USAID MEDICINES, TECHNOLOGIES, AND PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES (MTaPS) PROGRAM

Improved Access. Improved Services. Better Health Outcomes.

Photo by Afghan Eyes/Jawad Jalali

MTaPS objectives

1. Pharmaceutical-sector governance strengthened

2. Institutional and human resource capacity for pharmaceutical management and services increased, including regulation of medical products

3. Availability and use of pharmaceutical information for decision making increased and global learning agenda advanced

4. Pharmaceutical-sector financing, including resource allocation and use, optimized

5. Pharmaceutical services, including product availability and patient-centered care, to achieve health outcomes improved

The MTaPS Program is from the American People through USAID

Based on its decades of expertise in strengthening health systems to save lives and improve the health of people in low- and middle-income countries, USAID supports better governance and integrated, innovative, and sustainable strategies to strengthen pharmaceutical systems.

Funded by the US Agency for International Development and led by Management Sciences for Health (MSH), the goal of the five-year USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program (2018–2023) is to help low- and middle-income countries strengthen their pharmaceutical systems to ensure sustainable access to and appropriate use of safe, effective, quality-assured, and affordable essential medicines and pharmaceutical services.

STRENGTHENING PHARMACEUTICAL-SECTOR GOVERNANCE

mproving governance throughout pharmaceutical systems contributes to more effective, efficient, accountable, participatory, and transparent institutions, which in turn leads to more resilient and sustainable health systems.

Attaining the goals of universal health coverage—for which medicines are crucial—requires clear policies, robust legislation, and sound management practices supported by good governance. This premise is relevant to pharmaceutical systems, which are particularly vulnerable to corruption due to the economic value of medicines (approximately 25% of the total health care expenditure in low- and middle-income countries, with nearly half of out-of-pocket expenditures attributable to pharmaceuticals)[1] and the multiplicity of stakeholders.[2] Governance plays a critical role in reducing opportunities for corruption and mitigating other system inefficiencies. It also shapes the ability of the health system to respond to challenges and institute reforms.

USAID MTaPS assists countries in strengthening pharmaceutical-sector governance, which is a key objective of USAID's Vision for Health Systems Strengthening for the medical products health system function,[3] and achieving the global sustainable development goal of improving access to essential medicines and health technologies through:

- Increasing transparency and accountability throughout the pharmaceutical system
- Improving and enforcing evidence-based medicines policies, laws, regulations, guidelines, norms, and standards
- Increasing stakeholder engagement and empowerment, including civil society and consumers
- Working with country stakeholders to identify areas in need of reform in the pharmaceutical sector

MTaPS helps countries:

- Conduct data transparency surveys, develop or improve disclosure and transparency policies and procedures, and improve and monitor mechanisms for disseminating and sharing public information (e.g., prices of publicly procured medicines)

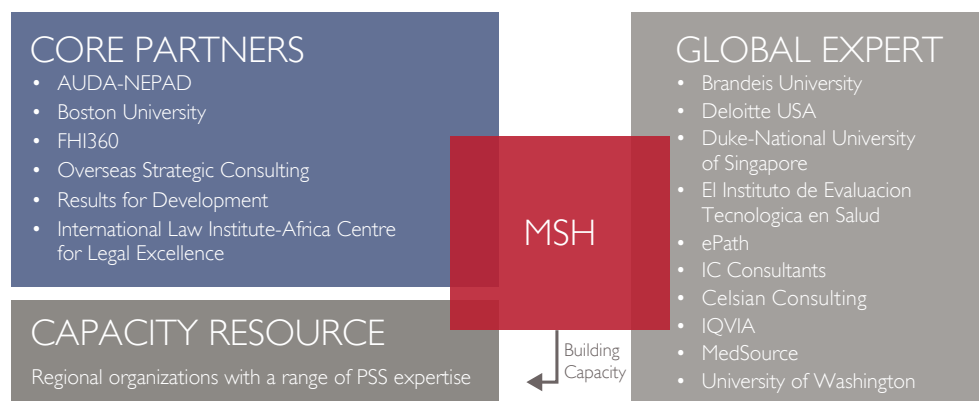1   Lu Y et al. 2011. *The World Medicines Situation* 2011: Medicine Expenditures. 3rd ed. Geneva: WHO.
2   Cohen JC, Mrazek MF, Hawkins L. 2007. Corruption and pharmaceuticals. In: Campos JE, Pradhan S, editors. The Many Faces of Corruption: Tracking Vulnerabilities at the Sector Level. Washington, DC: World Bank.
3   USAID (2015). USAID's Vision for Health Systems Strengthening (2015–2019).

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- Evaluate, strengthen, and monitor the performance of governance bodies such as pharmaceutical tender boards and audit committees and help them to adapt and implement model accountability frameworks and tools, including terms of reference that clarify roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest policies, and channels for sharing information
- Institute auditable track and trace systems for publicly procured medicines and related finances and work with government agencies, multistakeholder groups, and civil society organizations (CSOs) to develop and implement tools for identifying and reporting corruption and fraud threats, establish whistleblowing and complaint systems, and build capacity to analyze findings and manage risks
- Develop or improve policies, legislation, and guidelines that support the country's priorities and goals of health programs such as TB and maternal, newborn, and child health; convene stakeholder consultations that include civil society and gender and minority representation; and formulate and oversee implementation plans
- Assess mandates, clarify roles and responsibilities, and develop and implement risk-based plans to build the capacity of national and local regulatory authorities and other agencies to oversee and enforce policies, laws, and regulations that support access to effective medicines and protect patients from harm

- Develop toolkits and build the capacity of stakeholder groups, including civil society and patient groups (e.g., HIV and TB) to advocate for reforms, greater transparency, and effective government oversight of the pharmaceutical sector; engage in policy and legislative dialogue; and convene public forums to monitor the progress of reforms
- Map stakeholders, work with existing CSOs to form consumer groups, create opportunities, and develop platforms for greater citizen and consumer engagement in policy discussions and social accountability initiatives, including monitoring the country's progress toward the sustainable development goal of improved access to essential medicines and health technologies
- Mobilize stakeholders and create coalitions to identify and advocate for needed reforms for strengthening pharmaceutical systems and country self-reliance, build local capacity to lead stakeholders in evidence-based policy analysis and planning, and implement improvement plans

The MTaPS Consortium

Led by Management Sciences for Health (MSH), the MTaPS consortium comprises core partners, global experts, and capacity resource partners. Core partners and global experts are listed below. Capacity resource partners include local organizations with regional or country-based knowledge, technical expertise, and networks (African Health Economics and Policy Association, African Collaborating Centre for Pharmacovigilance and Surveillance, Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network, Kilimanjaro School of Pharmacy, Muhimbili University, Pharmaceutical Systems Africa, U3 SystemsWork, and the University of Ibadan) and other partners (Columbus Consulting, Empower Swiss, and Softworks).

CORE PARTNERS
- AUDA-NEPAD
- Boston University
- FHI360
- Overseas Strategic Consulting
- Results for Development
- International Law Institute-Africa Centre for Legal Excellence

MSH

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- IC Consultants
- Celsian Consulting
- IQVIA
- MedSource
- University of Washington

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