The Value of Investing in Technology Appraisal: Lessons for Decision-Makers in Resource-Constrained Environments

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**Case Study as Background**

**Economic Context**
With less aid available, governments and sub-national administrators under pressure to (a) find own solutions, and (b) make more efficient use of available resources. Further, many MNCs have discontinued supply in low-resource settings such as Africa due to regulatory constraints.

- **Regional Public Health Policy**
  - Large regional public health administrator in an emerging market economy

- **Regulatory Standards**
  - Embroiled in litigation over malfunctioning donated technology

- **Unmet Population Health Needs**
  - Urgent need to acquire replacement treatment technology to serve population health needs

- **Cost Containment**
  - Cost = Patient Population x Treatment Interval x Unit Cost of Treatment

- **Evaluation and Procurement**
  - Need to consider extant programs that serve as templates for evaluation process for market access
Decision-Making Strategy Overview

Pre-Evaluation
- Situational Analysis
- Consult existing reference guidelines, e.g., WHO Medical Device Donations; soon-to-be-launched Toolkit for Donations

Needs Assessment
- Level of Impact
- Necessary Response Time
- Intended Benefits
- Identification of relevant technologies

Data & Expertise Ascertainment
- Price information essential for decision-making, including assessment of follow-on and replacement costs
- Gauge availability of other data resources

Robust Appraisal: Specification of the decision-analysis framework
1. Target population
2. Alternative treatment strategies
3. Cost Evaluation Strategy
4. Time horizon
5. Outcomes

Decision & Procurement
- Driven by Budget tolerance
- Consideration for alternative procurement channels
- Build-in Monitoring capability

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Take-Aways

Maintain strategic dynamism

1. Pragmatism
   - Do not be rule-bound: HTA is a tool not a rule
   - Implement what can be done
   - Do what can be agreed

2. Price
   - Emphasise priorities as a guide for procurement
   - Budgetary factors typically represent the rate-limiting step
   - Re-visit budget constraints throughout process and appraisal

3. Plausibility
   - Evaluate potential trade-offs in contiguous budgets
   - Fit to the local context
   - Consider local expertise base
   - Scale to local data resource-base

4. Politics
   - Politics trumps all!
   - Work to gain buy-in of multiple stakeholders

Keep things in play