

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

Improved Access. Improved Services. Better Health Outcomes.



FISCAL YEAR 2019 QUARTER I REPORT

October–December 2018

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Program Name:	USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program	
Reporting Period:	Fiscal year (FY) 2019, Quarter I (October 2018–December 2018)	
Activity Start Date and End Date:	September 20, 2018–September 19, 2023	
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	Management Sciences for Health	
Contract Number:	7200AA18C00074	
USAID MTaPS Partners:	Core Partners:	Boston University, FHI360, Overseas Strategic Consulting, Results for Development, International Law Institute-Africa Centre for Legal Excellence, NEPAD
	Global Expert Partners:	Brandeis University, Deloitte USA, Duke-National University of Singapore, El Instituto de Evaluacion Technologica en Salud, ePath, IC Consultants, Imperial Health Sciences, MedSource, QuintilesIMS, University of Washington
	Capacity Resource Partners:	African Health Economics and Policy Association, Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network, U3 SystemsWork, University of Ibadan, African Collaborating Centre for Pharmacovigilance and Surveillance, Kilimanjaro School of Pharmacy, Muhimbili University, Pharmaceutical Systems Africa
	Collaborators:	International Pharmaceutical Federation, Howard University, University of Notre Dame, WHO, World Bank

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AMR	antimicrobial resistance
AMS	antimicrobial stewardship
CGD	Center for Global Development
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CPD	Country Project Director
DOH	Department of Health
GFF	Global Financing Facility
GHSA	Global Health Security Agenda
HTA	health technology assessment
IDDS	Infectious Disease Detection and Surveillance
IPC	infection prevention and control
LGU	local government unit
LMICs	low- and middle-income countries
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MNCH	maternal, newborn, and child health
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MTaPS	Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services
PSM	procurement and supply chain management
RHSC	Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition
SIAPS	Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services
SOW	scope of work
UHC	universal health coverage
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

Funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and led by Management Sciences for Health (MSH), the purpose of the five-year USAID MTaPS Program (2018–2023) is to provide pharmaceutical system strengthening assistance for sustained improvements in health system performance and to advance USAID’s goals of preventing child and maternal deaths, controlling the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and combatting infectious disease threats, as well as expanding essential health coverage.

GOAL

The goal the USAID MTaPS Program 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, vaccines, and other health technologies and pharmaceutical services.

USAID MTAPS APPROACH TO STRENGTHENING PHARMACEUTICAL SYSTEMS

USAID awarded the USAID MTaPS Program to enable low- and middle-income countries to strengthen their pharmaceutical systems to ensure sustainable access to and appropriate use of safe, effective, quality-assured, and affordable essential medicines, vaccines, and other health technologies and pharmaceutical services. In this context, “access” refers specifically to affordability, acceptability (or satisfaction), geographical accessibility, availability, and equity (the extent to which pharmaceutical systems deal fairly with population subgroups differentiated along various parameters). “Use” refers to prescribing, dispensing (or sale or supply to the user), and consumption (or end use).

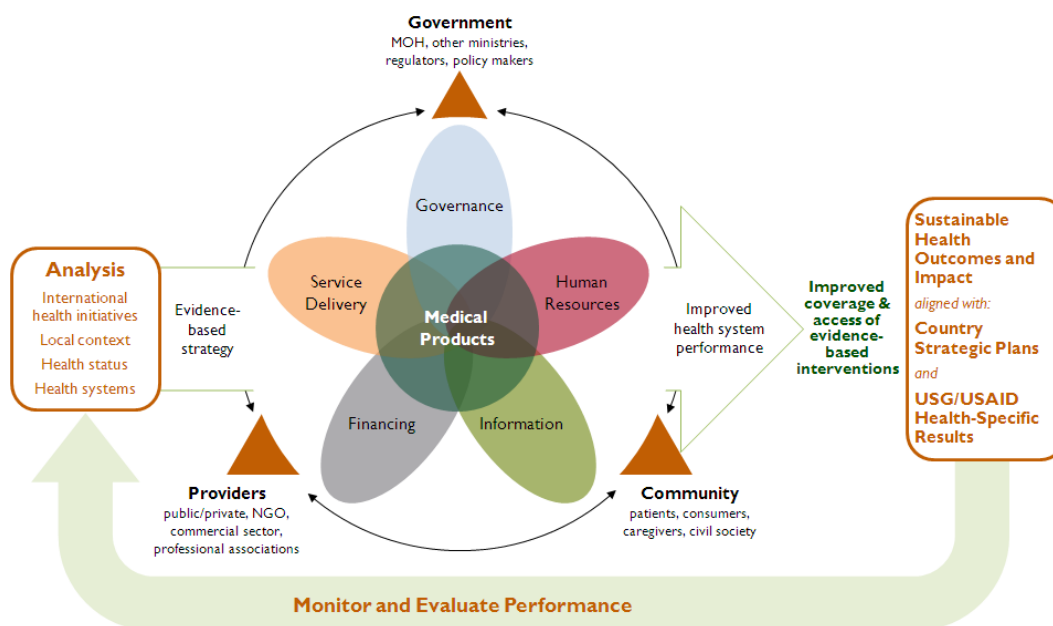


Figure 1. USAID MTaPS’ pharmaceutical systems strengthening approach

The program’s theory of change is based on USAID’s Vision for Pharmaceutical Systems Strengthening (PSS),¹ which posits six functions of health systems that must be strengthened to achieve sustained and equitable access to essential, high-quality services: human resources, health finance, health governance, health information, medical products/vaccines/technologies, and service delivery. USAID MTaPS has adapted this framework to the pharmaceutical sector as per figure 1, which illustrates a comprehensive set of dynamic relationships among a health system’s functions with an overarching focus on the role medical products are expected to play in improving health system performance.

