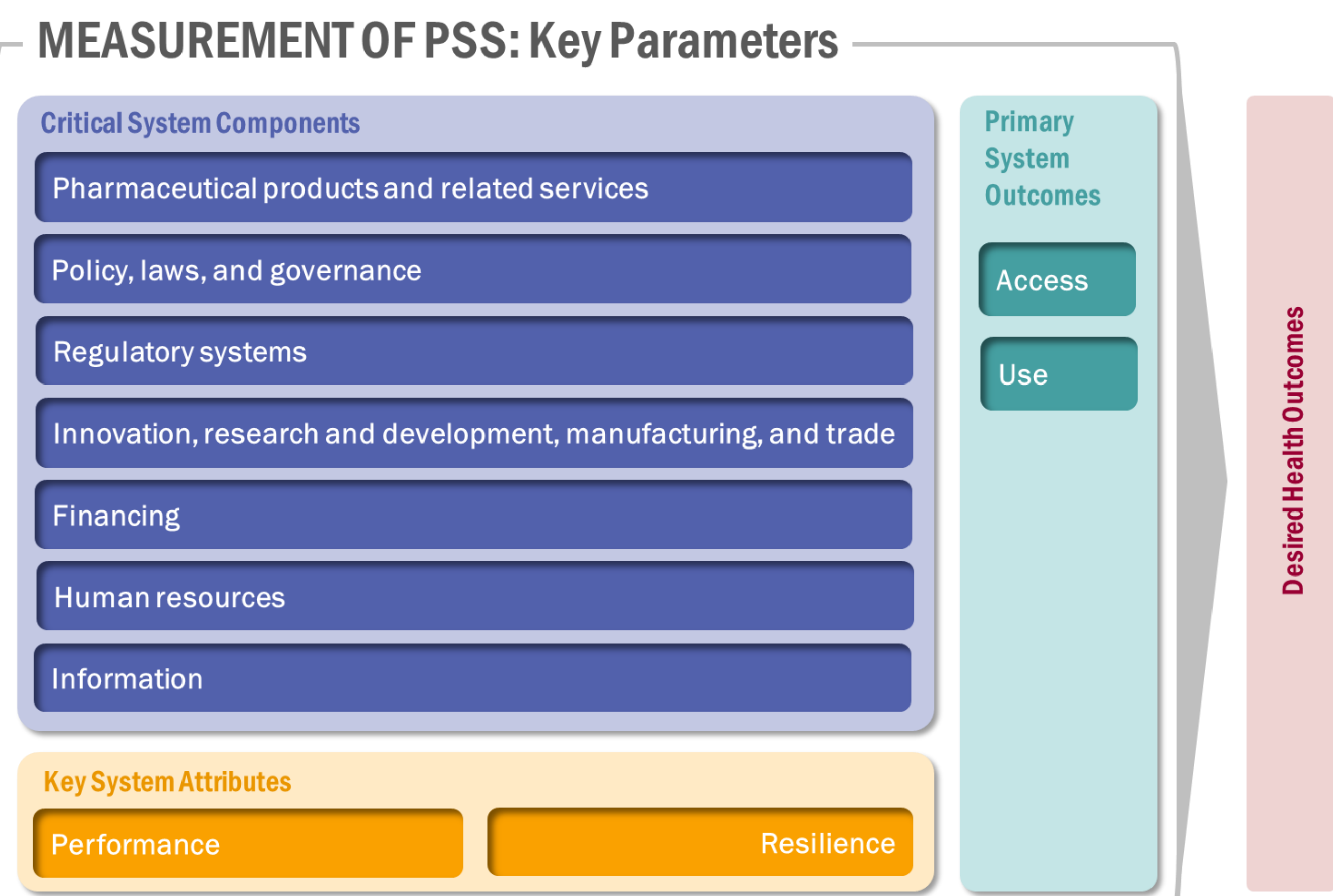
Introduction

Sustainable access to and appropriate use of safe, effective, quality-assured, and affordable essential medicines and pharmaceutical services are critical to health system strengthening efforts and improved health outcomes.

