

ZAMBIA

# Increasing storage capacity to ensure product availability for patients

*The PopART study, conducted by the Zambia AIDS Related Tuberculosis Project (ZAMBART) and other partners and funded by the National Institutes of Health HIV Prevention Trials Network, examines the impact of universal HIV testing and treatment on HIV incidence. Results from the study anticipated an exponential increase in the number of patients receiving treatment, resulting in an increase in commodities and the space required to store them. Prefabricated storage units were identified as best suited to address the new and immediate storage demand.*



Storing commodities in a new pre-fabricated warehouse.

In 2013, Supply Chain Management System (SCMS), a project under PEPFAR administered by USAID, installed six pre-fabricated storage units in Lusaka and Southern provinces to assist in the ongoing implementation of the PopART study. SCMS was requested to install an additional 11 units in 2014, with each province in Zambia receiving at least one new storage unit. These prefabricated units can be assembled rapidly and equipped with air conditioning and pallets to ensure health commodities are stored in optimal conditions.

This infrastructure investment is bringing much needed health commodities to the district level and closer to service delivery points, which allows the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health to provide better health services to the people of Zambia. In 2014, USAID’s investment in prefabricated storage units to aid Zambia totaled approximately \$245,000. They have proven



A Medical Stores for Life truck being unloaded at a new pre-fabricated storage unit.

essential to meet the commodity storage demands in recipient districts.

“We are now able to accommodate a wider range of products and keep up to three months’ worth of stock. This will help us serve more patients,” said Kangwa Mulenga, Kalulushi district pharmacist.

With 20 storage units installed in the last four years, storage capacity at district and facility levels has increased a total of 2520m<sup>2</sup>. In the past, many health facilities could only receive a limited quantity of commodities because of storage constraints. With the new storage facilities, health centers can store up to three months of stock, ensuring consistent product availability to meet patients’ needs, even if deliveries are delayed or consumption increases. Monthly deliveries of commodities from the central medical stores can now be stored appropriately. Commodities are also more secure and better organized, making them easier to locate and dispense.

SCMS continues to work closely with the Government of Zambia to meet growing patient needs by providing technical assistance and procurement services to develop and manage a secure, reliable, cost-effective and sustainable supply chain.

