

## Success Story

# Tanzania Graduates First Class of Public Health Supply Chain Managers



USAID | DELIVER PROJECT, SCMS

USAID | DELIVER PROJECT and SCMS teams hand over materials to professors at the Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences, which will be used in their first supply chain management pre-service training classes.

**"...before, they didn't know how to count forms, how to take stock, any of that...it was all new to them. Now, they are learning from their classes, they went to their practice, they went to their field experience, they know."**

*Esther Tuarira, Lecturer at Muhimbili University*

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**"When we were starting, there wasn't anything like [it]."**

—David Rayson, graduate, Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences.

In 2013, David was one of the first students in Tanzania to graduate from the pharmacy technical program at Muhimbili University with a certificate in supply chain management. Simon, a second graduate of the program, stressed: "I think running a pharmacy, or any business, you need those skills in supply chain management."

Pharmacists, nurses, and technicians like Simon and David are at the forefront of the supply chain. In Tanzania, often, not only are they responsible for dispensing commodities, but also for managing part—if not all—of the procurement and reporting within their service delivery facility.

Before the certificate program was developed, recently graduated students—who were new to the practical functions of healthcare service delivery—usually entered the workforce with limited understanding of supply chain management concepts and did not have the skills required to manage supply chains. Facilities were forced to spend extra time and money to provide on-the-job training for new hires, diverting essential human resources away from treating patients. Furthermore, hiring replacements for departing employees would result in a recurring drain on time and financial capital.

In November 2011, with the USAID | DELIVER PROJECT and Supply Chain Management System (SCMS), the Tanzanian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) conducted an

initial needs and opportunities assessment for pre-service training in supply chains. The assessment team visited seven schools of health throughout the country; they spoke with coordinators, instructors, and academic leaders regarding their interest in, and the necessity of, developing a standardized curriculum module to address supply chain management. The idea of pre-service training was well received. As a district hospital medical officer in Mvumi commented, “You mean you want to include supply chain management in the pre-service instead of all the seminars that are expensive but do not train everybody? Ah, that is a great idea.”

Following positive meetings with each institution, partners from the MOHSW, USAID | DELIVER PROJECT, SCMS, and the academic institutions developed a 10 session learning module; comprising a lecturer’s guide, student syllabus, relevant worksheets, activities, and other tools that will be incorporated into the curriculums. Nineteen lecturers received an orientation to supply chain training and adult learning.

The new supply chain management curriculum was successfully integrated into the bachelor of pharmacy training at the Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUHAS) and the Institute of Allied Health Sciences (IAHS). The first graduating class in 2013 included students who had completed their programs with the supply chain module—a total of 40 pharmacists and 35 pharmaceutical technicians. In 2014, 26 pharmaceutical technicians graduated with supply chain skills. In future years, all students in the bachelor of pharmacy program are expected to have supply chain training as part of their coursework.

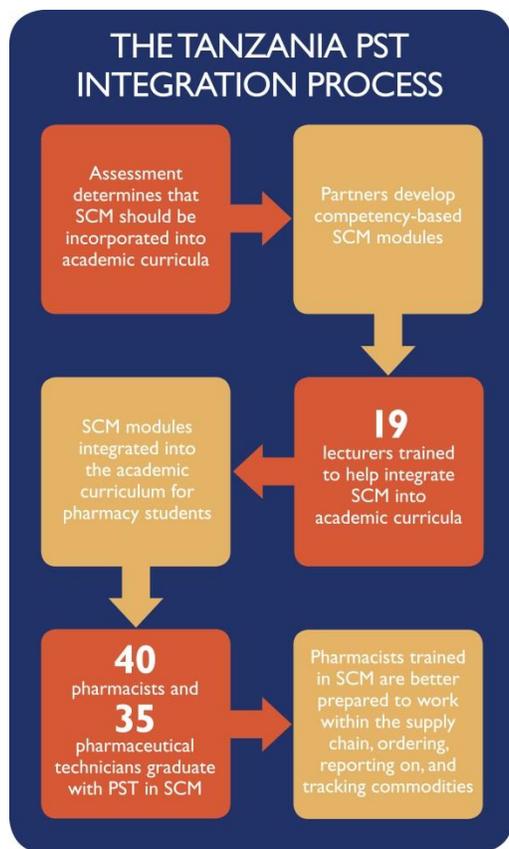
The USAID | DELIVER PROJECT and SCMS are now collaborating with the St. Luke Foundation at the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centres (KCMC) School of Pharmacy and St. John University in Dodoma to integrate supply chain management into their diploma programs for the pharmaceutical technician course and the bachelor of pharmacy course, respectively.

“We learned about many things which are helping me now,” David said. The lecturers agree, and add that the students’ knowledge is helpful to employers as well as employees. “According to my contacts in hospitals, there are students who went to our school last year, and they handle the stores better than those who did not go through the training,” one said. Another adds, “We have several students at a hospital, and their supervisors greatly appreciate them. They have told us, ‘Our other workers, they don’t know the skills that these new graduates know. They can manage stores more easily with that previous experience.’”

Successfully including pre-service training in higher-learning institutions is just one step toward ensuring future commodity security in Tanzania. Next steps include developing a monitoring and evaluation framework—focusing on service delivery and performance—to assess the impact of Tanzania’s pre-service training program. As more universities incorporate pre-service training programs into their health and pharmacy curricula, new



Peter Njalale, head of the pharmacy program at Muhimbili University, leads a discussion on the success of the pre-service training program.



cadres of front-line health workers, well-versed in supply chain management, will enter the workforce; contributing to reduced stockouts, better-quality service delivery for patients, and improved health outcomes throughout Tanzania. Peter Njalale, the head of the pharmacy program at Muhimbili University, is optimistic that pre-service training is an essential and valuable approach to increase service delivery and improved patient access to drugs and other commodities. He says, "...we are entering another era. The workers know how to solve these problems. If you know the concepts, you know how to manage stores."

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