

As an American neurosurgeon working in Haiti, I have been in the unfortunate position of witnessing families refusing life-saving interventions for their sick family members because of fear that the cost of these interventions would financially ruin the entire family. In this uniquely low-income country in the Americas, understanding and tracking the risk of impoverishing and catastrophic expenditure is an absolutely essential part of strengthening the health system through scale-up of surgical capacity. I therefore wholeheartedly support the inclusion of this indicator in the DHS.

PGSSC wrote on Tue, 05 March 2019 17:28The questions we propose are a product of the Lancet Commission on Global Surgery (LCoGS), a body of work spanning three years involving 25 commissioners and a diverse group of academic, governmental and civil society collaborators from 110 countries. Of the six indicators proposed by the LCoGS, four were published in the World Development Indicators by the World Bank and all six are included in the World Health Organization's Global Reference List of 100 Core Health Indicators. Nevertheless, there currently are no mechanisms in place to collect the data required for these indicators, creating a critical gap in knowledge for surgical care strengthening.

The new indicators in this proposal span four existing DHS modules. For clarity, they are listed in the table below. Of particular interest are the questions on out-of-pocket expenditure and household expenditure to enable the calculation of financial risk protection for all medical interventions captured by the DHS (both surgical and medical), a core component of Sustainable Development Goal 3.8. The remaining questions were taken from a successful pilot DHS survey in Zambia. In the development of this application, we have been fortunate to count on a number of international partners to provide expert review and the indicators proposed are a culmination of these consensus building discussions. Please refer to Appendix A for a full list of international stakeholders who support this application.

Proposed Indicators:

1. Risk of impoverishing and catastrophic expenditure

Data Utility:

1. World Bank: World Development Indicators