



African Population and Health Research Center

# **Improving Health Systems Through a Maternal Health Framework**

October 17, 2011

**Maternal Health Dialogue Series, Nairobi**



## Outline

- **Why Maternal Health?**
- **Linkages with Population Health**
- **The Maternal Health Framework(s)**
- **The WHO Health Systems Framework**
- **Diagonal Approach**
- **Added Utility of MH approach to improving HS**
- **Food for Thought**



# Why Maternal Health?

- Maternal health indicators in Kenya are still poor
- Provides opportunities for improving the health system
- *A health system* that adequately addresses MH will have a significant impact on:
  - Newborn and child health (directly and indirectly)
  - Adolescent sexual and reproductive health



# Maternal Health Indicators in Kenya

Contraceptive prevalence (%), 2005-2009*	46
Antenatal care coverage (%), At least once, 2005-2009*	92
Antenatal care coverage (%), At least four times, 2005-2009*	47
Delivery care coverage (%), Skilled attendant at birth, 2005-2009*	44
Delivery care coverage (%), Institutional delivery, 2005-2009*	43
Delivery care coverage (%), C-section, 2005-2009*	6
Maternal mortality ratio†, 2005-2009*, reported	490

**Source: UNICEF, 2011**



## MH Linkages with Population health

- Continuum of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health
- Developmental origins of disease: Cardiovascular disease risk in adulthood may be determined in pre-natal and early childhood period – dependent on health and behavior of the mother
- Links between MH and household economic productivity

