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# **Health Policy and Systems Strengthening Program - Malawi**

Quarter 1, Year 1 Report  
September – December 2011

**January 2012**

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# **Health Policy and Systems Strengthening Program - Malawi**

## **Year One Quarter I Report**

September – December 2011

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The Health Systems Strengthening Program is a technical assistance program to support the Government of Malawi. The project is implemented by Abt Associates, Inc. in partnership with Salephera Consulting, Ltd. and Prime Health Consulting and Services, and is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), under Cooperative Agreement AID-612-A-11-00002.

### **DISCLAIMER:**

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## Introduction

The purpose of USAID Malawi's Health Policy and Systems Strengthening (HPSS) Program is to provide technical assistance to Malawi's Ministry of Health (MOH) in support of **improved policies, management and leadership, and fiscal responsibility**, in a collaborative effort to strengthen Malawi's health care system. HPSS is the third sector of USAID Malawi's flagship Support to Service Delivery – Integrated (SSD-I) Program<sup>1</sup>; all HPSS strategies and activities are designed to complement and support the service delivery and social and behavior change interventions of Sectors I and II of the program.

HPSS is implemented by Abt Associates, Inc., in collaboration with Malawian partners, Salephera Consulting, Ltd. and Prime Health Consulting and Services. The project team will provide targeted technical support to the MOH at national, zonal and district levels to accomplish the following six results:

1. Increased and coordinated advocacy for and implementation of evidence-based policies that affect priority areas in all United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Malawi projects as appropriate
2. Strengthened strategic leadership and management capacity of MOH
3. Improved and strengthened zonal supervision structures of the MOH
4. Improved leadership and management of HRH
5. Improved decentralized management of district health services
6. Strengthened health financing mechanisms, financial planning, and budget execution capability at national, zonal, and district levels for sustainability.

## Overall Program Progress for the Quarter

During Quarter I of Year I, Abt Associates and their Malawian partners began project implementation for the five-year HPSS program. Program start-up activities consisted of workplan compilation and review, extensive stakeholder consultations, planning for activity implementation, recruitment and hiring, and activities to lay the ground-work for successful in-country operations.

**Workplanning** – The HPSS start-up team was in country during October and November 2011 to work closely with SSD-I, local stakeholders and USAID/Malawi to shape the Year I workplan according to local priorities and current MOH needs. The workplan was submitted on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and a revised workplan, incorporating comments from the AOTR and various USAID/Malawi technical leads was submitted on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The project team is awaited comments and/or approval of the revised workplan.

**Stakeholder consultation** – As a health system strengthening project, HPSS will be working hand-in-hand with MOH colleagues to strengthen MOH systems and capacity. This level of partnership requires extensive engagement with these counterparts to ensure the project is supporting the most pressing health system needs and is being responsive to the both USAID Malawi and the Government of Malawi. Table I details the consultations that have been undertaken thus far with key MOH counterparts and other important stakeholders.

**Activity implementation** – While the program team awaits workplan approval, they have begun planning for three critical activities: performance based incentives (PBI) and development of a capacity building plan in support of the Malawi Health Sector Strategic Plan 2011 – 2016; and facilitating support by the USAID Regional office for the HRH Strategic Plan review process.

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<sup>1</sup> Sectors I and II of the SSD-I Program are the Support for Service Delivery Excellence (SSD-E) and the Social and Behavioral Change (SBCC) projects, respectively.

- **PBI** – The Acting CoP, Takondwa Mwase, has engaged with other individuals and institutions planning to undertake PBI activities in Malawi, namely, SSD-E, the USAID-funded global Health Systems 20/20 Project, KfW, GIZ, and program leads at USAID, to ensure coordination of HPSS efforts with others in the health sector. The project team has produced a concept note in collaboration with SSD-E and Health Systems 20/20 that proposes a process to assess the feasibility of PBI within SSD-I target districts, design the schemes and begin implementation on a pilot basis. HPSS will leverage HS20/20 resources for the PBI feasibility assessment, which will help to inform the way forward for both the HPSS and SSD-E programs. The PBI feasibility assessment is currently scheduled for February/March 2012.
- **MOH Capacity Building Plan** – HPSS was approached by the Malawi Global Fund Coordinator to take on an urgent technical assistance request. The MOH, as the Principle Recipient of the Global Fund Grant, is required to submit an MOH Capacity Building Plan, aligned to the Malawi Health Sector Strategic Plan, 2011-2016; release of certain funds is contingent on completion and submission of this plan. The Capacity Building Plan will help guide Global Fund expenditures on building capacity of ministry staff at central level. Upon workplan approval, Abt Associates will mobilize a Senior Capacity Building Advisor to take on this piece of work. The Senior Capacity Building Advisor is engaged in USAID activities for both SHOPS and HPSS, therefore, HPSS would leverage her TDY to Malawi, which is already planned under SHOPS, to make cost effective use of program resources.
- **HRH Strategic Plan development/review** – The Acting COP, Takondwa Mwase has been engaged with the MOH, Department of Human Resources for Health, the USAID/Malawi and USAID Regional Office in Pretoria on the proposed support by the USAID Regional Office in Pretoria to update the Malawi HRH Strategic Plan process. Background documents relating to this activity have been gathered by Takondwa Mwase and sent to USAID/Malawi, USAID Regional Office in Pretoria and HRAA ECSA Project. A 2-3 day TDY is being planned by USAID Regional Office or HRAA ECSA project to assess the situation and develop clear terms of reference and next steps.

