

Opportunities and threats to linking informal healthcare providers into the formal urban health system in Nigeria

Findings from stakeholder consultations in Anambra & Enugu states

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Background

- In Nigeria, informal healthcare providers (IHPs) account for a significant proportion of health service delivery in underserved urban areas
- Low coverage of health insurance and uneven distribution of formal health services increase the reliance of the urban poor on the more accessible and affordable IHPs, whose services are of questionable quality
- Despite the interdependencies of IHPs and formal health facilities in providing health services in urban areas, IHPs are not properly integrated or formally linked into the urban health system
 - Health service data from IHPs are not captured in the national health information system
 - Referrals are informal and unspecific in nature
- Although the National Health Policy and Strategic Plan recognize the contributions of IHPs, there are no clear mechanisms to link them into the National health system.
- In the absence of more consistent and structured linkages between informal and formal providers, the consequence of fragmented and poor quality of care will be borne by service users

Methods

- Data was collected through key informant interviews and analysed using thematic approach

Stakeholder category	No. of participants
• State policy and decision makers	10
• State programme managers (Malaria or RMNCAH or HIV/TB or NCDs)	2
• Local government health authority	5
• Health professional regulatory bodies	8
• Informal health service providers & professional associations	10
• Formal health service providers & professional associations	8
Total	43

Opportunities

Governance (regulation and supervision)