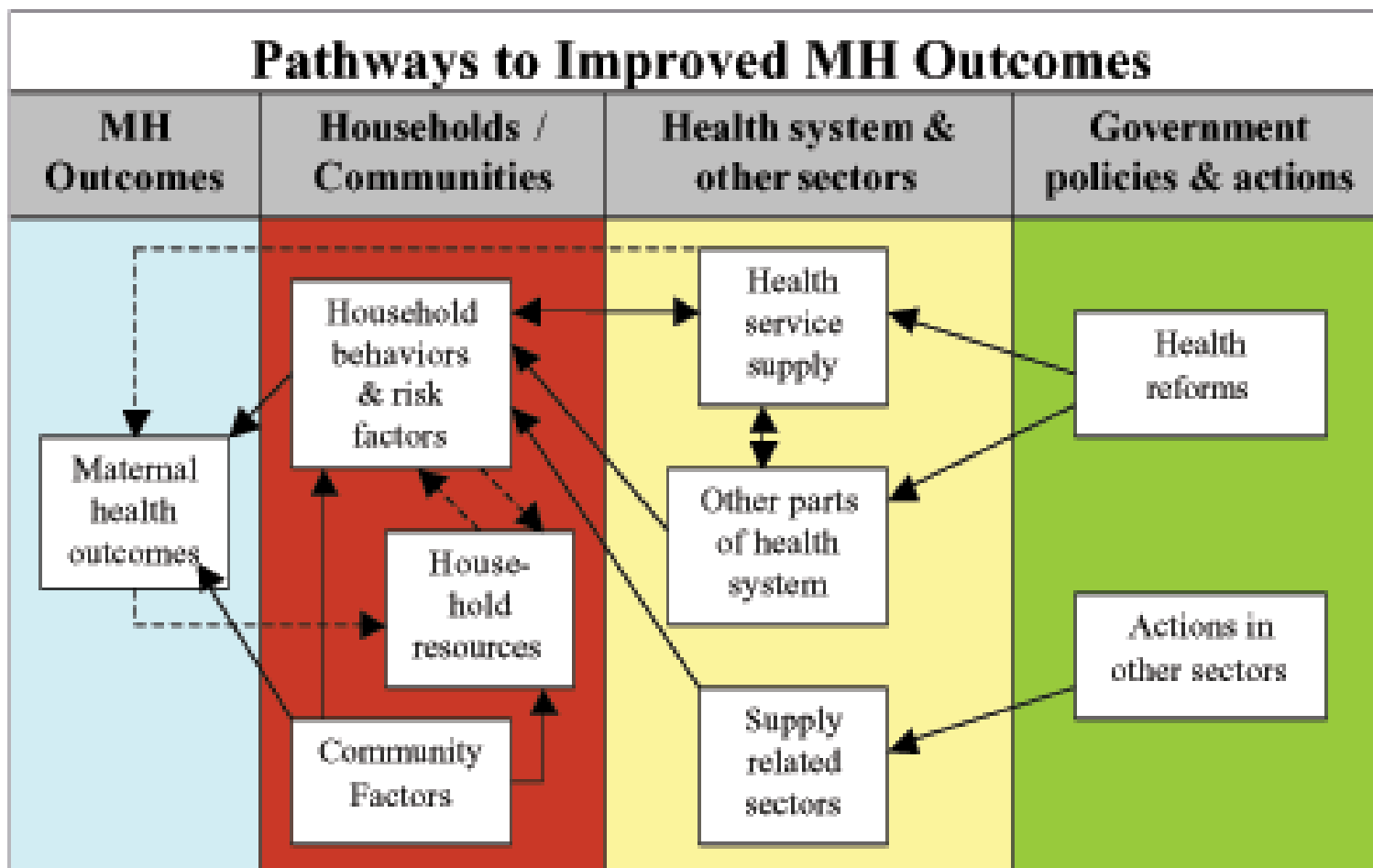


# Maternal Health Frameworks

- Determinants of maternal health
- Pathways to improved maternal health outcomes
- UNICEF framework for maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity (or Health)
- UK Framework for Results (for improving MNH)



# Pathways to Improved MH Outcomes



Source: PRSP Sourcebook, Claeson, et al.