Figure 1 forms the basis for the USAID MTaPS theory of change, which hypothesizes that to improve health and the performance and sustainability of pharmaceutical systems, a system’s human resources, financing, governance, information, service delivery, and products must all be strengthened. Figure 1 further illustrates that governments, providers, and community members all play pivotal roles in bolstering these system functions, and the entire strategy must be driven by evidence-based decision making to achieve its goals. When all of these components come together, countries will achieve sustained improvements in coverage and access to evidence-based pharmaceutical interventions and services. Figure 1 also serves as the basis for the program’s monitoring, learning, and evaluation (MEL) framework, with the feedback loop at the bottom (monitor and evaluate performance) providing the basis for the program’s learning agenda, in which new insights from analyses feed into an evolving understanding of the situation and drive new or amended evidence-based strategies.

The program further hypothesizes that one must look at what binds the different functions of a pharmaceutical system together rather than focusing on improving the performance of a single function. Figure 2 illustrates elements of the underlying fabric that transcend pharmaceutical system functions and must be addressed to achieve progress against the six pharmaceutical systems strengthening functions and, ultimately, sustained access to and use of pharmaceuticals. Components of the fabric include country-led coordination, innovation and sustainability, optimizing allocation, integration, strong nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and strengthening existing systems.

USAID MTAPS OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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 desired health outcomes improved

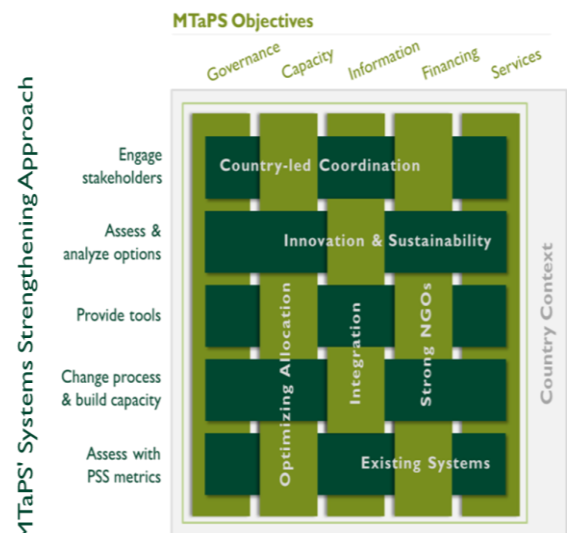


Figure 2. MTaPS’ approach to strengthening the pharmaceutical systems fabric

¹ US Agency for International Development. USAID’s vision for health systems strengthening, 2015–2019. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/HSS-Vision.pdf>.

The USAID MTaPS approach to strengthening sustainable pharmaceutical systems will build country ownership and self-reliance, drawing on the following guiding principles:

- Utilize a systems strengthening approach
- Optimize allocation and use of resources for medicines and related functions in health systems
- Build on and strengthen existing systems
- Support integration
- Build/strengthen the capacity of local, nongovernmental organizations
- Support country-led coordination
- Provide global technical leadership

ABOUT THIS REPORT

We are pleased to present our performance report for fiscal year 2019 quarter I (October–December 2018). This report summarizes significant achievements, key challenges, program performance, and adaptation in response to new demands and lessons learned. The report is organized by health area, objective, region, and country.

While no technical activities took place this quarter, MTaPS staff worked closely with USAID, MTaPS partners, and in-country stakeholders to define scopes of work, conduct scoping visits, develop work plans, and set up country offices. Scoping visits took place to the following countries: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Philippines, Senegal, and Tanzania.

By the end of the first quarter, MTaPS had received \$21,797,800 in core funding from the following: Office of Health Systems, Cross Bureau, Global Health Security Agenda, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, and Asia Regional Bureau. Mission funding of \$3,000,000 was secured during the quarter from the following countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Mozambique, and the Philippines. Refer to the *Financial Management* section for additional information.

PROGRESS BY HEALTH AREA

MATERNAL, NEWBORN, AND CHILD HEALTH

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

During this quarter, USAID MTaPS held a series of meetings with the maternal, newborn, and child health (MNCH) team at USAID to brief them on the USAID MTaPS Program and to start discussions on the content of the fiscal year 2019 MNCH work plan. Discussions were also held with the Director of Task Order 4 MNCH of the Global Health Supply Chain Procurement and Supply Management (PSM) project to explore potential joint activities. Initial drafts of the work plan were developed to guide discussions.

USAID MTaPS staff visited the Global Financing Facility (GFF) secretariat offices in Washington, DC in December. This staff held discussions with the secretariat staff on the transition of a pharmaceutical advisor's secondment at the GFF secretariat that was funded by USAID and is now ending. USAID MTaPS staff presented to the secretariat and at USAID on the status of activities conducted under the secondment.

MNCH-FUNDED
COUNTRIES
Bangladesh

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Finalize work plan	Engage partners in brainstorming on activities and their potential involvement Finalize draft and submit to USAID	By end of January
Develop MNCH fact sheet	The fact sheet will provide an overview of USAID MTaPS and the MNCH's contributions to the program, for USAID Missions, Ministries of Health, implementing partners, and other key stakeholders	By end of January
Start the revision of the RMNCH quantification guide	Request review and comments from key partners Draft revisions	By end of quarter
Finalize GFF transition	Develop scope of work for commodity management support at the GFF secretariat Finalize the package of documents on quality with the World Bank pharma and procurement teams Finalize contributions to the GFF orientation document on investment case development Finalize support to the local procurement in Liberia either as the framework agreement mechanism is set up or by handing it over to a consultant to finalize	By end of quarter
Participate in the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (RHSC) annual meeting in Nepal	Attend Maternal Health Supplies Caucus meeting, participate in Interagency Supply Chain Group meetings representing GFF, and present on the MSH RHSC Innovation grant oxytocin work	March 2019

GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY AGENDA

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

In October 2018, USAID provided funding to the USAID MTaPS Program to work in 10 countries in support of USAID's Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA)/antimicrobial resistance (AMR) objectives. USAID MTaPS' mandate is to provide technical assistance to partner countries to strengthen systems and practices for infection prevention and control (IPC) and to optimize the use of antimicrobial medicines through antimicrobial stewardship (AMS). USAID has also asked USAID MTaPS to strengthen multisectoral coordination for AMR containment.