**Table 1. Matrix of Stakeholder Consultations**

Person	Position/Department	Month/Year	Discussion	Outcome
Mr. S. Samute	Principal Secretary, MOH	December 2011	Courtesy Call and briefing on SSD-I Project	Successfully briefed PS on HPSS component of the project.
Dr. Anne Phoya	Director SWAp, MOH	November 2011	Courtesy Call	Project will continue to engage the SWAp secretariat after workplan is approved and will be in regular communication
John Chiphwanya	National Malaria Control Program, MOH	November 2011	Courtesy Call	Project will further engage NMCP after workplan is approved
Mr. S. Ligomeka, Keswell Dakamawu, Hastings Bota	P.S., Director, and Deputy Director, MOLGRD	November 2011	Courtesy Call	Project will further engage MOLGRD after workplan is approved
Mr. Chris Moyo	Deputy Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, MOH	November 2011, December 2011, and January 2012	Courtesy Call and update on HMIS priorities	Project will further engage CMED after workplan is approved
Mr Y. Hassan	Director of Finance and Administration, MOH	December 2011	Courtesy Call and update on MOH priorities in terms of general management and financial management capacities and systems	Project will further engage DOFA after workplan is approved
Mr. J. Kalilangwe	Chief HRH Planner, MOH	November 2011, December 2011, and January 2012	Courtesy Call, request to support MOH Functional Review, MOH HRH Strategic Plan review, MOH HRH Deployment Policy and HRH Development Policy	Project will further engage HR Department after workplan is approved
	KfW/Norway/ Options	November 2011 and December 2011	Coordination on PBI activities	Project will further engage Options on PBI design activities.
Ms. J. Ilse	GIZ	December 2011	Courtesy Call and update on GIZ support to the Malawi Health Sector in particular on HRH and Zonal Support Supervision	Project will further engage GIZ after workplan is approved
Dr. Dorothy Namate	Global Fund HSS Project	December 2011	Request for Assistance with MOH Capacity Building Plan	Capacity Building Plan included in HPSS workplan, waiting for approval
	HRH Technical working Group	December 2011	Quarterly meeting and Adhoc committee meeting on HRH Road map TORs	HPSS was introduced to HRH Technical Working Group as a resource
Mr. Dan Wendo	SSD-E	December 2011 and January 2012	Joint workplan activities review, discussions on PBI concept note and timelines	Deeper understanding of project objective, linkages between the projects and activity synergies and responsibilities
Mr H. Njati, Mr. J. Chizonga, Mr. J. Mazalale	Director, HPPD; Health Planning Officers, MOH	January 2012	Courtesy call and briefing on HPSS project, update on NHA activities, PBI and health financing strategy development	Project will further engage HPPD after workplan is approved
Mr. S. Chuti	Chief Planning and Economic	January 2012	Courtesy call and briefing on HPSS Project,	Project will further engage HR Department

	Analyst, National Local Government Finance Committee		update on the current status of financial management of local councils and role of HPSS project in supporting financial management	after workplan is approved
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## Challenges, Solutions, and Actions taken

The Year I workplan for the HPSS Program has not yet been approved, therefore project implementation has only partially begun.

The project has been particularly challenged in the area of recruitment and hiring of qualified, senior professional staff to fill the project's key positions. Abt is now poised to make offers to candidates identified to fill vacant key positions – Chief of Party, Senior Health Financing Advisor, Advisor for Policy and Human Resources for Health, Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor and Advisor for Capacity Building and Civil Society Engagement. We will be seeking USAID/Malawi approval for these candidates in the near future, as well as proposing some revisions to the top position descriptions, in order to make optimal use of the skills and expertise of our outstanding pool of candidates.

