



# The Exemplar

September 2020

Hi Friend,

We here at Exemplars in Global Health believe that improving health systems is a critical foundation and starting point for not only reaching our global health goals, such as stunting and vaccine delivery, but also for progress on non-health goals such as poverty alleviation and women's empowerment.

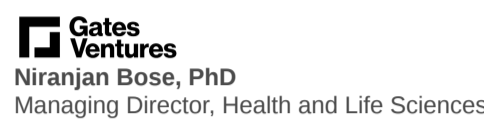
That's why in this edition of the Exemplar, ahead of the Annual Meeting of the World Bank Group, October 12-18, we feature an article co-written by myself and Dr Meera Shekar, the World Bank's Lead Health & Nutrition Specialist, on how Peru cut its high rate of stunting by 68 percent over three decades of sustained commitment. The World Bank estimates stunting can shave as much as 10 percent off a country's GDP per capita. It should be no surprise that Peru is now one of the best performing economies in Latin America.

We also feature an article by Dr Heidi Larson, Professor of Anthropology, Risk and Decision Science, at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and Director of The Vaccine Confidence Project, on countries that have achieved strong or improved vaccine confidence and what contributed to their success. A study published in Health Affairs by Harvard University and GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, found that in addition to preventing 36 million deaths, vaccines could help prevent 24 million people from slipping into poverty by 2030.

Lastly, we feature a Perspective by Dr Henry Perry, Senior Scientist, Johns Hopkins University, on the outsized impact Community Health Workers (CHWs) can have in achieving universal access to primary healthcare and a related country narrative on Bangladesh's CHW program which broadly improved health outcomes as well as improved women's empowerment.

Thank you for reading – and as always please let us know how we can help you strengthen your health system and meet your goals.

Best wishes,  
Niranjan Bose



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## FEATURE



### Lessons from Peru: How to Save Children from Stunting and Other Exemplars in Global Health

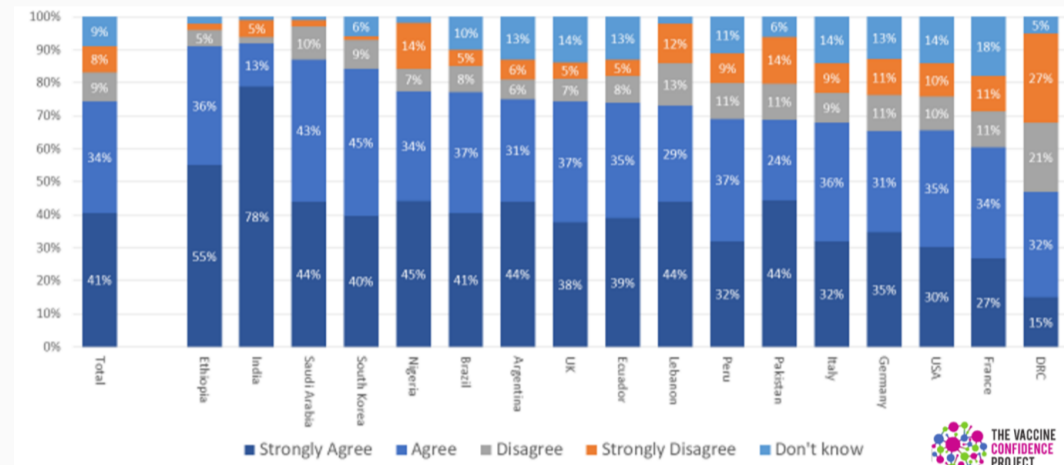
Written by Dr Meera Shekar and Dr Niranjan Bose

For generations, Peru suffered among the highest rates of childhood stunting in the world. But between 2008 and 2017, the country cut its rate by more than half. In this article, we look at how Exemplars in Global Health, building on research by the World Bank and the World Health Organization, investigated Peru's success. We also examine four barriers to progress in global health that philanthropists and funders are uniquely positioned to solve.

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## PERSPECTIVES

"If a new Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine became publicly available, I would take it." Agree/Disagree



### Finding Exemplars Among Those Who Restored Vaccine Confidence: A Pathway for Post COVID-19 Recovery

Written by Dr Heidi Larson

Countries can monitor confidence in their health systems and in the safety and effectiveness of vaccines and take action to prevent vaccine hesitancy. A look at what the Philippines' experience with dengue vaccine distrust and Indonesia's response to vaccine hesitancy can teach us about preparing for a COVID-19 vaccine.

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### CHWs an 'Integral Component' of Universal Access to Primary Healthcare

Written by Dr Henry Perry

In this article, the author argues that national community health worker programs are finally getting the attention, recognition, and scrutiny they deserve as an integral component of – or perhaps even the foundation for – achieving universal access to primary healthcare. Four countries with strong CHW programs – Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia and Liberia – demonstrate how these contributions to improved health can be achieved at scale.

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## PLATFORM FEATURE



### Community Health Workers in Bangladesh

Written by Kaosar Alsana, Mohammad Ariful Alam, Nan Chen, Mushtaque Chowdhury, Kyle Muther, Raj Panjabi, and Matt Price in collaboration with BRAC, BRAC University, and BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health.

In 1971, Bangladesh – then the poorest and most densely populated country in the world – had an enormous rural population with little access to healthcare. Today, a cadre of 130,000 Community Health Workers is delivering health services to over 100 million residents, driving extraordinary improvements in health outcomes for the entire country. The key to this success story has been government and NGOs working in collaboration and in parallel to establish, expand, and improve robust pluralistic CHW programs. These programs are noteworthy for their large impact and scale, being data-driven, and their focus on women's health.

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## WHAT WE'RE READING



**JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS**  
A fascinating look at how the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978 inspired seven countries – Bangladesh, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Nepal, Ghana, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam – to embrace the idea of comprehensive primary healthcare systems and deploy new cadres of community-based health workers to deliver universal primary healthcare. The book brings together experts who share insights on the policies and strategies that succeeded in improving health broadly in each of these seven countries.

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**THINK GLOBAL HEALTH**  
Among the many strange facets of COVID-19 is that while the pandemic is close to claiming a million deaths globally, there are wide variations in mortality. At the high end, the virus ranks as the second-leading cause of death in Latin America and the sixth leading cause of death in high-income countries. At the other end of the spectrum, it ranks as the 41st leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa and the 58th leading cause of death in Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Oceania.

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**THE LANCET**  
A new analysis shows how COVID-19 could seriously jeopardize the progress made in reducing malaria in Africa since 2000. With just a 25% reduction in antimalarial drug coverage, researchers predict 224.1 million cases of the disease and 487,900 deaths across malaria-endemic African countries in 2020, compared to 215.2 million cases and 386,400 thousand deaths in the baseline scenario of uninterrupted intervention coverage. Under more pessimistic scenarios, malaria mortality in Africa could double.

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### Exemplars in Global Health

Exemplars in Global Health is more than just a research platform. We also offer governments, researchers, NGOs, and funders a variety of support services. Our services include conducting desk research, organizing study tours and workshops, and longer-term collaborations to support the design or implementation of evidence-based programming and strategies.

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