Between October 2018 and March 2019, USAID MTaPS is expected to conduct scoping visits to all 10 assigned countries, mobilize stakeholders, coordinate with GHSA partners, and develop and initiate plans to help countries improve AMR management.

During this quarter, USAID MTaPS conducted three scoping visits (Tanzania, Ethiopia and Senegal) and determined dates for the seven remaining visits. The key objectives of the scoping visit were to:

- Inform key stakeholders of the overall goals and objectives of USAID MTaPS, as well as its GHSA/AMR-specific scope of work
- Identify the current in-country accomplishments, strengths, weaknesses, gaps, priorities, and opportunities in the areas of IPC and AMS
- Recommend activities relating to IPC, AMS, and multisectoral coordination to include in the USAID MTaPS year 1 country work plans

GHSA-funded countries:

*Burkina Faso
Cameroon
Cote d'Ivoire
DRC
Ethiopia
Kenya
Mali
Senegal
Tanzania
Uganda*

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
Scoping visit to Tanzania	<p>This was a joint visit by USAID MTaPS and the Infectious Disease Detection and Surveillance (IDDS) Project, another USAID-funded program supporting GHSA activities. USAID MTaPS team members included Mohan P. Joshi, USAID MTaPS Technical Lead for GHSA/AMR activities, and Maura Soucy Brown, USAID MTaPS Senior Technical Advisor. Tobey Busch, Senior Technical Advisor, Office of Health Systems, and member of the USAID Contracting Officer Representative (COR) team for USAID MTaPS, also joined the visit.</p> <p>Work plan was submitted on December 14, 2018.</p>
Scoping visit to Ethiopia	<p>This was a joint visit by USAID MTaPS and the IDDS Project. USAID MTaPS team members included Francis Aboagye-Nyame, USAID MTaPS Program Director; Maura Soucy Brown, USAID MTaPS Senior Technical Advisor; Suzanne Diarra, USAID MTaPS Senior Technical Advisor; and Negussu Mekonnen, proposed Country Director for USAID MTaPS/Ethiopia.</p> <p>Development of the work plan is in process (draft is due in Q2, January 2019).</p>
Scoping visit to Senegal	<p>The USAID MTaPS scoping team included Ousmane Faye, USAID MTaPS scoping visit in-country focal person in Senegal; Suzanne Diarra, USAID MTaPS Senior Technical Advisor; and Mohan P. Joshi, USAID MTaPS Senior Principal Technical Advisor and Technical Lead for GHSA/AMR activities. Tobey Busch, Senior Technical Advisor, Office of Health Systems, and member of the USAID COR team for USAID MTaPS, also joined the visit. The team was joined by USAID MTaPS partner organization IQVIA's Stuart Knight and Alexandre de Carvalho for part of the scoping visit.</p> <p>Development of the work plan is in process.</p>

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Scoping visits and work plan development	Uganda	February 4–8, 2019
	Burkina Faso	February 4–8, 2019
	Cameroon	March 4–8, 2019
	Cote d'Ivoire	January 28–February 1, 2019
	DRC	February 25–March 1, 2019
	Kenya	January 28–February 1, 2019
	Mali	March 18–22, 2019

OFFICE OF HEALTH SYSTEMS, CROSS BUREAU

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

The Cross Bureau work plan was developed and submitted to USAID for approval. Activities are set to begin next quarter.

Activity 1: Refine/validate Pharmaceutical Systems Strengthening (PSS) Insight in USAID MTaPS-supported countries

PSS Insight, an indicator-based monitoring tool to measure pharmaceutical systems strengthening, was developed by the USAID-funded Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) program. USAID MTaPS has been tasked with refining and validating the tool, indicators, and indicator reference sheets that comprise PSS Insight, and in project year I, aims to conduct three in-country pilot activities, Bangladesh, Philippines, and Mozambique.

During this quarter, USAID MTaPS began discussions of pilot activities with in-country counterparts. In the coming months, USAID MTaPS will revise the PSS Insight user manual and use it to develop a suite of eLearning materials to introduce PSS Insight and train implementers on its use. These materials will be used to prepare USAID MTaPS teams in country to conduct the planned pilot activities. Concurrently, USAID MTaPS will conduct a brainstorming session with selected partners during the planned USAID MTaPS summit in March to discuss additional functionality and suggested improvements to the tool that may be incorporated prior to the in-country pilot activities.

Activity 2: Enhance the global pharmaceutical systems learning agenda

During this quarter, USAID MTaPS began developing a proposal for the design and implementation of a course for USAID FSO and FSNs, which will be submitted for approval next quarter. USAID MTaPS is in the process of conducting a desk review of existing materials to identify resources gaps. Once the proposal is approved by USAID, USAID MTaPS will begin developing the in-person course, which will focus on how current concerns such as universal coverage, antimicrobial resistance, and infectious diseases are linked to pharmaceutical services. The course instruction will prioritize adult learning principles; learner-driven discussion; and interactive, hands-on activities. It will include regular quizzes and consist of three parts to allow participants an experiential learning journey.

