

Local government as an arena for Health in All Policies

8th Global Conference on Health Promotion

Health in All Policies

Helsinki, Finland, 10-14 June 2013

Asa Cristina Laurell June, 2013

Content

- ✓ **HiAP in social and health policy**
- ✓ **Reasons why local governments can be efficient**
- ✓ **Difficulties and obstacles**
- ✓ **What promotes local governments HiAP actions?**
- ✓ **Some words of caution**
- ✓ **Mexico City's social policy and HiAP**
- ✓ **Concluding remarks**

HiAP in social and health policies

✓ **Relation social policy and HiAP**

- **Progressive governments' social policy tend to include HiAP**
- **Current crisis and socio-economic policies → negative impact on the main social determinants of health**
 - Salaries and employment
 - Work and life conditions
 - Health services
 - Latin American experience: the lost decade → new policies

✓ **Health ministries and HiAP**

- **Who leads HiAP in a cabinet?**
- **HiAP at Health Ministries**
- **Health system organization and HiAP**
 - **Commodification and markets (Universal Health Coverage)**
 - **Right to health and integrated health system**

Reasons why local governments can be efficient

✓ **Facilitating factors and opportunities**

- **Close to the population and to everyday problems**
- **Accountability. Social control and participation.**
- **Overall urban planning and issues: Transportation, public space, environment, building standards, security, etc.**
- **Health services and sanitation**
- **Affirmative action for discriminated groups**
- **Territorial integration of programs**

Strategies: broad or issue centered

Difficulties and potential obstacles for local governments

- ✓ **Variable size, power and expertise**
- ✓ **Restrictive legal framework**
- ✓ **Lack of resources or of decision over crucial areas and issues**
- ✓ **Local interest groups “capture” decision-making**
- ✓ **Engagement of non-health sector**
- ✓ **Sectoral “silos”**
- ✓ **Lack of good and shared information**
- ✓ **Indifference or hostile media coverage**

What promotes local governments HiAP action

✓ **Tools or mechanisms**

- **Coordinating intersectorial structures: committees, councils, programs, Healthy Cities, etc.**
- **Processes: assessment and response tools—Urban HEART, Health or Environmental Impact Assessments**
- **Financial: special or joint funds for HiAP and grants**
- **Mandates: official policy, laws, regulations**
- **Intergovernmental relationships: cooperation, coordination, integration**

Some words of caution

✓ **Problems of decentralization**

- **Small municipalities, big problems**
- **Local taxes and insufficient funding**
- **Limited intervention capacity**
- **“Capture” of local government**

✓ **Health authorities are not the owners of social determinants of health**

✓ **Integrated and territorialized social policy is in itself a HiAP policy**

Mexico City's social policy and HiAP

- ✓ **An example of integrated, territorialized and participatory social policy**
 - **1.200 local districts classified by socio-economic criteria**
 - **Assemblies: certain decision-making and social control through direct action and accountability**
 - **Health, education, housing, pensions, jobs, youth, public space, security, etc. but**
 - **Legal restrictions**

Concluding remarks

- ✓ **Important LG experience**
- ✓ **A way forward**
 - **Systematise the experience**
 - **Distinguish differences according to crucial issues**
 - **Involve academic institutions with local governments**
 - **Propose action research projects**