

## **Workflow analysis in Laos**

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# Tools for Success

## Technical Support to Global Fund Grants



## Workflow analysis in Laos:

### A tool for learning, improving processes and developing SOPs

PSM staff of the PR used an interactive process of mapping and analyzing work flow to improve efficiency, comply with guidelines and policy, and satisfy Global Fund requirements.



Photo: M. Ojermark

Ms. Manisone and Mr. Khampasong map out the activities in a procurement process, together with their team.

On average, 45% of Global Fund grant budgets are dedicated to procurement, primarily for life-saving drugs. Weaknesses in PSM systems, and resulting delays in procurement and distribution of drugs, can seriously undermine services to those in need.

For more information related to this story, visit [www.theglobalfund.org/en/performance/grantportfolio/money](http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/performance/grantportfolio/money)

For more information on GMS, visit [www.gmsproject.org](http://www.gmsproject.org)

On a small street lined with market stalls, and bordered by the Mekong River, the Ministry of Health houses its Office of the Global Fund Principal Recipient (PR). The PR manages seven grants worth \$61.5 million, and is using multiple strategies to maintain and improve its grant performance.

Procurement and supply management (PSM) is an area whose particular challenges are few qualified staff, fragmented functions across several programs, and weak adherence to guidelines and procedures. The ultimate consequence of the PSM problem is failure to provide patients with urgently needed medicines. Due to delays and systemic weaknesses, Laos was facing critically low levels or stock-outs of key medicines and supplies. A holistic approach was needed to resolve the organizational and capacity problems hindering the PSM system.

Grant Management Solutions (GMS) was invited to assist the PR, and the national HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis programs, to improve their procurement performance, while transferring skills and capacity. Following a diagnostic analysis, the GMS team and PR opted to use workflow mapping to identify gaps, errors and inefficiencies, and define improvements.

The GMS approaches of participatory learning and creating “options for decision making” were put to work in a learning-by-doing workshop. Using wall space marked with swimlanes, teams of procurement staff and program managers plotted out various procurement processes. A lively debate accompanied the mapping of actions, decisions and persons responsible. Each flow diagram was critiqued and revised by the combined teams with GMS assistance. The multiple results achieved by the PR were beyond expectations: more efficient processes were defined, compliance gaps and errors were rectified, standard operating procedures were delineated, and a deadline set by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) was met. The PR’s Assistant Manager Dr. Rattanaxay commented: “[GMS’] support for the organizational development needs of our office will surely result in long-term benefits.”



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