Without a standardized approach for measuring progress toward stronger, more sustainable pharmaceutical systems, low- and middle-income countries cannot make informed decisions or set strategic priorities to guide their pharmaceutical systems strengthening (PSS) efforts.

PSS Insight v2.0 is an indicator-based measurement tool that combines 43 indicators from across domains of pharmaceutical systems that are normally tracked separately to provide a more complete picture of the system and its capacity to operate as a whole for national stakeholders.

The tool is organized according to seven identified critical system components for measuring PSS. Measures are aligned with each component, the key system attributes of performance and resilience, and the primary system outcomes of access and use (Fig. 1).



Methods

The USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program is piloting PSS Insight v2.0 in four countries (Nepal, Uganda, Bangladesh, and Tanzania) to test the feasibility of deploying the tool at the central level to assess the critical components, outcomes, and attributes of national pharmaceutical systems and to determine the relevance of the indicators to national PSS priorities and information needs. The pilot consists of a desk review of publicly available information and key informant interviews.

Due to variations in pilot activity completion, we analyzed indicator availability, source, and frequency based solely on the desk review.

Results

Component	Definition	# of Indicators	Average # Available through desk review		Average # Collected by government*		# Routine reporting†	
			(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)
Pharmaceutical Products and Services	At the center of the pharmaceutical system and encompasses the functions of selection, procurement, and distribution of pharmaceutical products. It also includes systems for monitoring and promoting appropriate and cost-effective prescribing, dispensing, retail practices, and correct use by end-users.	11	6	55%	2	18%	2	18%
Policy, Laws, and Governance	The hub of coordination for the entire system, providing the framework, structures, and systems for organizing, financing, and regulating the system; and coordinating the activities of the various institutions and stakeholders to achieve the system objectives. It takes account of systems for facilitating participation, transparency, and accountability, and the promotion of ethical practices.	7	4	57%	4	57%	4	57%
Regulatory Systems	Focuses on ensuring the safety, efficacy, and quality of pharmaceutical products and related services.	7	5	57%	4	43%	4	57%
Innovation, Research and Development, Manufacturing, and Trade	The entry point for pharmaceutical products into the system. Includes research and development of products; domestic manufacturing capacity; and intellectual property protections in national legislation and international trade agreements that shape innovation and trade, and affect access to pharmaceutical products.	3	3	67%	2	67%	2	67%
Financing	The management of resources to ensure the adequate and sustainable financing of the pharmaceutical product purchase, related services, and other costs associated with system functioning. Includes financial risk protection strategies and monitoring and controlling costs and prices to reduce financial barriers to accessing pharmaceutical products and related services.	6	5	83%	4	67%	4	67%
Human Resources	Ensures the availability of adequate numbers of appropriately trained staff for managing the supply and delivery of pharmaceutical products and related services.	2	2	100%	2	100%	2	100%
Information	The generation and dissemination of timely and reliable information, which is the foundation for decision making, policy development and implementation, governance and regulation, and planning and allocation of financial, infrastructure, and human resources in the pharmaceutical system.	2	1	50%	1	50%	1	50%
Outcomes & Attributes	Includes the primary system outcomes of Access and Use, and the key system attributes Performance and Resilience	5	3	60%	2	40%	2	40%
Total		43	29	65%	21	49%	21	49%

* Indicators are classified as "Government Collected" if the national government published or participated in the generation of the data used to compute the indicator
† Indicators published with a frequency ≤ 5 years, or according to a schedule stipulated in the data source are considered "Routinely Reported"

Conclusions

- Although the pilot is ongoing, the desk review and interviews completed to date show that data collection at the central level is feasible.
- There is some variation in the degree to which PSS Insight indicators are routinely collected. We need to better understand the reasons why (relevance, technical capacity, or resources), which we hope to obtain through the pilot dissemination and validation workshops in each country.
- Data availability and frequency of collection are early indications that certain components may require additional effort to develop measures that are both relevant and feasible to collect.

Scan Me! For more details on the measurement framework, indicator selection process, and foundations of PSS Insight v2.0



For more details on the measurement framework, indicator selection process, and foundations of PSS Insight v2.0