## Management Issues

- **Registration of the Organization** –is under process through Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC). It is hoped to be completed by mid-February.
- **Office Space** - The office space has been identified in the 4th Floor of Kang'ombe building. The tenancy agreement was signed with Frank Knight in December for a move-in date of March 1, 2012.
- **Procurements:**
  - IT equipment (server, firewall, computers, LCD project and peripherals) have been procured through HQ and are being configured. Shipment to Malawi is scheduled for February, in time for move into new office space.
  - IT equipment (PBX, printers, fax, UPSs, mobile phones and peripherals) are being purchased locally. Procurement is being timed with office move.
  - Office furniture and equipment are being purchased locally. Procurement is being timed with office move.
  - 4x4 vehicle – PIB advertisement closes on Feb 4<sup>th</sup>. Procurement is anticipated for end of February. Meanwhile, a hired vehicle is being used for our daily operations.
- **Administration** - Orientation for the Director of F&A is scheduled in late January of Q2. Training will be held in Lusaka, Zambia where Abt Associates has a similar project which is already fully established.

## Update of the PMP

The PMP for the HPSS Program has not yet been approved.

## Planned Activities for Next Quarter

Table 2 lists the anticipated project activities for the next quarter, based on most current submission of the workplan. Please note, HPSS will await USAID/Malawi approval of workplan before initiating these activities.



**Table 2. HPSS Quarter Two, Year One Activity Matrix**

Number	Activity	Activity Timeframe	Progress/Outputs in Quarter 2
<b>Objective 1: Increased and coordinated advocacy for and implementation of evidence-based policies that affect priority areas in all USAID/Malawi projects as appropriate</b>			
<b>1.1 Support and strengthen policy development and coordinated advocacy</b>			
1.1.1	<u>Activity:</u> Collaborative review of existing and proposed policies that impede efficient and effective health service delivery <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> COP, Health Finance and HRH Advisor	December 2011 – June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force to review policies established</li> <li>• Policy analysis protocol reviewed and approved by task force</li> </ul>
1.1.2	<u>Activity:</u> Revise and finalize Malawi draft Health Policy <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> COP, Health Finance and HRH Advisor	December 2011 – September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Health Policy community consultations undertaken</li> </ul>
1.1.3	<u>Activity:</u> Support targeted, in-depth policy analysis and development of priority policies <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> COP with assistance from HPSS and SSD-E technical experts	January 2012 – September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One policy, in addition to the Health Policy, identified for action</li> </ul>
<b>1.2 Strengthened use of HMIS data for decision-making</b>			
1.2.1	<u>Activity:</u> Develop data analysis and use training materials for policy makers and program managers <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> M&E Advisor	March 2012 – July 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOH/HPSS consensus on training material needs</li> </ul>
1.2.3	<u>Activity:</u> Support the MOH to produce data quality/validation training materials for the facility level <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> M&E Advisor	February 2012 – June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Data validation guidelines ready for MOH review</li> </ul>
1.2.6	<u>Activity:</u> Work with the Ministry to identify one virtual knowledge management database for health sector policy documents and other relevant information <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> M&E Advisor	January 2012 – September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus on one appropriate information sharing database for the MOH</li> </ul>
<b>1.3 Support to the National Malaria Control Program</b>			
1.3.1	<u>Activity:</u> Support remuneration and activities of NMCP M&E Advisor <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor to the NMCP	December 2011-Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E Advisor seconded to NMCP</li> <li>• NMCP Secretariat functioning normally</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2: Strengthened strategic leadership and management capacity of MOH</b>			
<b>2.1 Strengthen capacity for management and leadership in pre-service and in-service education</b>			
2.1.1	<u>Activity:</u> Rapid identification of management and leadership capacity building priorities through desk review and stakeholder engagement Assess institutional and individual capacity within the MOH and at the zonal level <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> Senior M&L Advisor	January 2011 – March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritized list of management and leadership capacity building needs</li> <li>• Project strategy for addressing capacity building needs</li> </ul>
2.1.4	<u>Activity:</u> Develop project management and leadership coaching and training materials <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> Senior M&L Advisor	March 2012 – October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin training materials review and adaptation</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3: Improved and strengthened zonal supervision structures of the MOH</b>			
<b>3.1 Assess supervisory systems and support recommended improvements</b>			
3.1.1	<u>Activity:</u> Conduct an assessment of supervision functions, structures, processes, and capacity at the National, Zonal and District levels to assess performance of current supervision system and proposed targeted improvements (feeds into R5) <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> HRH Advisor/ Senior M&L Advisor	December 2011-June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive Supervision taskforce constituted</li> </ul>
3.1.2	<u>Activity:</u> Clarify the role of the Zonal Health Support Offices in Monitoring and strengthening technical performance and its links to District and Central zones <u>Party(s) responsible:</u> HRH Advisor/ Senior M&L Advisor	January 2012 – June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National and Zonal staff engaged in discussions to clarify roles</li> </ul>

