



LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS SCHEME (LTAPS)

The MTA_{PS} 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.

BACKGROUND

The USAID Medicines Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTa_{PS}) Program enables low- and middle-income countries to strengthen their pharmaceutical systems, which is critical to higher-performing health systems. MTA_{PS} focuses on improving access to essential medical products and related services and on the appropriate use of medicines to ensure better health outcomes for all populations. The program brings expertise honed over decades of seminal pharmaceutical systems experience across more than 40 countries. The MTA_{PS} approach builds sustainable gains in countries by including all actors in health care—government, civil society, the private sector, and academia. The program is implemented by a consortium of global and local partners and led by Management Sciences for Health (MSH), a global health nonprofit.

The Philippines Republic Act No. 11223, also known as the Universal Health Care Act, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, devolved the national health system, placing financial responsibility and supply chain authority on hundreds of individual local government units (LGUs) that have varying degrees of maturity. Determining the LGUs' maturity is anchored in Administrative Order 2020-0037, which provides guidelines on implementation of local health systems maturity levels and provides the monitoring and evaluation framework to track LGU performance.

THE RATIONALE FOR A LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS SCHEME (LTAPS)

USAID MTA_{PS}:

- Supported the Department of Health (DOH) in the development of the Procurement and Supply Chain (PSCM) Roadmap. The roadmap recognizes that the DOH PSCM strategic objectives could align with the universal health care law and the National Strategic Plan for PSCM. The universal health care integration technical working group has been formed to pioneer the implementation of the PSCM Roadmap and to finalize the Disease Prevention and Control Bureau (DPCB)-initiated PSCM reforms through a governing policy administrative order. The roadmap collaboration aims for:
 - A more streamlined, unified, and cost effective PSCM system
 - Increased leverage of private sector capability
 - More competent, professional, and accountable human resources for PSCM
 - Strong stewardship
 - Functional oversight of PSCM
 - Unified information system



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- Supported DOH to conduct a PSCM-pharmacovigilance (PV) workforce assessment and develop a workforce development plan in collaboration with the Health Human Resource Development Bureau (HHRDB).
- **Recognizes Integrated Health Systems, one of the key indicators in the LGU Health Scorecard that supports PSCM, as a key result area, thus the need to align the LTAPS approach with the Local Health Systems Integration Maturity Level at universal health care implementation sites.**
- Conducted a gap analysis in 2020, which highlighted issues in five areas:
 1. Governance: no local governing body overseeing PSCM and PV activities in LGUs
 2. Human resources: no dedicated workforce for PSCM-PV;
 3. Information system: fragmented, non-interoperable information systems in various offices;
 4. Finance and resources: no budget specific for PSCM-PV work and heavy dependence on the DOH's central office for supply of health commodities; and
 5. Service delivery: lack of knowledge on the supply chain cycle/functions and the need to strengthen and link with each component.
- Conducted an LTAPS consultative workshop with key stakeholders in April 2022, revisiting the previously identified gaps for LGUs. Participants in the consultative workshop explored how LGUs could increase their PSCM maturity and ways in which different organizations could support the development, implementation, and sustainability of having a pool of local technical assistance providers.

MTaPS is supporting the DOH and Centers for Health Development (CHDs) to advance PSCM reform implementation in LGUs. LTAPS is a key component of MTAps' strategic approach.

LTAPS

LTAPS is a planned process aimed at creating a pool of experts who provide technical assistance to LGUs to improve PSCM systems at the LGU level in collaboration with the DOH through CHDs.

The main goal of the scheme is to facilitate the improvement of PSCM services through the deployment of an LTAPS, as support to the DOH PSCM reforms at LGUs' universal health care implementation sites. The scheme will focus on the development and application of leadership and change management competencies, combined with entry-level PSCM technical competencies, in the context of broader health systems strengthening approaches.

Underpinning LTAPS is the internationally accepted Strategic Training Executive Program (STEP 2.0), which MSH is accredited to provide through MTAps. This PSCM leadership and change

management program has been jointly agreed by GAVI, the Global Fund, and USAID as a proven approach to sustainable PSCM development in LMICs. Coordinated by The People that Deliver (PtD), STEP 2.0 is a professional capacity development tool specifically tailored to the needs of health supply chain leaders and managers. Crucially, it blends elements of facilitator-led training, self-paced learning, on-the-job application of leadership skills, change management, and coaching support for PSCM improvements in the workplace. What makes it particularly unique is that it pairs participants with private sector supply experts (the coaches), which are made available through PtD coordination. The foundational LTAPS development activity integrates Philippines PSCM considerations into the existing STEP Program.

HOW TO MOVE LTAPS FORWARD? OUR FOUR PHASE APPROACH

1. **Phase 1:** Advocacy and engagement. Key stakeholders were engaged, notably the DOH-DPCB, HHRDB, Bureau of Local Health Systems Development, CHDs, Department of Interior and Local Government, and LGUs.
2. **Phase 2:** LTAPS program materials/toolkit development. All necessary course materials will be developed **with the inclusion of Leadership and Change Management competencies through the conduct of STEP 2.0**, a professional capacity development tool specifically tailored to the needs of health supply chain leaders and managers.
3. **Phase 3:** The LTAPS Program will be delivered in the Philippines through a 17-week blended program (6 weeks online, 1 week face-to-face, 10 weeks remote workplace support). Participants will be nominated by LGUs in collaboration with local capacity development partners and the DOH.
4. **Phase 4:** Integration. Having graduated a cohort of LTAPS for some LGUs interested institutions will be supported to apply for PtD accreditation to run the STEP PSCM Philippines course independently. LTAPS graduates will also be monitored in each LGU to facilitate integration into ongoing development structures in the LGUs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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The USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program enables low- and middle-income countries to strengthen their pharmaceutical systems, which is pivotal to better health outcomes and higher-performing health systems. The program is implemented by a consortium of global and local partners, led by Management Sciences for Health (MSH), a global health nonprofit.

This document is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the US Agency for International Development (USAID) contract no. 7200AA18C00074. The contents are the responsibility of Management Sciences for Health and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.