

HEALTH PRODUCTS AND TECHNOLOGIES UNITS REVOLUTIONIZE KENYA'S HEALTH SUPPLY CHAIN SYSTEM

ABSTRACT No.72

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INTRODUCTION

Supply chain remains the weak link in the health sector in most developing countries, characterized by low visibility of data, poor coordination of the supply chain functions, and sub-optimal demand and supply planning for medicines and medical supplies.

Kenya's devolved system of government exacerbated the situation with loss of skills through staff attrition and diminished resources for the supply chain functions at the county level.

There was lack of a proper mechanism for stewardship and coordination of health products and technologies with different products being managed through parallel systems at the health facilities. This gave rise to losses through pilferage, expiries, and general obsolescence.

METHODOLOGY

In 2019, Kenya's Ministry of Health (MOH) through the department of health products and technologies (DHPT) developed the first ever health products and technologies (HPT) supply chain strategy 2020-2025.

- The strategy provided approaches to ensure steady supply of quality and affordable HPTs through functional supply chain systems.
- The strategy also acknowledged the urgency to address the human resources and capacity gaps in the HPT supply chain in the context of a devolved governance system.

To support the implementation of the HPT supply chain strategy, USAID GHSC-PSM-Afya Ugavi (AU) developed a robust advocacy strategy for establishment of HPTUs.

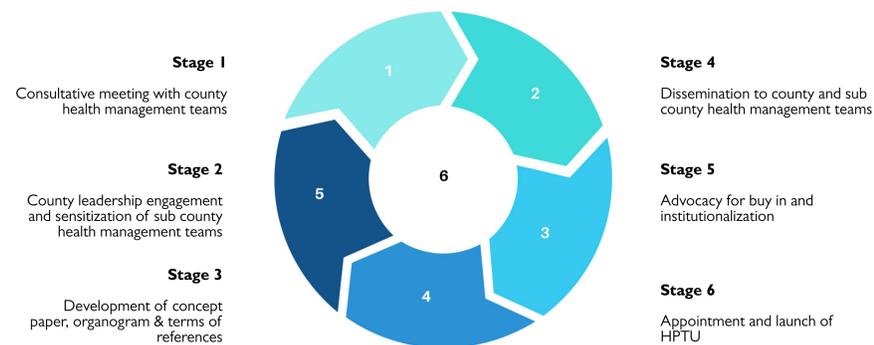


Diagram 1: Activities supported by GHSC-PSM, Afya Ugavi towards the establishment of HPTUs

AU also supported:

- MoH DHPT to develop a HPTU guidance standard policy document
- HPTUs to undertake organizational capacity assessment and development of the units.
- Standard basic infrastructure that included office furniture, laptops and printers.
- Branding of HPTU offices giving them the necessary visibility and mainstay as the go to unit for all matters supply chain

RESULTS

By May 2022, all 47 counties in the country had established the HPTUs in line with the national SC strategy

Advocacy for the institutionalization of HPTUs in local county legislation has been successful in five counties to date (Kilifi, Machakos, Taita Taveta and Vihiga).



Diagram 2: Key milestones on the HPTU establishment

All 47 county HPTUs undertook a forecasting and quantification for their HPT annual requirements. These reports have been used by the counties to advocate for increased resource allocation and to highlight focus areas for health SC systems strengthening.

To scale up opportunities for research and local manufacturing, HPTUs like Kitui County have been inspired to look for local solutions to bridge the gap and fulfil this demand and reduce over-reliance to central level mechanisms for its HPTs.

Some of the products being locally manufactured include antiseptic disinfectant solution, antibacterial hand wash, chlorine-based bleach, hand sanitizers, methylated spirit, oxygen-based bleach, formalin and fumigants.

SUSTAINABILITY

For sustainability, and to ensure that these units are a mainstay in the county health structures, AU advocates for the entrenchment of the units in the county health legislation. This way, the health products and technologies units will have dedicated financial and human resources required to deliver its mandate.

So far five counties Kilifi, Machakos, Taita Taveta and Vihiga have anchored the units into law.

THE FUTURE

AU envisions that health products and technologies units will lead the development of policies that will provide an enabling environment for a responsive health supply chain systems at sub national level.

HPTUs will manage demand and supply planning for county HPTs and leverage on technology to strengthen the supply chain functions.

HPTUs will also scale up capacity for research and local production and strengthen human resource capacity and development for HPT supply chains.

Finally, HPTUs should harness collaboration and partnerships at county level for increased resource mobilization for HPTs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Afya Ugavi acknowledges the roles played by the National Government through the Ministry of Health, the Directorate of Health Products and Technologies, Council of Governors and County Governments. The authors are indebted to the main donor, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as well as implementing partners supporting health system strengthening in Kenya.