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USING GOOGLE MAPS TO MONITOR THE DEMAND FOR PREVENTATIVE HEALTH CARE BY GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: EXPERIENCE FROM FIJI, MICRONESIA, PALAU AND MARSHALL ISLANDS PILOT PROJECTS

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The shortages in healthcare are many in the remote islands in Pacific. This project was to identify the demand for services by the geographical location in order to plan services to deliver. The other intention was to relocate redundant services to more useful locations. In all the countries mentioned above, patient records were categorised by diagnosis and demographics and were plotted on google maps. This was done because we could not afford GIS and google maps could be updated online and real time using smart phones. The maps were then used to identify diseases by location and plan services to be delivered. The other advantage was the outcomes could be recorded on the maps itself and the records get updated real time. We could even monitor spread of some diseases. By using free software we managed to establish the different diseases present in localities and then decide the secondary prevention package to be delivered. Due to the maps we are now able to monitor service delivery by the very household of the patient. It was also possible to plan stronger primary prevention packages because we were aware of the disease in different locations.

Biography

Shyama Janaka Mahakalanda graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo as a medical doctor. However his interest was more in health policy hence he took to development economics for post graduate diploma, and then completed his masters in Economics from University of Colombo. He also completed an Executive Masters in Science (Health Administration) from Malaysia. He is a full time researcher in health systems at the Fiji National University. He has performed many consultancies and provided policy reports in his career for many pacific island countries and Sri Lanka.

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