Activity 3: In collaboration with core partner NEPAD, support the AMRH initiative to increase institutional and human resource capacity for pharmaceutical regulatory systems in Africa

One method for engaging stakeholders is participating in international conferences and meetings. USAID MTaPS participated in the second African Medicines Regulatory Harmonization (AMRH) Partnership Platform meeting and AMRH Week launch December 10–15, 2018, in Kigali, Rwanda. Participation in the meetings provided an opportunity to introduce USAID MTaPS to the pharmaceutical community on the continent, including partners involved in regulatory systems strengthening.

The outcome of the discussions and information exchange during the week facilitated enhanced collaboration with core partner NEPAD and the implementation of activities to support the continental regulatory harmonization effort. The scope of work identified specific areas of support that will contribute to the harmonization of medicines regulation and transition of the AMRH initiative to the African Medicines Agency.

Activity 4: Collaborate with and participate in meetings with WHO and other global initiatives to enhance transparency and accountability in the pharmaceutical sector

During this quarter, USAID MTaPS held meetings with the Essential Medicines and Health Technologies Program of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the WHO Collaborating Center for Governance, Transparency and Accountability in the Pharmaceutical Sector in Toronto to identify opportunities for collaborating with and supporting the governance activities of WHO and other global health governance initiatives.

Activity 5: Develop a roadmap for Health Technologies Assessments (HTA) institutionalization for LMICs

Later this year, USAID MTaPS will begin activities to develop the roadmap by identifying potential countries to pilot the tool to advance regulation and institutional designs for systematic priority setting and HTA.

Activity 6: Examine opportunities for and barriers to the use of drug sellers in increasing access to medicines and other health technologies in low- and middle-income countries in support of universal health coverage (UHC) objectives

Private pharmaceutical service providers—private pharmacies and drug sellers—are often an underutilized stakeholder in the provision of health care, despite their close proximity to the community. The noninvolvement of private-sector service providers may be driven in part by quality, affordability, and trust barriers.

USAID MTaPS will conduct an indicator-based analysis in selected countries using a pharmacy benefits management tool to assess the level of utilization of services of drug sellers and private pharmacies for dispensing pharmacy benefit packages in the community. USAID MTaPS will examine opportunities for and barriers to the use of drug sellers in increasing access to medicines and other health technologies in low- and middle-income countries in support of UHC objectives. The results will be used to analyze opportunities and barriers and to recommend approaches and interventions that will enable countries to optimize utilization of private-sector drug outlets to enhance access to medicines and other health technologies.

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Activity 1. Refine/validate PSS Insight in USAID MTaPS-supported countries	Participate in an upcoming meeting in Delhi, India, hosted by the Essential Medicines and Health Products group at WHO	February 26–27, 2019
	USAID MTaPS will revise the PSS Insight user manual and use it to develop a suite of eLearning materials to introduce PSS Insight and train implementers on its use	March 2019
	USAID MTaPS will conduct a brainstorming session with selected partners to discuss additional functionality and suggested improvements to the tool	March 2019
Activity 2. Enhance Global Pharmaceutical Systems Learning agenda	<p>Create PSS 101 course (eLearning, in-person course, brown bags). USAID MTaPS will draft and submit a proposal for approval for the design and implementation of the course</p> <p>Participate in networking and collaboration activities, including attending conferences and engaging regional and global PSS players</p>	March 2019
Activity 3. In collaboration with core partner NEPAD, support the AMRH initiative to increase institutional and human resources capacity for pharmaceutical regulatory systems in Africa	Discuss the implementation plan for PYI with NEPAD in preparation for execution of activities	January 2019
Activity 4. Collaborate with and participate in meetings with WHO and other global initiatives to enhance transparency and accountability in the pharmaceutical sector	Participate in an upcoming workshop in Geneva on WHO's new Anticorruption, Transparency and Accountability in Health Sector (WHO-ACTA) initiative	February 26–28, 2019
Activity 5. Develop a roadmap for Health Technologies Assessments (HTA) institutionalization for LMICs	USAID MTaPS will begin activities to develop the roadmap by identifying needs and opportunities for HTA and systematic priority setting in LMICs	
Activity 6. Examine opportunities and barriers to the use of drug sellers in increasing access to medicines and other health technologies in low- and middle-income countries in support of UHC objectives	USAID MTaPS will conduct an indicator-based analysis in selected countries using a pharmacy benefits management tool and examine opportunities for and barriers to the use of drug sellers in increasing access to medicines and other health technologies	March 2019

PROGRESS TOWARD OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE I: PHARMACEUTICAL SECTOR GOVERNANCE STRENGTHENED

Since the USAID MTaPS Program was awarded this quarter (September 2018), no activities were implemented.

During this reporting period, USAID MTaPS completed several country scoping visits that were designed to identify gaps in governance and examining options for addressing them. The program also held meetings with the Essential Medicines and Health Technologies Program of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the WHO Collaborating Center for Governance, Transparency and Accountability in the Pharmaceutical Sector in Toronto, Canada, to identify opportunities for collaborating with and supporting the governance activities of WHO and other global health governance initiatives.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF COUNTRY PHARMACEUTICAL SYSTEMS IMPROVED

No activities implemented in this quarter.

EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINES POLICIES, LAWS, REGULATIONS, GUIDELINES, NORMS, AND STANDARDS IMPROVED AND ENFORCED

No activities implemented in this quarter.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT, INCLUDING CIVIL SOCIETY AND CONSUMERS INCREASED

No activities implemented in this quarter.

