

SCMS

IN BRIEF



Institutionalizing the Integration and Coordination of Service Provision

Meeting the pharmaceutical needs of Ethiopia's population requires coordinated efforts for smooth operations.

From planning to procurement, distribution, monitoring and forecasting pharmaceutical commodities, all actors in the supply chain must execute specific roles and responsibilities to overcome the challenges of pharmaceutical management and meet the health requirements of the people.

The Government of Ethiopia is seeking partners to build, strengthen and expand its public health system. One of the challenges for the government and the respective ministries involved is coordinating the services that are available and the actions of the respective bodies. To support the government in this process, SCMS provides technical and financial contributions to the regional health bureau-led Essential Pharmaceutical Security Pharmacy Technical Working Groups and Review Meetings.

Arsi and Horo Guduru zones of the Oromia Region have faced many service provision and coordination challenges in the pharmaceutical supply chain. To address these and related, SCMS supports the development of the Technical Working Groups and Review Meetings: regional gatherings that facilitate discussion and deliberation on the problems and agree upon solutions.

Arsi Zone, one of the 18 zones of Oromia Region is the second largest zone, with 90 health facilities comprising 3 hospitals and 87 health centers. Arsi Zone's major challenge was a parallel supply chain from PFSA and the



As a result of proper training, Horo Guduru Zone's health care product availability has improved.

Zonal Health Department, which caused double-orders, overstock and wastages of pharmaceutical commodities. In March 2012 the Oromia Regional Health Bureau decided to increase its Prevention of Mother to Child Treatment (PMTCT) service by doubling the number of health facilities providing PMTCT and ART services in all zones in the region. This scale up effort compounded the existing challenge.

The Zonal Health Department requested SCMS provide technical and financial support for a Zonal Logistics Review Meeting to iron out the problems in the supply chain. A joint action plan was developed and agreed upon. Following the review meeting, PFSA increased the direct delivery of products to 81 percent of the total number of health facilities, and ART and PMTCT sites' door-to-door distribution rose from 69 percent to 95 percent. An underlying



SCMS-supported technical working groups work to improve service provision throughout Ethiopia.

challenge, a shortage of professionals in health centers, was rectified with recruitment of 43 pharmacy professionals between August 2012 and April 2013. In addition, district health offices were mandated to collect bimonthly reports and requisition reports from all health centers and submit to PFSA.

At Horo Guduru, another zone in Oromia Region, the main challenge was a shortage of trained staff, which inhibited the zone's ability to implement its duties accordingly. Without sufficient staff, SCMS also faced a challenging in providing supportive supervision to the appropriate health workers. To find solutions, SCMS provided financial and technical support for the Horo Guduru Zone to conduct a sub-regional review meeting to assess the gaps in the supply chain management system. Horo Guduru Zone then

recruited four pharmacy logistics officers to manage the district health offices. SCMS provided financial support to train these new recruits, and provided supportive supervision to respective staff to ensure their skills were best utilized. As a result, Horo Guduru Zone's reporting rate, data quality and product availability improved. The zone is now better able to avoid stockouts of HIV, anti-TB, family health and other essential pharmaceuticals.

The Essential Pharmaceuticals Security Technical Working Groups and Review Meetings, which take place across Ethiopia, are important avenues for different stakeholders to gather, coordinate activities, identify challenges and agree upon solutions. The examples of Arsi and Horo Guduru Zones in Oromia demonstrate the important role SCMS-supported meetings have in improving service provision and access to care throughout Ethiopia.



Meeting national pharmaceutical needs requires coordinated efforts for smooth operations.

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the US Agency for International Development or the United States government.

ABOUT SCMS

The Supply Chain Management System (SCMS) was established to collaborate within country and global partners to ensure a reliable, cost-effective and secure supply of high quality medicines and health products for HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment. SCMS is funded as part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Visit us at www.scms.pfscm.org.

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