

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

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Key Recommendations: Improving Subnational Procurement for MNCH Medicines in Nepal

Based on a Stakeholder Workshop held in Banepa, Nepal, March 10–11, 2022

July 2022



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BACKGROUND

Sound procurement practices are crucial to consistent access to quality maternal, newborn, and child health (MNCH) medical products, which can help ensure sustainable quality MNCH services and optimal health outcomes in Nepal. After federalization, local level governments (LLGs) were given the necessary authority to procure most MNCH medical products and essential medicines. However, the LLGs lack the necessary skills and capacity to make appropriate procurement decisions.

To assess procurement practices at subnational levels and ensure the quality and availability of MNCH products, MTaPS conducted a mapping study “Subnational Procurement Practices of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Medicines in Nepal”.¹ The study examines roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in procurement; procurement mechanisms and the procurement process; training; infrastructure; and financing.

Following the study, MTaPS supported the government of Nepal to hold a two-day stakeholder workshop² in March 2022 to raise awareness around the need for quality subnational MNCH procurement practices and to generate actionable recommendations for improvement of current practices. Representatives from seven provinces, the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), Department of Health Services, and the Department of Drug Administration participated in the discussions and came to consensus on a set of recommendations to improve procurement practices.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The key recommendations emerging from the workshop deliberations included:

- Establish a centralized framework agreement for the local procurement of essential medicines
- Improve quality of data and data analysis for better quantification and procurement through expansion of electronic logistics management information system and the electronic procurement platform (e-GP)
- Strengthen monitoring of procurement by federal authorities to ensure transparency and fairness
- Strengthen budget planning and financial management
- Improve storage and distribution practices
- Engage civil society to bring transparency to procurement process

NEXT STEPS

The MoHP authorities present at the workshop and in follow-up meetings committed to:

- Integrating the recommendations of the workshop into national and local-level plans and budgets to improve procurement practices
- Advocating to donors for support in implementing the recommendations
- Implementing the policy changes required for better procurement practices
- Developing guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to orient local-level procurement teams

¹ [Subnational Procurement Practices of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Medicines in Nepal. USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services \(MTaPS\) Program. July 2022.](https://www.mtapsprogram.org/our-resources/subnational-procurement-practices-of-maternal-newborn-and-child-health-medicines-in-nepal/) Available at <https://www.mtapsprogram.org/our-resources/subnational-procurement-practices-of-maternal-newborn-and-child-health-medicines-in-nepal/>

² Improving Subnational Procurement for MNCH Medicines in Nepal. Workshop report March 2022