

Towards a new approach for assessing Health Systems Governance

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GOVERNANCE
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Why governance in health systems?

“Governance is arguably the most complex but critical function of any health system.

It is also one of the most difficult functions to measure because of inherent difficulties in definition and measurement.

Without appropriate investment in the governance of health systems, any gains that are realised from investment in health service delivery are unlikely to be sustained over the long term”

WHO 2009

Why increasing interest in governance in health systems?

- Rapidly increasing financial resources for health and health systems
- Increasing recognition of the underlying importance of governance for efficient use and effectiveness of these investments
- But research on governance in health systems is lacking
- What has been done, tends to focus on discrete issues such as corruption, efficiency, financing

- For fuller understanding, there is a need to address governance from a broader systems perspective across all levels of the system

Governance

What does it mean?

Our understanding of Governance:

- **From political science:**
 - “Governance is about the rules that distribute roles and responsibilities among societal actors and that shape the interactions among them.” Brinkerhoff and Bossert (2008:3)
- **From development studies:**
 - Interest in evaluating the “quality” of the processes and interactions that governance rules support.
- **From health systems thinking:**
 - System design and rules determine system behaviour including that of actors and institutions.

Governance in health systems

What are the challenges? Where are we now?

- Health systems are complex...consist of multiple dimensions
- All frameworks now include a governance dimension
- Various assessment toolkits developed to measure governance in health
 - but few have been applied
 - fewer have proposed a comprehensive systematic assessment of governance
 - across health system building blocks
 - across health system levels

Governance in health systems

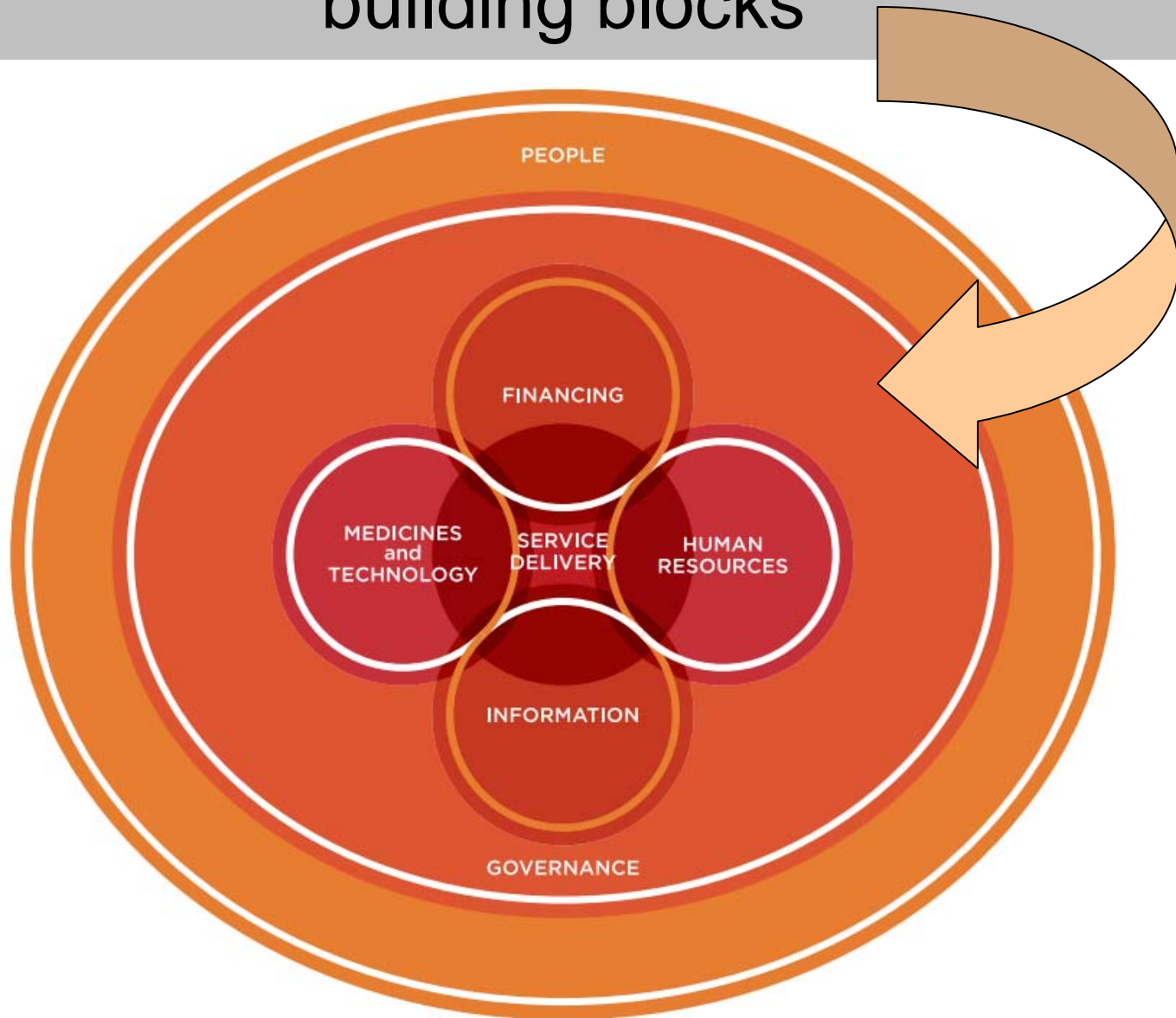
Many possible conceptual & analytical frameworks