OBJECTIVE 2: INSTITUTIONAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY FOR PHARMACEUTICAL MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES INCREASED, INCLUDING REGULATION OF MEDICAL PRODUCTS

Since the USAID MTaPS Program was awarded this quarter (September 2018), no activities were implemented.

During this reporting period, USAID MTaPS completed a diagnostic assessment of the Philippines Department of Health as part of the country scoping visit and is in the process of developing strategies to enhance the Philippines Department of Health's individual and institutional capacity in procurement, supply chain management, and pharmacovigilance.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF PROVEN, INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO BUILDING HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY

No activities implemented in this quarter.

STRONGER CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENT TO MANAGE PHARMACEUTICAL SYSTEMS

No activities implemented in this quarter.

IMPROVED CAPACITY OF PRIVATE-SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT PHARMACEUTICAL OPERATIONS

No activities implemented in this quarter.

STRONGER MEDICINES REGULATORY CAPACITY, INCLUDING THROUGH REGIONAL REGULATORY HARMONIZATION

No activities implemented in this quarter.

OBJECTIVE 3: AVAILABILITY AND USE OF PHARMACEUTICAL INFORMATION FOR DECISION MAKING INCREASED AND GLOBAL LEARNING AGENDA ADVANCED

Since the USAID MTaPS Program was awarded this quarter (September 2018), no activities were implemented.

INTEROPERABILITY OF PHARMACEUTICAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS THAT LINK PATIENTS AND PRODUCTS

No activities this quarter.

INCREASED AND BETTER USE OF INFORMATION ON PHARMACEUTICAL SYSTEMS FOR DECISION MAKING

No activities this quarter.

ADVANCEMENTS IN PHARMACEUTICAL SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING RESEARCH AND THE GLOBAL LEARNING AGENDA

No activities this quarter.

OBJECTIVE 4: PHARMACEUTICAL SECTOR FINANCING, INCLUDING RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND USE, OPTIMIZED

REDUCTIONS IN FINANCIAL BARRIERS TO ACCESSING MEDICINES

A key approach to reducing financial barriers to medicines is to define and include a package of medicine benefits into financial risk protection schemes within countries. Following a scoping visit to Bangladesh, USAID MTAPS, as part of its year 1 work plan, proposes to work with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other stakeholders to identify medicine management gaps in the initiatives under way in the public and private sectors, establish financial risk protection schemes, and reduce inefficiencies in health resource allocation and use. USAID MTaPS will work with core partner R4D, stakeholders, and USAID to explore opportunities for collaboration to help make decisions on medicines benefits when expanding health coverage; reduce financial barriers to medicines access; and increase financial resources for pharmaceutical products and systems in line with the Government of Bangladesh's 20-year health care financing strategy, "Expanding Social Protection for Health: Towards Universal Coverage" 2012–2033.

IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINES STRATEGIES AND PHARMACY BENEFITS PROGRAMS

No activities this quarter.

INCREASED EFFICIENCY OF PHARMACEUTICAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND USE

Asia Regional Bureau

During this quarter, USAID MTAPS had a key meeting with the USAID Asia Bureau on strengthening health technology assessments (HTAs) and other relevant pharmacoeconomic assessment tools that work across the Asia region to improve transparent and evidence-based decision making processes for medicines. USAID MTAPS and the USAID Asia Bureau reviewed and agreed on potential work streams, including building and strengthening partnerships/collaborations among formally established HTA institutions/networks (e.g., HTAsiaLink) and informal HTA mechanisms in low- and middle-income countries in the Asia region to help build their capacity; increase production of and sharing of findings from high-quality HTAs, which could be adapted for use in low-income countries; assist in governance of HTA process and utilization of HTAs in public-sector decision making; and improve institutional capacity to conduct HTAs, including local training on HTA-related disciplines.

Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (MNCH)

During this quarter, USAID MTAPS and the USAID MNCH team discussed developing strategies and interventions to address bottlenecks in financial flows for MNCH commodities. In the upcoming quarter, USAID MTAPS will collaborate with USAID and R4D to identify key strategies to implement recommendation for developing a global technical leadership approach or guide to support countries to improve financial flows for MNCH commodities.

MOBILIZATION OF ADDITIONAL AND SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES

During the last quarter, USAID MTAPS conducted a scoping visit to the Philippines, where the program identified a need for need to work with in country stakeholders to explore approaches to resource efficiency and generation, such that additional funds can be allocated to develop the pharmaceutical and supply management capabilities in country.

OBJECTIVE 5: PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES, INCLUDING PRODUCT AVAILABILITY AND PATIENT-CENTERED CARE TO ACHIEVE DESIRED HEALTH OUTCOMES, IMPROVED

INCREASED AVAILABILITY OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES AND OTHER HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES

Philippines

Ensuring the availability of safe, effective, quality-assured, and affordable medicines and health technologies is critical for effective health outcomes. It also requires sustainable demand planning; efficient and coordinated procurement systems; optimized warehousing, inventory management, and delivery systems; and reliable data for decisions supported by local institutional and individual capacity. During this quarter, USAID MTaPS conducted a scoping visit in the Philippines to rapidly diagnose supply chain gaps, map procurement and supply chain stakeholders, and identify possible interventions. USAID MTaPS designed assessment approaches and tools, held 25 meetings with Department of Health (DOH) offices/bureaus/units and implementing partners, and identified strategic and stop gap interventions. During this visit, 13 DOH offices and 8 supply chain stakeholders were consulted and contributed to identifying bottlenecks and intervention areas. Systematic forecasting; efficient procurement systems; optimized warehouse, inventory management, and delivery systems; implementation of end-to-end supply chain information systems and data use; and human resource and institutional capacity development are priority areas identified to support the DOH.