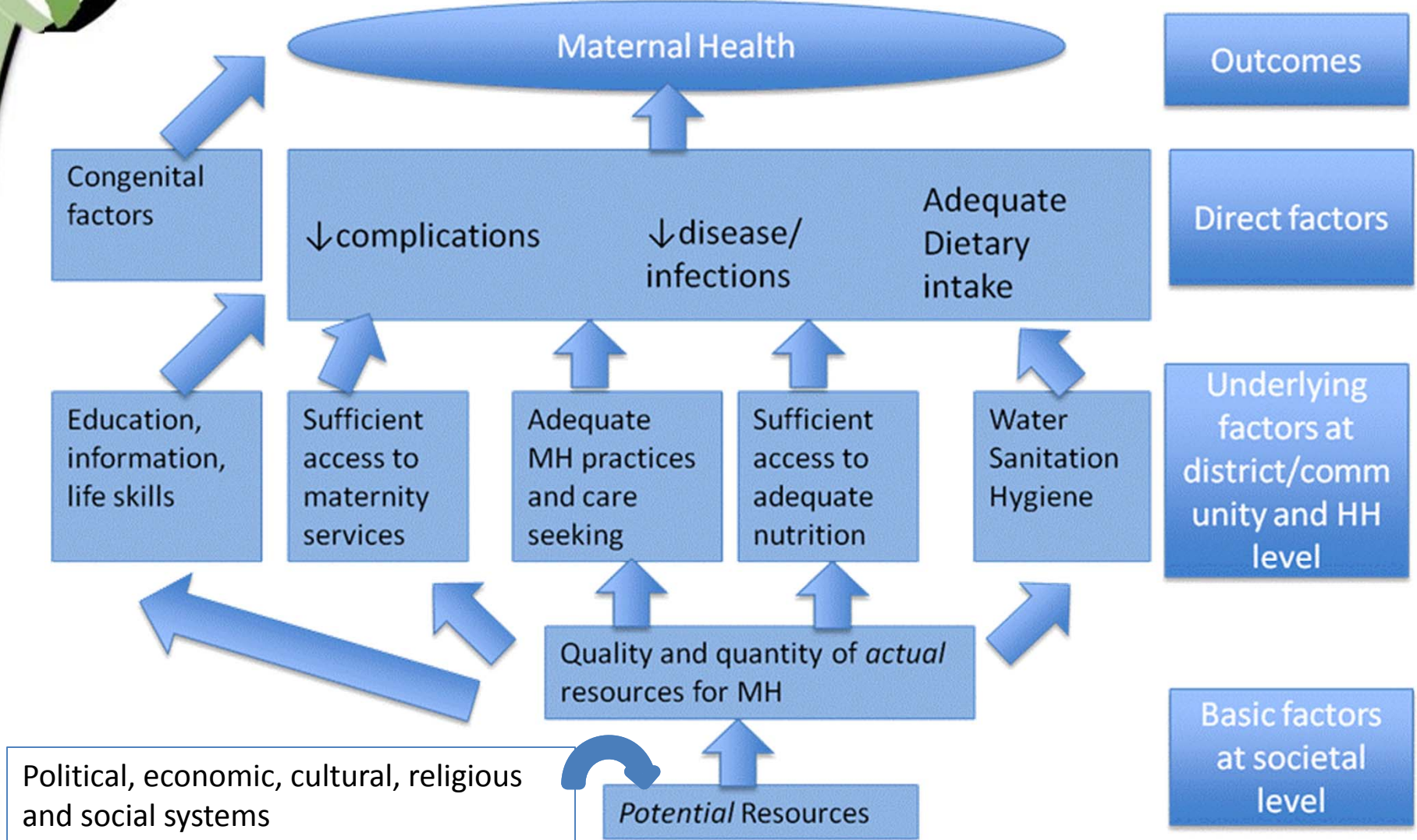
# Maternal Health Frameworks

- Pathways to improved maternal health outcomes
  - Government policies and actions influence health service supply and other aspects of the health sector
  - Government policies and actions also influence (health) supply-related sectors
  - Factors at household and community are influenced by the health system but they also influence interaction with the health system





