Module 6: Health Policy and the Budget Process (Part 1)
Structure of the Module

Session 10: Analyzing policies and reading a budget
- What is a health policy and how do you analyze it?
- How do you read a budget and find relevant parts of it?

Session 11: The budget process and when to intervene
- Identifying causes of the health problem in Sunrise State
- Stages of the budget process
- When do you intervene in the budget process?

Session 12: Understanding the budget decisions required to bring about change
- To whom do you direct your interventions?
- Why are budgets difficult to change?
- Choices and trade-offs in the budget
Defining Policy

**Policy:** A course of action or inaction chosen by public authorities to address a given problem or interrelated set of problems. (Pal, 1992)

**Health Policy:** Authoritative decisions made within the government that are intended to direct or influence the actions, behaviors, or decisions of others pertaining to health and its determinants. These decisions can take the form of laws, rules, and operational decisions. Policies can be allocative and/or regulatory in nature. (Longest, 1998)
Central Parts of Health Policy

- Public Health
- Health Care
Who Shapes Health Policy?

- Executive / bureaucracy
- Legislature
- Professional bodies, insurance providers, unions
- Health providers and professionals
- Epidemiology / research
- Interest groups (disabled, HIV+, elderly, etc.)
- Public / civil society / health activists
Where Is Health Policy Made?

- Political bargaining in legislative process
- Electoral politics
- Administrative decision-making / actions
- Courts
- Public campaigns and actions
- Epidemiology / research study outcomes
- Public law and rule / regulation-making
- Professional associations
Policy-Making Process

- Environmental Scanning
- The Public
- Implementation Evaluation
- Minister’s Announcement
- Finalize Program

- Departments
- Definition Analysis
- Inter-Departmental or Jurisdictional
- Cabinet and Committees
- Draft Legislation
- Program and Resourcing Proposal

Decision-Making Cycle

Break
Using the Budget for Advocacy

What do we need to be able to do?

1. **Read** the budget.
2. Determine **who did what wrong** in the budget process.
3. Determine **when** the relevant actors make their decisions.
4. Find out **how** they make decisions.
5. Figure out **how to fix** the problem.
In Polarus the budget is like a Russian doll.
How Are They the Same?

• All the budgets for each constitutional unit of government (national, state, and local) use the same classification system.

• Each smaller unit is contained in a larger one (e.g., state health budgets are part of state budgets).

• Each level of government is its own complete unit.

• But…some summary tables complicate the picture.
Examining the Polarus Budget: Non-Budget Tables

• They provide non-budget data, often demographics and service delivery data.

• Careful. Watch the units!
Examining the Polarus Budget: Which Part of the Budget Should You Analyze?

1. Which level of government is responsible for addressing the problem?

2. To which department is your advocacy objective linked?

3. Which program in this department is the most important for your objective?