- Actors framework (Evans R, 1981)
- Demand-supply framework (Cassels, 1995)
- Performance framework (WHO, 2000)
- Design of health systems (Mills and Ranson, 2001)
- Control knobs framework (Hsiao, 2003)
- Public management framework (Khaleghian, Das Gupta, 2004)
- Capacity framework (Mills A, Rasheed F, Tollman S, 2006)
- Building blocks health systems performance tool box (WHO, 2007)
- Health system assessment - A how to manual (Islam, 2007)
- Essential public health functions framework (PAHO, 2008)
- Systems framework (Atun, 2008)
- Toolkit on monitoring health system strengthening: Health system governance (WHO 2008)
- Governance in health care delivery (Lewis and Pattersson, 2009)
- Governance in the health sector (Savedoff 2009)
- Framework for assessing governance of health systems in developing countries (Siddiqi, 2009)
- Systems thinking framework (de Savigny and Adam 2010)

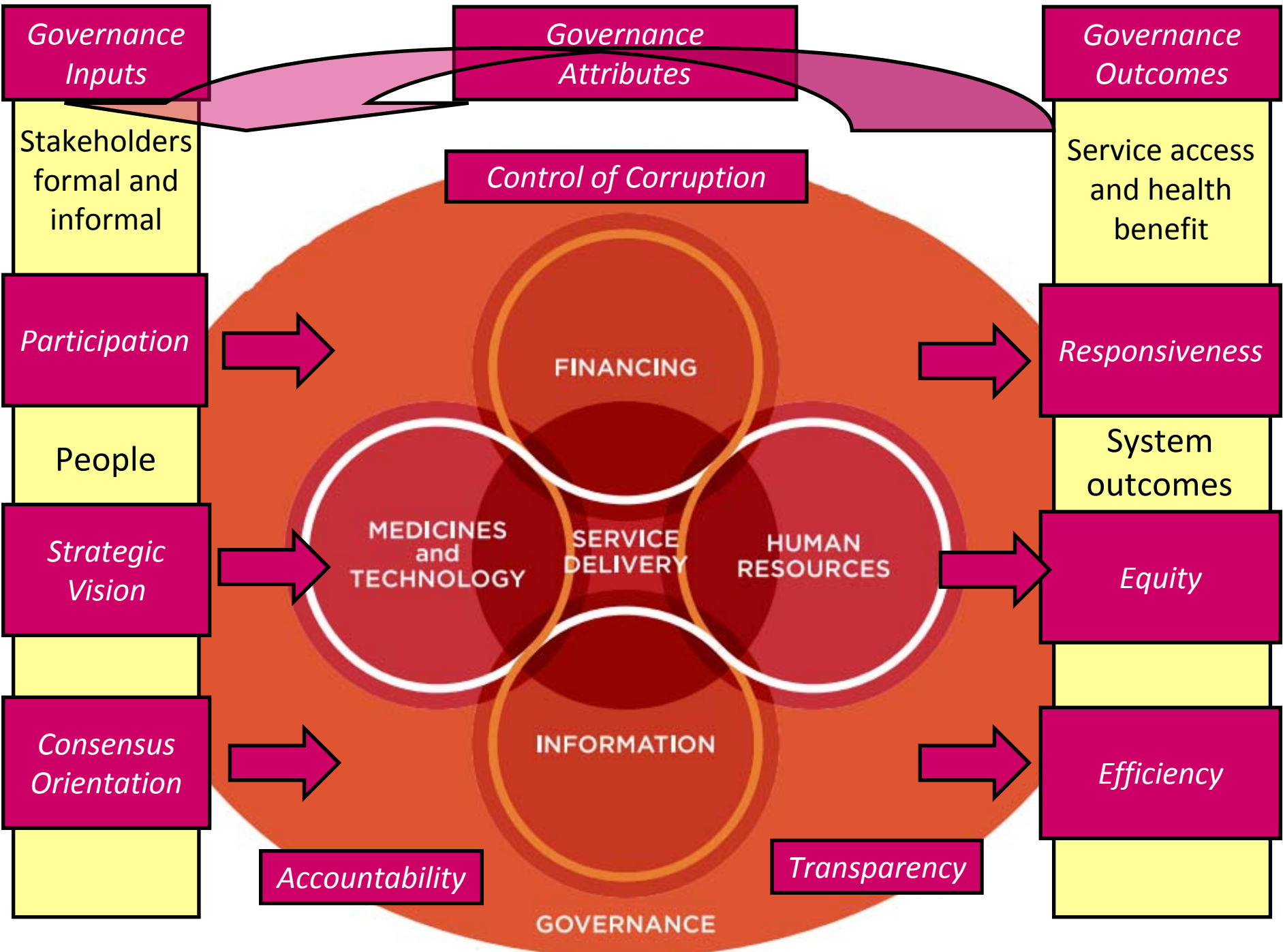
Starting with the health systems framework



