

# SCMS

## IN BRIEF



## In Ethiopia, warehouse staff take ownership of their part of the HIV/AIDS supply chain

With increased support from PEPFAR, the Global Fund and other international donors, countries like Ethiopia are receiving and distributing massive quantities of medicines, test kits, laboratory supplies and other commodities to support testing and treatment for HIV/AIDS.

Last year alone, the Supply Chain Management System (SCMS), a project of PEPFAR administered by USAID, initiated orders for products worth \$46.9 million.

Central and regional warehouses play a critical role in receiving and storing life-saving HIV/AIDS commodities and distributing them to testing and treatment sites and, ultimately, to the patients who rely on them.

Seid Mohammed works at the Dire Dawa warehouse hub for Ethiopia's Pharmaceutical Fund and Supply Agency (PFSA). As Assistant Manager, he is seconded by SCMS to PFSA to help in management of the warehouse. Regional hubs receive product from PFSA's central warehouse and supply pharmaceutical products to nearby public and private health facilities. These hubs are an important link between the national procurement of pharmaceuticals and the individual clients who receive care at the 2,028 health facilities in Ethiopia that provide antiretroviral (ART) and prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) services. Dire Dawa's regional hub supplies medical products and medi-

cine to 287 health facilities, 123 of which offer ART and/or PMTCT services.

Despite Dire Dawa's relentless heat, Seid's enthusiasm for his work endures year-round. Seid — who came to the region from over 700 kms away — and others have relocated within Ethiopia to contribute to their government's ambitious goal to provide total access to health care for over 80 million people. With approximately 80 percent of people living in rural areas, this is no easy task. Public health supply chains are a critical link to sustaining prevention, testing and treatment programs.

Seid was one of 28 PFSA and SCMS staff members supported by SCMS to attend a state-of-the-art warehouse operations and management training in South Africa in 2011 and 2012. The ongoing training, provided by SCMS team member Imperial Health Sciences, covers a wide variety of



Seid Mohammed is seconded by SCMS to help in management of the Dire Dawa warehouse hub for Ethiopia's Pharmaceutical Fund and Supply Agency (PFSA).

warehouse operations management topics and gives trainees practical hands-on experience in a world-class operation.

“It was a good opportunity. Not only for knowledge, but practically, to see how things operate,” Seid explains. SCMS training programs help expand the vision of warehousing staff who have not been exposed to international standards. “Now we see things differently,” he adds.

Following his return to Dire Dawa, Seid gave a one-day orientation to the 32 staff at his hub on lessons learned in the training. Immediately following, he saw improvements in the use of key performance indicators, internal auditing, standard operating procedures and warehouse organization, among others. As a result, the warehouse operations were more efficient — more quickly and effectively taking products in and moving products out. Seid is progressively transferring tasks and responsibility to PFSA and has a plan to phase out his seconded role.

Trained staff are also eager to implement lessons learned in advanced technologies with the development of 10 newly constructed warehouses, currently nearing completion.

SCMS is supporting the development of these USAID-supported warehouses through providing vehicles, forklifts, warehouse layout designs and racking. The trainees, including Seid, are keen to put their knowledge into practice in their new workplaces.

According to Safia Nuro, another attendee of the warehouse operations management training, the training was “amazing.” Safia is the Director of the PFSA Storage and Distribution Directorate in Addis Ababa and oversees the operations of storage and distribution at the national and regional levels. For her, it was “good to see the space utilization and vertical racking, the bar coding and security,” and she now applies new physical and commodity workflow management strategies in her workplace in Addis Ababa. The training also helped Safia gain greater awareness of cold room items, storage and management. The warehouse operations management training allows participants to gain knowledge and experience to improve current operations and prepare for the new practices that will be introduced with the new warehouses. According to Safia, “we want to make our warehouses like the ones in South Africa; it is an example for us.”

## 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](http://www.scms.pfscm.org).

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.

## CONTACT

Daniel Tadesse  
Deputy Director for Technical  
Operations  
Bole Sub City, K.02,H no 708  
P.O. Box 1157, Code 1250  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Email: [dtadesse@et.pfscm.org](mailto:dtadesse@et.pfscm.org)  
Phone: 251.116.17.5000  
Fax: 251.116.18.3089

Find us on Facebook

