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Partners for Health Reform*plus*

Primary Health Care Reform in Albania: A Pilot Project to Provide Evidence for Health Policy

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End-of-Project Report



Mission

Partners for Health Reformplus is USAID's flagship project for health policy and health system strengthening in developing and transitional countries. The five-year project (2000-2005) builds on the predecessor Partnerships for Health Reform Project, continuing PHR's focus on health policy, financing, and organization, with new emphasis on community participation, infectious disease surveillance, and information systems that support the management and delivery of appropriate health services. PHRplus will focus on the following results:

- ▲ *Implementation of appropriate health system reform.*
- ▲ *Generation of new financing for health care, as well as more effective use of existing funds.*
- ▲ *Design and implementation of health information systems for disease surveillance.*
- ▲ *Delivery of quality services by health workers.*
- ▲ *Availability and appropriate use of health commodities.*

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Abstract

The U.S. Agency for International Development-funded Partners for Health Reform *plus* Project provided technical assistance to the government of Albania from 2001 to 2005 in the design and implementation of a sub-set of its health sector reform strategy, focused on strengthening the primary health care (PHC) sector. An integrated PHC service delivery model was designed, implemented and evaluated in two districts to inform national health policy, for later refinement and replication on a wider scale. The model integrated five major components – family medicine training for PHC providers, a facility-based health information system, service delivery reorganization and quality improvement, financing reforms, and community involvement. The model addressed the low quality of primary health care, lack of any data on PHC patients or costs, bypassing of PHC clinics for specialty polyclinics or hospitals, fragmented financing and management of PHC, and the absence of community involvement. The pilot was a bottom-up approach that informed the development of an integrated PHC delivery system that is affordable to the Albanian economy.