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, USAID MTaPS conducted a two-week scoping visit and identified key procurement and supply chain intervention areas. During the visit, the USAID MTaPS team met and consulted with seven Ministry of Health (MOH) offices/directorates and eight international and local organizations, including USAID, the US Center for Disease Control (CDC), PQM, WHO, UNICEF FAO, and GH Pro consultants.

The findings from the visit include recommendations from the above-mentioned organizations and MOH offices/directorates. The findings were also prioritized according to whether they are immediate and long-term interventions to be included in the USAID MTaPS year 1 work plan and five-year strategic plan.

IMPROVED PATIENT-CENTERED PHARMACEUTICAL CARE

During the scoping visit in Mozambique, USAID MTaPS identified a need for support to strengthen the Drug and Therapeutics Committee, implement active pharmacovigilance, and support AMR initiatives, which are instrumental in building and institutionalizing patient-centered pharmaceutical care at service delivery points.

IMPROVED PATIENT SAFETY AND THERAPEUTIC EFFECTIVENESS

During this quarter, USAID MTaPS participated the annual meeting of the International Society of Pharmacovigilance in Geneva with the primary goal of networking and interacting with key global stakeholders in pharmacovigilance. USAID MTaPS contributed to the global discussion on the future direction of pharmacovigilance, which enhances the support that the USAID MTaPS Program will provide. USAID MTaPS also identified key areas of potential collaboration with countries and international stakeholders.

Philippines

In the Philippines, USAID MTaPS conducted a rapid assessment of existing pharmacovigilance systems, including governance structures, information systems, data use, and human resource capacity, to implement a functional pharmacovigilance system. The assessment was used to develop the USAID MTaPS year 1 intervention in collaboration with the DOH's Food and Drug Administration, Pharmacy Division, and implementing partners. The USAID MTaPS team also conducted a scoping visit in Mozambique and identified key areas of support related to tuberculosis medicines safety.

Bangladesh

Similar rapid assessments were done in Bangladesh to identify a need for USAID MTaPS support on adverse drug reaction surveillance and monitoring of first- and second-line tuberculosis medicines in collaboration with the Department of Drug Administration.

BETTER CONTAINMENT OF ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Antimicrobial resistance containment is one of 11 action packages of the Global Health Security Agenda, a partnership of nearly 50 countries, international organizations, and nongovernmental stakeholders. During this quarter, as part of the scoping visit to Bangladesh, USAID MTaPS identified areas of collaboration and strategic activities to enhancing ownership and self-reliance that complements efforts being made by the CDC, FAO, and Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research.

For additional information on antimicrobial resistance and infection prevention and control, see the *Global Health Security Agenda* section of this report.

PROGRESS BY REGION

ASIA REGIONAL BUREAU

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

In October 2018, an initial draft scope of work (SOW) was provided to USAID MTaPS by the USAID COR, and in December 2018, USAID MTaPS home office staff and a representative from USAID MTaPS partner Results for Development met with the COR team and the Asia Bureau Mission to discuss the proposed activities and SOW. A final SOW will be shared during the next quarter.

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
SOW finalization	The Asia Regional Bureau will share a final SOW with USAID MTaPS. Key activities are: 1) strengthening health technology assessment systems in Asia; 2) ensuring affordability of essential medicines and strengthening national and regional capacity to assess value; 3) moving the pharmaceutical good governance agenda forward in Asia.	Mid-January 2019
Meeting with the Center for Global Development (CGD)	A meeting with USAID MTaPS home office staff, the Asia Bureau Mission, the COR team, and the director of global health at the CGD will be held to discuss opportunities for joint collaboration between USAID MTaPS and the CGD regarding the implementation of Asia Bureau activities.	Mid-January 2019

PROGRESS BY COUNTRY

AFGHANISTAN

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

No activities were held during the first quarter.

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Scope of work	USAID MTaPS anticipates that the scope of work will be developed and planning meetings will begin during the second quarter.	January–March 2019

BANGLADESH

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

Scoping visit

Shortly after the award of the USAID MTaPS Program, two USAID MTaPS staff members travelled to Bangladesh from October 25 to November 17, 2018, to conduct a scoping visit. The USAID MTaPS team met with the USAID/Bangladesh MTaPS Activity Manager and other USAID staff, including the Health Systems Strengthening Lead and Deputy Director, Office of Population, Health, Nutrition and Education, to review and discuss the draft scope of work developed by USAID/Bangladesh, which sets out the broad objectives and illustrative activities over the course of the five-year project to strengthen Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) pharmaceutical management systems.

To inform the development of the overall strategy for the project and specifically the FY19 work plan, USAID MTaPS met with government counterparts from the MOHFW; the Directorate General of Family Planning; the Directorate General of Health Systems, including the Central Medical Stores Department, the National TB Program, and Communicable Disease Control; and the Directorate General of Drug Administration to solicit input on important gaps and priority areas of work. Meetings with development partners (WHO and UNICEF), USAID and its implementing partners (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and USAID Promoting the Quality of Medicines Program), and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided further input to shape the proposed strategy and activities and information on opportunities for collaboration.

In addition, a two-day workshop with 15 former SIAPS staff members who were hired as consultants under the USAID Global Health Program Cycle Improvement (GH Pro) Project enabled the USAID MTaPS team to gather information from consultants on the current status of SIAPS and GH Pro activities; lessons learned; country context, including emerging challenges and new initiatives; and priority areas of work for USAID MTaPS and to elaborate on activities for the first year of the project.

Work plan development and approval

As agreed with USAID/Bangladesh, USAID MTaPS developed and submitted the first draft of the FY19 work plan for Mission review on December 15, 2018. The agreed timeline of the Mission sending comments by December 25 and USAID MTaPS submitting the work plan for USAID approval by December 31 could not be adhered to as the US government shutdown delayed the Mission sending their comments on the work plan. The work plan will be finalized as early as possible in the next quarter.