# Maternal Health Frameworks



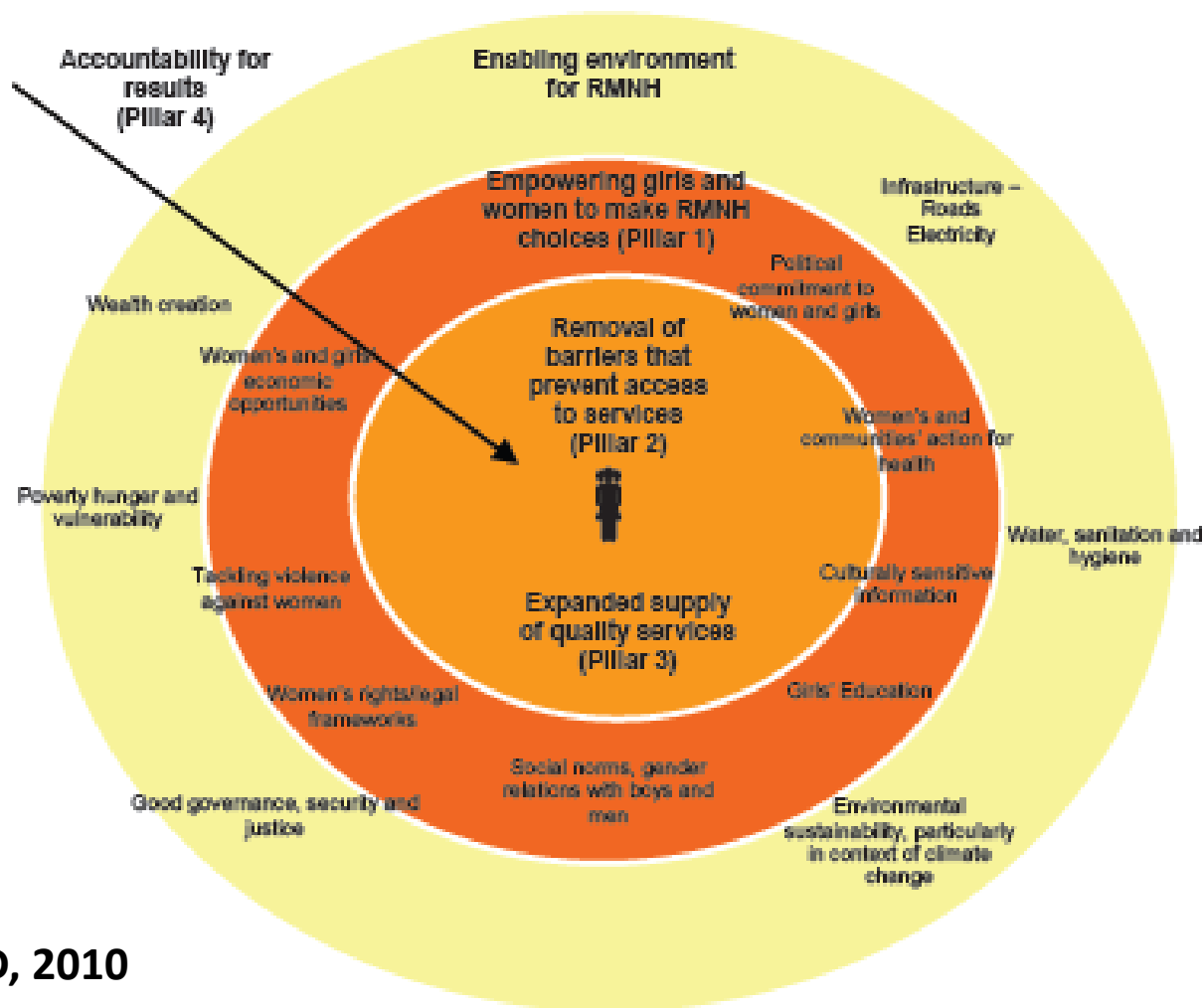


# Maternal Health Frameworks

- UNICEF Framework for maternal and neonatal health
  - Illustrates that health outcomes are determined by interrelated factors
  - Encompasses nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, health-care services and healthy behaviours, and disease control, among others
  - Factors are proximate (individual), underlying (household, community and district) and basic (societal)
  - Useful for assessing and analyzing the causes of maternal and newborn mortality, and in planning effective preventive actions



# UK Framework for Results



Source: DFID, 2010



# Maternal Health Frameworks

- UK Framework for Results for improving MNH
  - Empower women and girls to make healthy reproductive choices and act on them
  - Remove barriers that prevent access to quality services
  - Expand the delivery of quality services through stronger health systems with public and private providers
  - Enhance accountability for results at all levels with increased transparency



# Maternal Health Frameworks

- Commonalities

Both UNICEF and UK frameworks highlight:

- The enabling environment - the wider multi-sectoral connections of the health system e.g. governance, security, environment, water, infrastructure, including women's status.
- Removing barriers that limit access to MH services
- Increasing demand for MH services