Regulatory agencies
accredit and license
IHPs

Professional
associations register
IHPs

SMOH and LGHA
perform ISS of PHCs

Service delivery & referrals

Case finding &
referral – TB, HIV

DOT; Community-
based IMCI; Rx of
uncomplicated
malaria

Distribution of
commodities – ITNs,
condoms

Capacity building & training

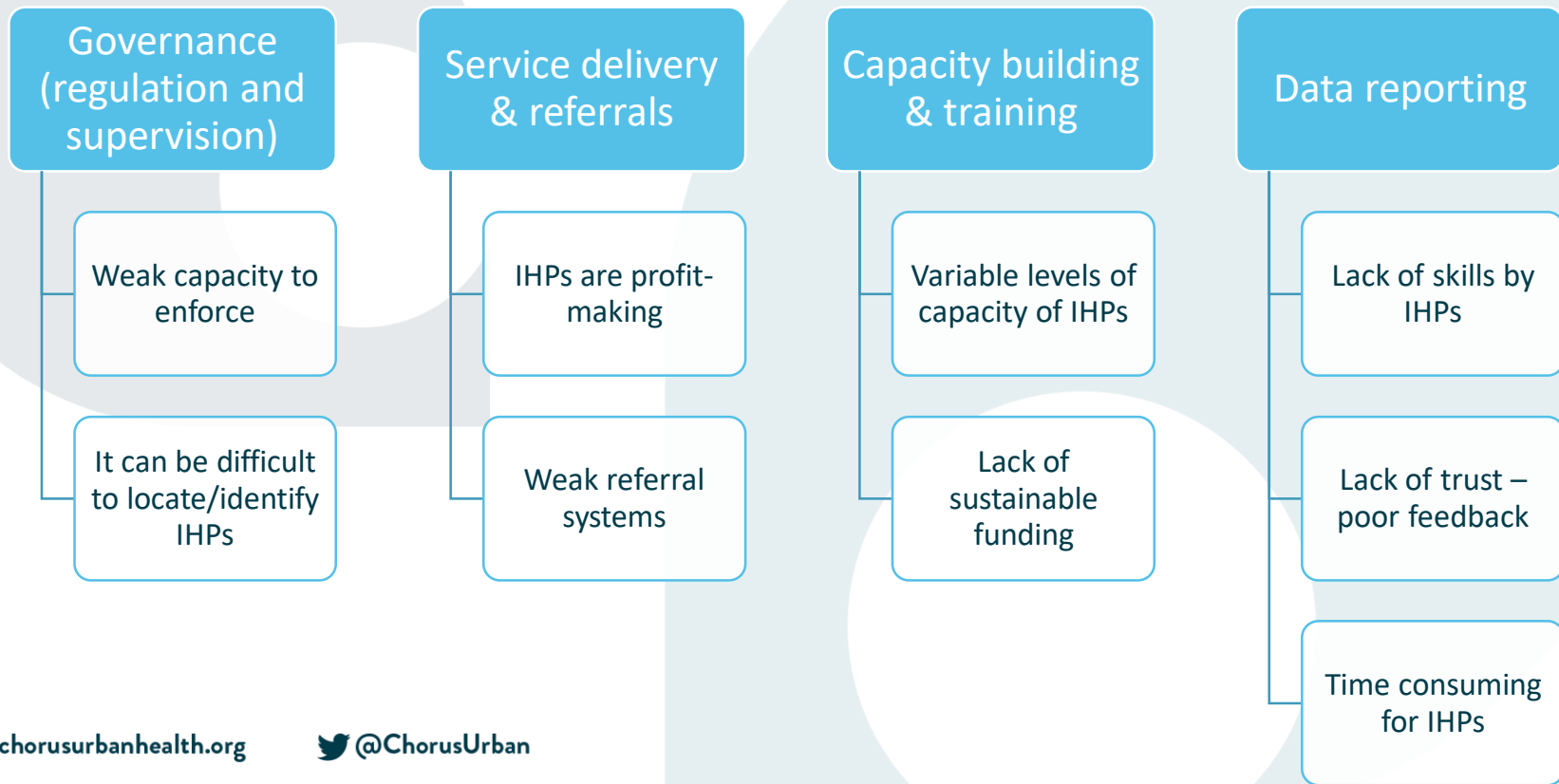
Existing curriculum
for training CHWs

Community Health
Influencers and
Promoters (CHIPS)
programme

Data reporting

DHIS2 makes
provisions for
Community-based
health information
system

Threats



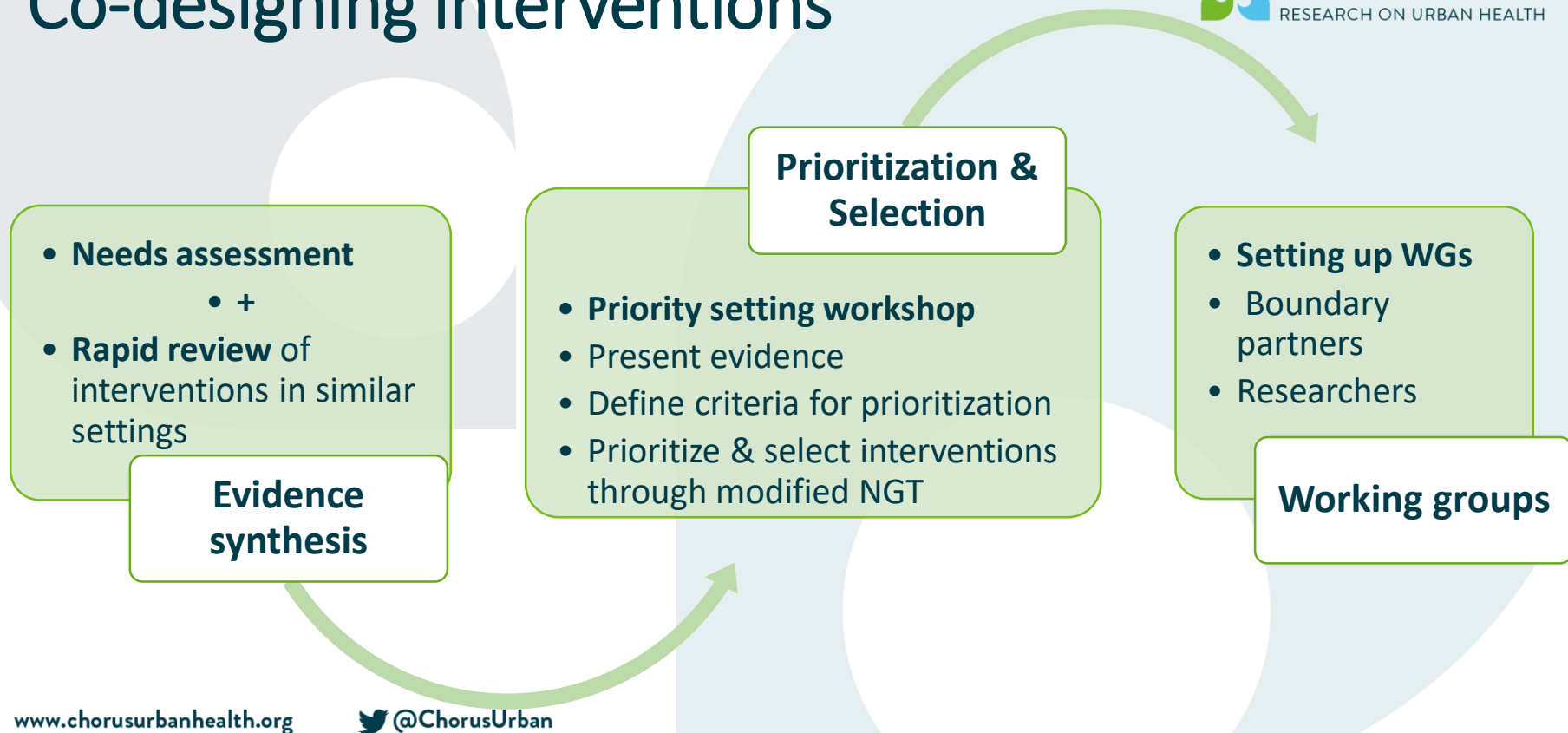
Conclusions

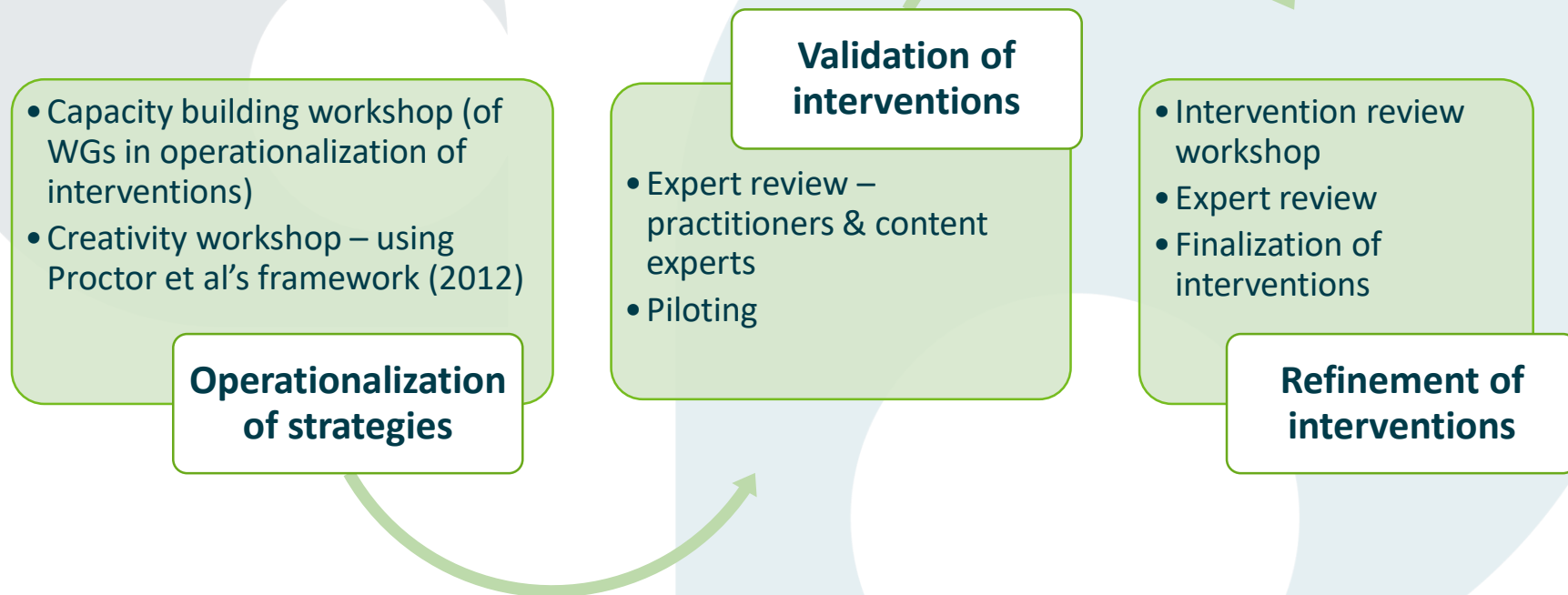
Opportunities exist to strengthen and institutionalize linkages between the formal health system and informal healthcare providers

Many studies recognize the importance of training and capacity building of IHPs. However, this does not guarantee improvement in quality of services by IHPs.

Hence, attempts to legitimize the practice of IHP should incorporate a combination of strategies that will ensure compliance to standard operating procedures including reinforcements through participatory problem solving, referral systems, and supportive supervision.

Co-designing interventions





Thank you

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