Recruitment and onboarding of local USAID MTaPS staff

The recruitment of the Country Project Director (CPD) was initiated in October 2018, and the search for a suitable candidate continued through the end of the quarter. USAID MTaPS will continue to explore options and networks for sharing the job link more widely. The staffing plan for the USAID MTaPS start up team was developed based on proposed year one activities, priority job announcements posted locally, and positions offered to 15 candidates. However, the US government shutdown delayed the USAID Contracting Officer in providing approval for the job hires. The recruitment of staff will be completed and staff onboarded as soon as USAID approval is received in the next quarter. Job

announcements for the remaining five technical staff and two operations positions will be posted locally in the next quarter.

Office set up and resource mobilization

USAID MTaPS Arlington has been working with the Management Sciences for Health Bangladesh country operations team to ensure that a work space with adequate resources is set up in early January 2019.

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER		
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Submission of FY19 USAID MTaPS work plan for approval	Once comments are received from USAID/Bangladesh, USAID MTaPS will address the comments and submit the work plan to USAID for approval	January 2019 (pending USAID comments on draft)
Onboarding of local USAID MTaPS start up team	Once USAID approval is received for hiring 15 local staff, USAID MTaPS will initiate onboarding of staff	January 2019 (pending USAID approval)
Hiring of CPD and other local USAID MTaPS staff	USAID MTaPS will continue the search for the CPD and post job announcements for the remaining five technical staff and two operations positions	January 2019
Office set up	The project will establish a work space with adequate resources	January 2019
Work plan implementation	Work plan implementation will begin once USAID MTaPS receives USAID approval of the work plan and for hiring local staff	January 2019 (pending USAID approval)
Project launch	USAID and USAID MTaPS will plan for a small event to launch the project	March 2019 (date to be determined with USAID)

MOZAMBIQUE

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

Scoping visit

The scoping visit took place December 3–8, 2018, to start up the USAID MTaPS office; recruit new local staff; and confirm with USAID and the Ministry of Health (MOH) key areas of intervention for supporting the MOH in strengthening its medicines regulatory system, rational medicines use, and pharmacovigilance. The USAID MTaPS team met with the USAID Mozambique team, National Directorate of Pharmacy, Hospital Pharmacy Department, Quality Control Laboratory, TB Department, and World Health Organization to present the USAID MTaPS project and understand the areas of support. At the end of the visit, USAID MTaPS presented the priority areas to both the MOH and USAID. The key areas of support for year one include medicines registration, quality assurance, pharmaceutical governance, pharmacovigilance and medicines safety, containment of antimicrobials, and the promotion of rational medicines use. These areas of support were discussed and agreement reached for activities to be included in year one of USAID MTaPS Mozambique.

Work plan development

The USAID MTaPS team developed the year one work plan, which will be submitted to USAID Mozambique, the USAID COR, and the MOH for approval in January 2019. While waiting for the finalization of the work plan and office set up, USAID requested travel duty to support the pharmacovigilance activity with the HIV department.

Staffing

While in country, the USAID MTaPS team conducted interviews for the Country Project Director and Senior Technical Advisor. The selected candidates were presented to USAID Mozambique, and MSH is making job offers. Staff are expected to assume duty during the next quarter.

Office set up

While in Mozambique, the USAID MTaPS team met with FHI 360 to discuss the possibility of subletting office space. This request was entertained and the rental agreement is at its final stage.

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Work plan development	Finalize work plan and obtain approval	January 2019
Staff recruitment	Recruit finance and operations staff	January–March 2019
Office set up	Finalize leasing agreement with FHI 360	January–March 2019

PHILIPPINES

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

Scoping visit

USAID has provided funding to the recently awarded USAID MTaPS Program, implemented by Management Sciences for Health (MSH). As part of USAID's support to the Department of Health (DOH), the Mission invited USAID MTaPS to provide technical assistance to strengthen the DOH's capacity to plan, implement, and sustain an integrated procurement and supply chain management (PSM) system and a strong regulatory system, including pharmacovigilance functions that will ensure the uninterrupted availability of quality-assured, safe, and affordable medicines. Based on these goals, three MTaPS staff traveled to the Philippines November 19–December 7, 2018, to conduct a scoping visit, set up an office, recruit local staff, and conduct rapid diagnostics on PSM and pharmacovigilance to strengthening the system.

The team met with USAID/Philippines, DOH decision makers and technical officers, and various stakeholders and implementing partners and conducted a rapid diagnosis to inform and facilitate the design of the supply chain strategic framework and its development process.

The USAID MTaPS team conducted a review of the last five years of assessment reports and relevant official documents and held a series of meetings with stakeholders from the DOH and key implementing partners. The team attended 24 meetings, one joint work planning workshop of the newly awarded USAID-Reach Health project, and one technical working group meeting with CLAIM Health. The team also met with two potential consultants who will be supporting technical and operational activities to discuss priorities during the startup period. The team visited six potential temporary and permanent office locations.

