Maintains is an operational research programme that will develop a stronger evidence base on how health, education, nutrition, and social protection systems can adapt and expand to respond to changing needs during and after shocks, whilst also maintaining existing services.

Maintains is a five-year programme, launched in 2018, and funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The programme will provide new insights on how to improve the ability of social services to respond more quickly, reliably and effectively to shocks such as floods, droughts, disease outbreaks and population displacement.

Enhanced evidence and practice from six focal countries — Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kenya, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, and Uganda — will inform policy and practice globally.

Maintains will seek solutions that promote equitable responses and support inclusion; and explore disaster risk financing options to enable a swift and efficient scale-up. Ultimately, the programme seeks to improve health, education and nutrition outcomes for affected populations, especially the poorest and most vulnerable people.

Maintains has three components that work closely together. Maintains will deliver research that responds to user demand, fills evidence gaps and is accessible and engaging for public and private sector stakeholders. It will also provide technical assistance to support practical implementation.

Research to build a robust evidence base

Targeted technical assistance support in six countries

Promotion of research findings to inform policy and practice globally
Maintains in Ethiopia

Droughts, floods, disease outbreaks and internal displacement pose significant and recurring public health shocks in Ethiopia, affecting millions of people every year.

Droughts and floods have a particularly significant impact on the country’s rural population that rely on rain-fed agriculture, and contribute to severe food crises. In response, the Ethiopian government has placed disaster management as a key national priority.

The Federal Ministry of Health, Ethiopian Public Health Institute and other stakeholders are working to overcome public health emergencies through strengthening the preparedness and response capacity of key public and social services.

Maintains research in Ethiopia will generate evidence on health system resilience to shocks, to support ongoing design and implementation of Government, DFID and other stakeholder programmes.

Ethiopia Research Overview

Health and nutrition
Does the Second Generation Health Extension Programme improve rural health post capacity to prevent, prepare for and respond to shocks?

Following over 15 years of the Health Extension Programme (HEP), the Government of Ethiopia is now implementing the ‘Second Generation’ HEP to strengthen frontline primary healthcare. This Programme is based on upgraded health post infrastructure, more qualified health extension workers and an expanded package of health services. The Maintains research will assess the impact of the Second Generation HEP on health post capacity to prepare for, prevent and respond to shocks, examining activities such as immunisation, nutrition screening and surveillance as well as community trust in health systems. Through this work, the research will suggest ways to maximise preparedness and effective service provision in times of crisis.

Maintains is partnering with the Ethiopian Public Health Institute and Federal Ministry of Health, and working closely with DFID and other development partners. The research will build on and enhance existing evidence and address knowledge gaps to support shock prevention and response.

For more information on Maintains please see the project website: https://tinyurl.com/project-maintains or contact Kate Gooding at Oxford Policy Management; kate.gooding@opml.co.uk

Image: ‘Buge Health Team’ by Nena Terrell, USAID Ethiopia via Flickr, licensed under CC BY 2.0.