Seeing governance common to all building blocks



Towards a framework for assessing governance across health systems



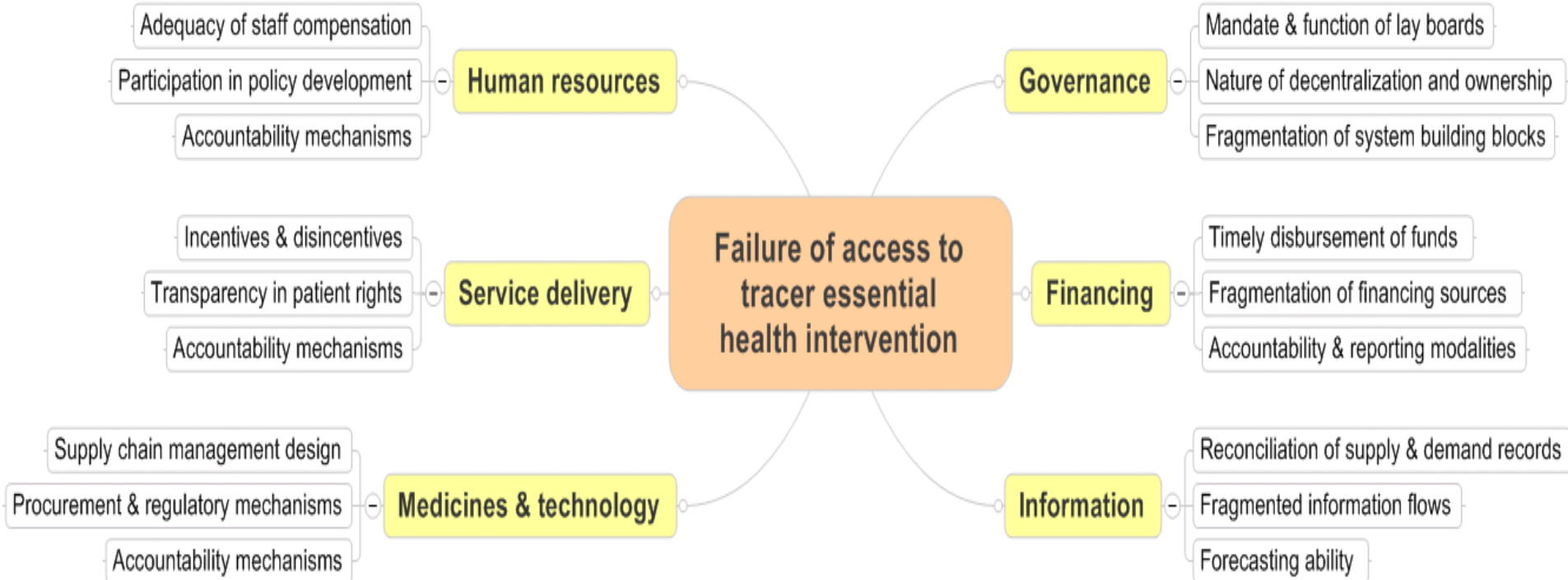
Testing this framework on a Tracer issue: Access to essential services

Entails...

- Broad stakeholder mapping and analysis
- Assessing rules of the system
- Assessing accountability for:
 - Mandate
 - Resources
 - Performance
- Assessing transparency and participation
- Assessing across building blocks
- Assessing across levels: community, facility, district, national, international

Testing this framework on a tracer issue: Access to essential services

Some sample themes to be followed in respective building blocks



Summary

- A work in progress
- Framework developed
- Now need to:
 - test ways of assessing governance systematically and comprehensively across the health system on a key tracer issue;
 - identify effective entry points for governance interventions at system level; and
 - widen the discussion and exploration of both needs
- Ready to test this approach in country health systems
- Comments and suggestions welcome

Parking lot