Following the document review and key informant information analysis, 10 focus areas for potential system strengthening interventions were identified. Diagnostic findings are presented according to stakeholder-identified focus areas on PSM and pharmacovigilance:

- Governance of PSM
- Capacity at the central, regional, and local government unit (LGU) levels
- Information and the use of data for PSM decision making
- Demand and supply of medicines and related health products
- Procurement of medicines and related health products for health programs
- Warehousing, inventory management, and delivery systems
- PSM at the LGU level
- PSM for health emergency response
- Financing for development of PSM capabilities and access to medicines
- Pharmacovigilance

Major challenges related to the current delivery system:

- Uninformed estimation of allocation quantities (determined once in a year) earmarked to the provinces/municipalities/health facilities without considering the stock balances and consumption
- Uncoordinated allocation plan from different health program units, leading to fragmented shipment planning and delivery

- Inadequate communication and monitoring of 3PL performance
- Lack of implementation of comprehensive inventory management policies at each level of the supply chain system

Work plan development and approval

As agreed with USAID/Philippines, USAID MTaPS is developing a first draft work plan identifying stopgap interventions to respond to findings of the rapid diagnostic analysis that was conducted during the scoping visit. USAID MTaPS is expected to submit the initial draft work plan for the Philippines to be further reviewed, vetted, and finalized at the DOH strategic plan workshop scheduled for the week of February 25, during discussions with USAID scheduled for the week of March 4, and at the USAID MTaPS joint work planning meeting with key Philippines stakeholders scheduled for the week of March 11. The final work plan will be submitted after the next scheduled trip to the Philippines; the final submission date will be determined with the Mission.

Office set up and resource mobilization

The USAID MTaPS HQ operations team continues to secure temporary and permanent office space. USAID MTaPS is in the process of finalizing a temporary lease agreement that will allow USAID MTaPS staff to co-locate with FHI 360 for two to three months while permanent space is secured.

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Submission of FY19 USAID MTaPS work plan for approval	Work plan will be finalized after conducting the DOH-led strategic planning workshop, in-country discussions with the Mission, and the USAID MTaPS joint work planning meeting with key stakeholders	Mid-March 2019
Office set up	The project will establish a work space with adequate resources	March/April 2019
Work plan implementation	Work plan implementation will begin once USAID MTaPS receives USAID approval of the work plan and for hiring local staff	March/April 2019 (pending USAID approval)
Project launch	USAID and USAID MTaPS will plan for a small event to launch the project	May 2019 (date to be determined with USAID)

RWANDA

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

No technical activities took place this quarter.

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
Scoping visit		January 2019
Staffing	Staff recruitment will take place after the scoping visit.	January–March 2019
Work plan development	The work plan will be developed following the scoping visit.	January–February 2019

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES THIS QUARTER

Monitoring and Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan development

With support from FHI 360, the first draft of the MEL, together with performance indicators and targets, was developed and submitted to USAID. The plan presents the theory of change as an organizing framework for performance measurement. It also presents the project data collection, reporting, data quality assurance, and data management system and a comprehensive knowledge management and learning strategy. Based on feedback from USAID, the plan has been revised and will be submitted after final management review.

USAID MTaPS central data system design

Consultations during the quarter led to USAID MTaPS agreeing to adopt the open source District Health Information System (DHIS) V2.0 software for reporting performance indicators at the country level and by funding stream and for aggregating the data at the global level. In recent years, DHIS 2 has become the go-to solution for health management information systems (HMIS) in developing countries and is used in USG programs, including PEPFAR, and by several USAID implementing partners as their global database. It has a large community of practice and built in dashboards, and it provides a robust data management and visualization platform. If more advanced visualization software is required at the national or global level, other options will be considered.

Hiring of M&E team

The M&E team was led by the MEL Director, hired by FHI 360, who resigned during the quarter. Interviews for the MEL Director's replacement are ongoing as at the end of the quarter, and a number of strong candidates have been identified; however, the combination of M&E Director experience and PSS experience is providing elusive among the candidates screened so far. A KM and Learning lead was successfully recruited and has hit the ground running, developing a KM plan and supporting establishment of the communications strategy, among other areas of support. Recruitment is also ongoing for an M&E Technical Advisor to support the MEL Director in maintaining the project data collection and reporting system and carrying out other key M&E tasks. Meanwhile, a Health Informatics Advisor at 50% was brought on board to help set up the central data system and database. Progress was made in this quarter by the Health Informatics Advisor regarding mapping out the steps and answering key configuration questions in system design. The Advisor moved on from the project at the end of the quarter, and the search for a replacement is currently at an advanced stage.

Planning baseline assessments

Discussions were held with the PSS Insight development team on the potential use of the tool for capturing baseline data and other MEL indicator needs throughout the project. Lessons learned from the implementation of the tool will be incorporated into these plans. In addition to its use during the baseline, midterm, and end-of-project assessments, there may be a need to collect other indicators derived from PSS Insight on an annual basis to fill gaps in host country data collection systems. An analysis of these gaps relative to the MEL indicators will be part of the baseline assessment team's work in each country. This will inform the future use of PSS Insight and the extent to which new data collection tools need to be developed, or existing tools modified, to report USAID MTaPS indicators.

Addressing M&E needs in scoping visits

The scoping visits conducted to date have analyzed the information management and data use systems in each country. Opportunities for M&E system strengthening were identified and discussed with core team members during scoping visit debriefs. Based on these findings, potential activities related to strengthening core data collection, reporting, analysis, and use are being proposed for incorporation in country-level work plans.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Early staff retention in the MEL team and identifying an outstanding MEL Director

ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER		
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATES
MEL finalization	Finalize MEL, develop PIRS,	January–March 2019
Central data system	The USAID MTaPS DHIS 2 server has been established, and the DHIS 2 instance is being set up. A DHIS 2 configuration workbook will be developed to guide the design of the instance, program organizational units, and populate with MEL and other draft indicator sets on hand (e.g., GHSA).	January–March 2019
Baseline assessments	Develop baseline assessment tools and protocol outline. These will be revised pending feedback from USAID.	January–March 2019

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN

The USAID MTaPS performance monitoring plan is pending approval by USAID and will be included in future quarterly reports after receiving approval.