# The WHO Health Systems Framework

**Inputs**

**Processes**

**Health Systems  
Financing**

**Service Delivery**

**Health Workforce**

**Health Information  
System**

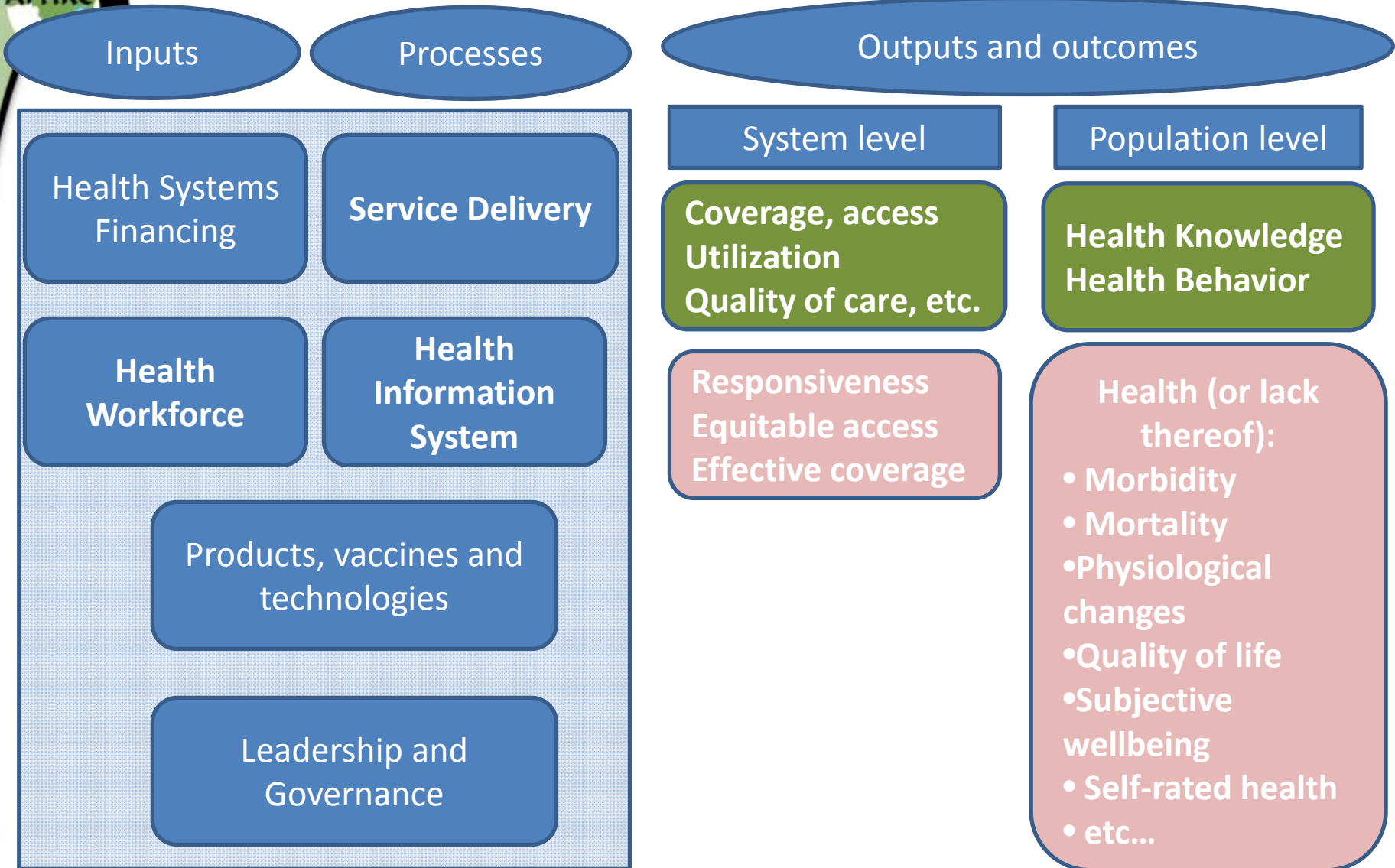
**Products, vaccines and  
technologies**

**Leadership and Governance**



# The Health Systems Framework

1. The health system does not exist without purpose
2. That purpose is to address health issues/problems/challenges
3. The system should not, be divorced from its functions and the context