Number	Activity	Activity Timeframe	Progress/Outputs in Quarter 2
<b>Objective 4: Improved leadership and management of HRH</b>			
<b>4.1 Support the GOM to develop and support the workforce based on HRH Road Map and the HSSP</b>			
4.1.1	Activity: Engage the HR TWG, the USAID Health Team and other relevant partners to build consensus on priority activities for Year One Party(s) responsible: HRH Advisor, Senior M&L Advisor	Jan 2012 –February 2012	• Consensus on a list of priority actions for Year One
4.1.2	Activity: Strengthen Performance Appraisal System Party(s) responsible: HRH Advisor, Senior M&L Advisor	December 2012- Yr 2	• Clarity on donor roles and plans for performance appraisal strengthening detailed
<b>4.2 Support the Global Fund Secretariat to develop and cost the HSSP Capacity Building Plan</b>			
4.2.1	Activity: Develop and cost the HSSP Capacity Building Fund for the Global Fund Secretariat Party(s) responsible: Capacity Building Advisor (STTA) and Health Finance Advisor	January 2012 – April 2012	• Draft costed Capacity Building Plan developed and ready for MOH approval
<b>Objective 5: Improved decentralized management of district health services</b>			
<b>5.1 Assess and strengthen decentralized management capacity at district level</b>			
5.1.1	Activity: Build on lessons from prior management strengthening efforts and identify quick wins for decentralized management strengthening Party(s) responsible: District Level Team Supervisor, Salephera Consulting	November 2011-January 2012	• Lessons from previous capacity building efforts documented • List of priority, preliminary interventions
<b>5.2 Strengthen CSOs' and community representatives' engagement in the District Implementation Plan development process</b>			
5.2.1	Activity: Participate in DIP process in 1-2 Districts, provide TA to link DIP to budget formulation and support the use of strategic information Party(s) responsible: Health Finance Advisor	February 2012 – September 2012	• Participate in DIP process in 1-2 districts
<b>Objective 6: Strengthened health financing mechanisms, financial planning, and budget execution capability at national, zonal, and district levels for sustainability</b>			
<b>6.1 Strengthen district-level financial management through targeted trainings and on-the-job coaching</b>			
6.1.1	Activity: Identify areas for HPSS action through document review and stakeholder engagement Party(s) responsible: Director, Salephera Consulting	January 2011– April 2012	• Rapid assessment of financial management capacity building needs at the district level
6.1.2	Activity: Coordinate with other partners contributing to district-level financial management strengthening Party(s) responsible: Director, Salephera Consulting	February 2012 – March 2012	• Joint workplan for supporting all districts in financial management in Malawi
6.1.3	Activity: Prepare capacity building materials for district level financial management strengthening Party(s) responsible: Director, Salephera Consulting	March 2012 – April 2012	• Begin training materials review and adaptation
6.1.4	Activity: Assign financial management coaches to districts Party(s) responsible: Director, Salephera Consulting	February 2012 -April 2012	• Financial Management coaches hired
<b>6.2 Strengthen planning for health sector financing through strategic planning</b>			
6.2.1	Activity: Conduct health finance strategy situational analysis Party(s) responsible: Health Financing Advisor	December 2011 – March 2012	• Financing mechanisms final report with recommendations validated
<b>6.3 Coordinate with Health Systems 20/20 on ongoing NHA institutionalization activities</b>			
6.3.1	Activity: NHA Coordination Party(s) responsible: Health Finance Advisor	January 2012 – September 2012	• NHA Institutionalization Tools archived
<b>6.4 Incentivize system performance through PBF schemes</b>			
6.4.1	Activity: Coordinate with Health Systems 20/20 and SSD-E on PBI feasibility study Party(s) responsible: Health Financing Advisor	February 2012-May 2012	• Partner consultations on PBI
6.4.2	Activity: Design pilot PBF scheme to reward good performance Party(s) responsible: Health Financing Advisor	January 2012 – June 2012	• Partner consultations on PBI