

An introduction to systems approaches in health
August 29 – 31, 2016

1. Profile of facilitators

Name and title:	Dr. Ligia Paina
Current position and affiliation:	Assistant Scientist, Health Systems Program, Department of International Health, Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, Baltimore MD
Areas of interest:	Health system evaluation, systems thinking, health workforce policy, programmatic transition, organizational capacity development
Publications relevant to this course :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varghese J, Kutty R, Paina L, Adam T. Advancing the application of systems thinking in health: Understanding the growing complexity governing immunization services in Kerala, India. Health Res Policy Syst. 2014 Aug 26;12(1):47 - Paina L, Bennett S, Ssengooba F, Peters D. Advancing the application of systems thinking in health: exploring dual practice and its management in Kampala, Uganda Health Res Policy Syst. 2014 Aug 18;12(1):41. - Bishai D, Paina L, Li Q, Peters D, Hyder A. Advancing the application of systems thinking in health: Why cure crowds out prevention – a systems dynamics model. Health Res Policy Syst. 2014 Jun 16;12(1):28. - Peters DH, Paina L, Bennett S. Expecting the unexpected: applying the Develop-Distort Dilemma to maximize positive market impacts in health. Health Policy Plan. 2012 Oct;27 Suppl 4:iv44-53. - Paina L, Peters DH. Understanding pathways for scaling up health services through the lens of complex adaptive systems. Health Policy Plan. 2012 Aug;27(5):365-73.

Curriculum Vitae:

Ligia Paina has a MHS in Public Health (2008) and a PhD in Public Health, Health Systems (2014). She is a health system researcher, with an educational background in international studies and global public health systems. Her research aims to improve understanding of how to intervene in complex systems in order to ensure quality and affordable health care access, particularly for poor, rural, and underserved populations. She is interested in applying multi- and trans- disciplinary approaches to strengthen organizational and research capacity, to improve health workforce management and policy challenges and to understand system adaptation, particularly in health systems in transition. In terms of research methods, she has experience with both qualitative and quantitative research and is particularly interested in applying systems thinking tools and approaches to public health (e.g. system conceptualization tools, system dynamics, network analysis, and participatory strategies). Prior to joining the faculty at Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, she has worked as a results-based financing consultant with Broad Branch Associates (2011-2013) and as a Health Systems Advisor with the US Agency for International Development (2007 – 2010).

2. Course description

Objectives:	This course is designed to provide an introduction to theory and hands-on application of systems thinking tools and approaches used to tackle complex health systems problems in low and middle income countries.
Content of the course:	<p>Day 1 of the course will focus on an introduction to systems thinking and reasons why related tools and approaches could contribute to solving “wicked problems” in complex systems. The day will conclude with a brief introduction to participatory stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Day 2 of the course will focus on introducing selected systems thinking tools and approaches and opportunities for participatory model building. It will conclude with case examples of systems thinking in health, as well as with some time for facilitated group work.</p> <p>Day 3 of the course will conclude the overview of systems thinking tools and approaches and provide participants the opportunity to conclude their group work. The course will conclude with group presentations, as well as plenary reflections on the concepts, tools, and approaches covered in this course.</p>
Prerequisites:	None
Pedagogical method:	Mixture of lectures, demonstrations, group work, and discussion.

3. Detailed content and structure of course

Morning 11 am - 1 pm	Content	Method	Afternoon 2 pm – 5 pm	Content	Method
Monday	<p>Introduction to systems and systems thinking for health systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are “wicked problems” • What is systems thinking • How can systems thinking help us solve “wicked” problems 	Lecture, discussion	Monday	Introduction to select participatory stakeholder mapping, analysis, and engagement approaches	Lecture, discussions
Tuesday	<p>Introduction to selected systems thinking tools and approaches, and participatory engagement</p> <p>Introduction to small group assignment</p>	<p>Lecture, discussion</p> <p>Facilitated group practice</p>	Tuesday	<p>Case applications of systems thinking</p> <p>Group work on assignment</p>	<p>Case examples</p> <p>Facilitated group practice</p>
Wednesday	<p>Systems thinking methods and tools, continued</p> <p>Group work on assignment</p>	<p>Lecture</p> <p>Facilitated group practice</p>	Wednesday	<p>Group presentations on case studies</p> <p>Plenary reflections</p>	Group presentations

4. Self-study and assessment procedure

Self study:	Optional and required readings will be provided
Assessment procedure:	Individual participation in class discussion and group work/presentations