

**Collective country engagement approach: Recommended steps / protocols**
**Principles  
of engagement**

1. The process should be country initiated and country led with strong country stewardship and broad-based stakeholder participation (governments, donors, civil society organizations, public health institutions, academic and private sector).
2. The approach should be where there are opportunities for collective technical support and / or where joint investments have been identified.
3. Global support, if required, should be mobilized through:
  - Requests from countries based on identified needs (responsive modality).
  - Reaching out to countries to actively demonstrate the value of an aligned partner response (proactive modality).

**Type  
of engagement**

There are several types of possible engagement:

1. **Strategic request for collective action** to support extensive M&E activities (in some cases this may be initiated by a preliminary scoping mission by a single agency or multiple partners, or arise out of national planning processes):
  - Strengthen M&E and/or HIS plan.
  - Priorities for investment.
  - Common investment framework.
  - Technical support for implementation.
2. **Focused request for collective action** to support a specific M&E activity (e.g. multiple agency support for technical work in a specific area such as building analytical capacity or for investing in /providing technical support for HMIS).
3. **Specific agency request** for technical support (which may provide an opportunity for considering with Ministries the value of more strategic partner engagement).
4. **Knowledge sharing for ongoing in-country coordination** of partner work requiring no international support but useful to inform others or share knowledge, best practices or tools.

These are country-initiated and led processes where government takes the lead in design and implementation, and sets up effective coordination mechanism for management resources.

**Where will  
HDC engage?**

1. All countries are eligible.
2. Based on country request from national government.
3. Where there is potential for:
  - Collective action and aligned investment.
  - Technical cooperation and coherence.
  - Building political interest in data.
  - Taking forward country-level activities of the working groups.
4. In 2016/17, work will be done in a small number (~5-8) of countries which will facilitate joint learning and best practice. This will include:
  - i. Comprehensive strategic approach as part of the joint learning agenda, documenting best practices.
  - ii. Focused engagement for collective action through different modalities.

The experience from the first wave of countries will provide a foundation for scaling up of the approach in more countries over subsequent years. Demand will be generated by demonstrating the value of the Health Data Collaborative approach.

Collective country engagement approach: Recommended steps / protocols

<p><b>Best practice of HDC country engagement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work through and strengthen in-country coordination mechanisms for M&amp;E.</li> <li>• Promote and disseminate standards, tools, approaches developed through the HDC with country counterparts, building on existing efforts wherever possible.</li> <li>• Engage broad range of local partners, including civil society, private sector and research and technical institutions.</li> <li>• Link to process of using data (e.g. planning or accountability at any level).</li> <li>• Coordinate, harmonize and align development partners' investments and engagements in country data systems.</li> <li>• Measure and document partner alignment and efficiency gains.</li> <li>• Disseminate progress and lessons learned.</li> </ul>
<p><b>HDC Information Flow for country engagement</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Countries made aware of the opportunities of the Health Data Collaborative approach.</li> <li>2. Countries express interest in receiving technical advice and support.</li> <li>3. All country requests shared with core group, which should include a clear explanation of the type of request, justification for support and expected response by HDC partners.</li> <li>4. Lead time of at least 6-8 weeks is given for all strategic requests, to allow partners to fully prepare and participate.</li> <li>5. Requests are shared by core team with relevant country and regional focal points to assess interest in engaging.</li> <li>6. Based on response, <i>agencies</i> inform core team of different agencies engagement interests.</li> <li>7. Partner focal point(s) identified and relevant stakeholders confirmed.</li> <li>8. All requests tracked through Collaborative workspace.</li> </ol>