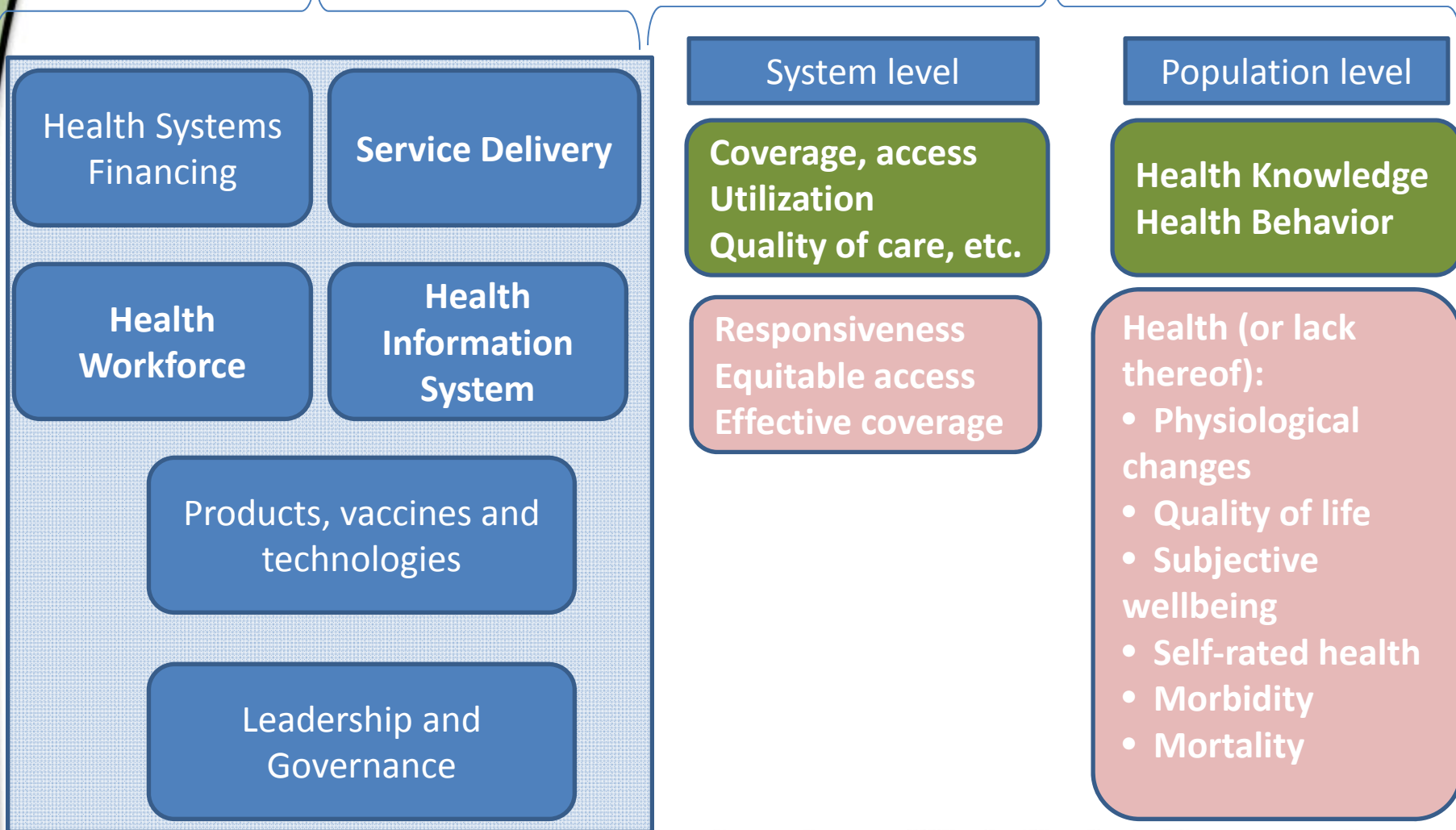
# The Classical Systems Approach

- Classical systems thinking acknowledges that **“problems” are part of the system** and
- .....”the component parts of a system can best be understood in the context of **relationships** with each other and with **other systems**, rather than in isolation

Other factors/systems: Food, Water, Sanitation, Education, Roads, Energy ...

“Health System”

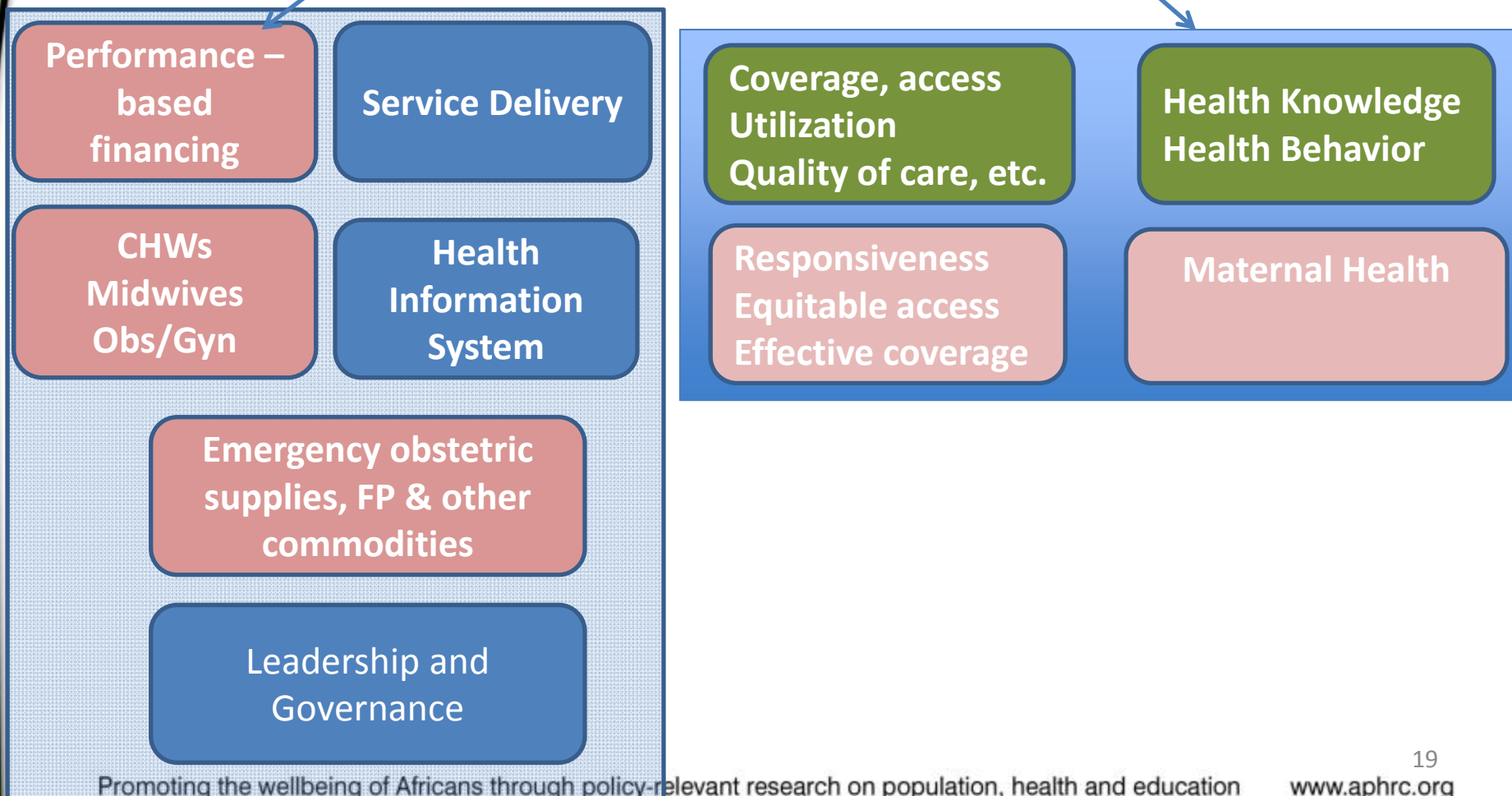
“Health Outcomes”





