PRESERVICE EDUCATION COSTING TOOL

BACKGROUND

The USAID-funded Capacity*Plus* project is developing a preservice education (PSE) costing tool that will provide current costs of PSE and cost estimates of interventions to improve and scale-up medical and nursing education in a given country. These cost estimates can support planning and management at various educational institutions and government agencies (e.g., Ministry of Education, Health, Finance, Planning), advocacy for increased funding for PSE, and evidence-based policy design to make the most cost-effective investments in PSE.

Poor quality of care is a key problem in many developing countries, and the value chain of clinical quality begins with the initial PSE that a health worker receives. The objective of the costing tool is to provide timely and accurate data on medical and nursing schools to make the most cost-effective investments in scaling up and improving the quality of PSE. The data generated by this tool can also facilitate US Government investments in PSE.

Capacity*Plus* is working on a toolkit that includes an Excel-based costing tool, guidelines, and data collection instruments to systematically estimate and analyze PSE cost data in developing countries.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS THAT THE TOOL WILL ANSWER

- What is the total current cost of PSE for a medical doctor? A nurse? (including direct and overhead costs)

- How do the PSE costs vary by school, program, department, and academic year?

- What is the cost of specific interventions aimed at improving the efficiency of PSE, and what are the associated efficiency gains?

- What is the cost of specific interventions aimed at improving the quality of PSE?

- What is the cost of specific interventions aimed at scaling up PSE?

PSE COSTING TOOL FUNCTIONALITIES

Determine current costs:

- Total current cost of PSE (direct and overhead)

- Cost of PSE by school, program, department, and academic year

- Cost of PSE per student (unit cost)

Determine and assess improvement costs:

- Additional cost of improving PSE by type of intervention (improve efficiency, improve quality, scale-up)

- Compare costs of various potential interventions

Support decision-making process:

- Identify priority and cost-effective investments in PSE

- Advocate for increased funding for PSE based on cost data and evidence.

USING THE TOOL

Users of the tool will input data and information on PSE such as education programs, course instruction hours, staff salaries, maintenance costs, and administrative costs. Sources of input data include school financial reports, accounting systems, course catalogs, and stakeholder estimates to determine the costs of clinical medical and nursing training. The tool will then allow for easy calculation of current base costs of PSE.

A set of potential interventions to improve PSE will be proposed with guidance from stakeholders. The tool will allow users to estimate total improvement costs by type of intervention. These costs can then be used to identify priority investments in PSE and accordingly advocate for increased funding.