

Overview of Health-related Development Cooperation in Germany

Walter Seidel, MD, MPH

The health situation in the poorest developing countries is marked by the predominance of infectious diseases and high child mortality and maternal mortality rates. Especially in Africa many government sectors have suffered from underfunding, the health sector being on top of the list. The HIV/AIDS epidemic represents an additional big problem.

German EZA revolves around an international health concept and is strongly influenced by the primary health care (PHC) principles of the WHO (1978), from which several other initiatives (comprehensive and selective PHC, GOBI-FFF, Bamako-Initiative, Prioritisation based on the DALY-concept) have been derived since.

Primary goal of the German development cooperation is the fight against poverty. „Help for self-help“ is the fundamental principle for cooperation. Development cooperation in Germany follows the concept of basic health care coverage but issues like family planning and the fight against AIDS are also taken into account. Approaches to planning such as ZOPP (target-oriented project planning) and PCM (Project Cycle Management) have proven to work well, but new approaches like the *Sectorwide Approach, SwAP* are currently being tested as alternative forms of development cooperation. The focal points in the discussion about new concepts in development cooperation are sustainability (considering that many developing countries are not even able to afford the running costs of development cooperation), new financial strategies and the restructuring of the health sector. The aim is to move away from purely technical approaches to more political forms of cooperation, involving political dialogue and government consultation.

The recent cuts in the German budget as well as changes in development Cooperation strategies of other donor countries will most probably lead to a reorganisation of the whole development cooperation concept, with a more regional focus and less sectors involved. Challenges of the next few years will include a better coordination between donor countries, new approaches to development cooperation and a stronger emphasis on political aspects such as good governance.