# Classical Systems Approach for MH

Food, Water, Sanitation, Education, Roads, Energy, Security ....





## Classical Systems Approach for MH

- Roads – emergencies; supply chains; access to non-emergency services
- Education – delayed first sex and pregnancy; knowledge and health literacy; health behavior
- Food and Agriculture – Adequate nutrition; optimal growth; immunity
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene – reduced morbidity; infection control
- Energy – supply chains; blood transfusion; emergencies



## Diagonal Approach for Health Systems

- Traditional vertical and horizontal approaches to health systems strengthening are limited in scope
- “Diagonal approach” defines and utilizes priorities to improve health system
- Provides opportunities for a more integrated strategy



## Diagonal Approach for Health Systems

- Emphasizes interrelations between health system components
- Health systems must be viewed from a population perspective
- Requires that equity is central in assessing a health system
- In addition to provision of services, the health system must provide stewardship and adequate resource generation



## Added utility of a MH System

- *A health system (in isolation)* that adequately ensures maternal health may not be adequate for other population health problems
- However a *holistic system (health plus other sectors)* that adequately ensures MH will have far reaching impact on other population health issues



# Added utility of a holistic system

Sector/system	Influence	Other health issues addressed
Food/Agriculture	Adequate quality and quantity of food and micronutrients	Child health; Adolescent health; Long term: NCD
Water, sanitation and hygiene	Adequate supply of safe water, proper waste disposal	Childhood illnesses Common adult morbidities General wellbeing
Education	Health (numeracy and literacy); health knowledge and behavior; economic productivity	Better care seeking in general Preventive behavior Long term: HWF supply and quality
Roads	Improved access to health facilities; better supply of essential commodities; emergency services	Medical emergencies in general Road Traffic crashes and other injuries;
Energy	Supportive infrastructure for 2 <sup>nd</sup> and tertiary care; cold chain	Emergencies requiring surgery and system support; vaccine-preventable childhood illnesses; blood transfusion services





## Food for thought

- How can the diagonal approach be used to strengthen the health system in Kenya?
- Which maternal health interventions can best set priorities for improving the health system in Kenya?
- How can maternal health indicators be used to create entry points and development plans for improving the health system?
- What will it take to have a holistic health system that takes a life course perspective on maternal health?



# Thank you