HEALTH PRODUCTS AND TECHNOLOGIES UNITS REVOLUTIONIZE KENYA’S HEALTH SUPPLY CHAIN SYSTEM

ABSTRACT No.72

INTRODUCTION

Supply chain remains the weak link in the health sector in most developing countries, characterized by low visibility of data, poor coordination of the supply chain functions, and sub-optimal demand and supply planning for medicines and medical supplies.

Kenya’s devolved system of government exacerbated the situation with loss of staff through attrition and diminished resources for the supply chain functions at the county level.

There was lack of a proper mechanism for stewardship and coordination of health products and technologies with different products being managed through parallel systems at the health facilities. This gave rise to losses through pilferage, expiries, and general obsolescence.

METHODOLOGY

In 2019, Kenya’s Ministry of Health (MOH) through the department of health products and technologies (DHPT) developed the first ever health products and technologies (HPT) supply chain strategy 2020-2025.

The strategy provided approaches to ensure steady supply of quality and affordable HPTs through functional supply chain systems.

The strategy also acknowledged the urgency to address the human resources and capacity gaps in the HPT supply chain in the context of a devolved governance system.

To support the implementation of the HPT supply chain strategy, USAID GHSC-PSP-Afya Ugavi (AU) developed a robust advocacy strategy for establishment of HPTUs.

RESULTS

By May 2022, all 47 counties in the country had established the HPTUs in line with the national SC strategy

Advocacy for the institutionalization of HPTUs in local county legislation has been successful in five counties to date (Kilifi, Machakos, Taita Taveta and Vihiga).

SUSTAINABILITY

For sustainability, and to ensure that these units are a mainstay in the county health structures, AU advocates for the entrenchment of the units in the county health legislation. This way, the health products and technologies units will have dedicated financial and human resources required to deliver its mandate.

So far five counties Kilifi, Machakos, Taita Taveta and Vihiga have anchored the units into law.

THE FUTURE

AU envisions that health products and technologies units will lead the development of policies that will provide an enabling environment for a responsive health supply chain systems at sub national level.

HPTUs will manage demand and supply planning for county HPTs and leverage on technology to strengthen the supply chain functions.

HPTUs will also scale up capacity for research and local manufacturing, HPTUs will manage demand and supply planning for county HPTs and leverage on technology to strengthen the supply chain functions.

Finally, HPTUs should harness collaboration and partnerships at county level for increased resource mobilization for HPTs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AU also supported:

- MoH DHPT to develop a HPTU guidance standard policy document
- HPTUs to undertake organizational capacity assessment and development of the units.
- Standard basic infrastructure that included office furniture, laptops and printers.
- Branding of HPTU offices giving them the necessary visibility and mainstay as the go to unit for all matters supply chain.

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