

USAID GLOBAL HEALTH
SUPPLY CHAIN PROGRAM
Procurement and Supply Management

SOUTHERN Pulse



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



PEPFAR
U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

PMI

**U.S. PRESIDENT'S
MALARIA INITIATIVE**

LED BY



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Welcome

After returning from Malawi recently, Judith Heichelheim shared how she met with Director Godfrey Kadewele, who is responsible for supply chain for the Ministry of Health. During their conversation, Director Kadewele shared his philosophy on “the 3Ps to delivering health care.”

“Product – Patient – Provider, keeping the product accessible and functional is the challenge. If we do not get all aspects of it right – supply, storage, distribution – then people will suffer.”

We are delighted to share stories from our colleagues which emphasize how the project and our many partners are collaborating to develop long-term and sustainable supply chain solutions, delivering essential supplies to those most in need. Many thanks to our colleagues across southern Africa for helping us share their story.

“Health services without products are an exercise in futility”

– Judith Heichelheim, IDIQ Director, Global Health Supply Chain Program-Procurement and Supply Management (GHSC-PSM) project

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Enjoy this fifth issue of our Southern Africa quarterly newsletter!

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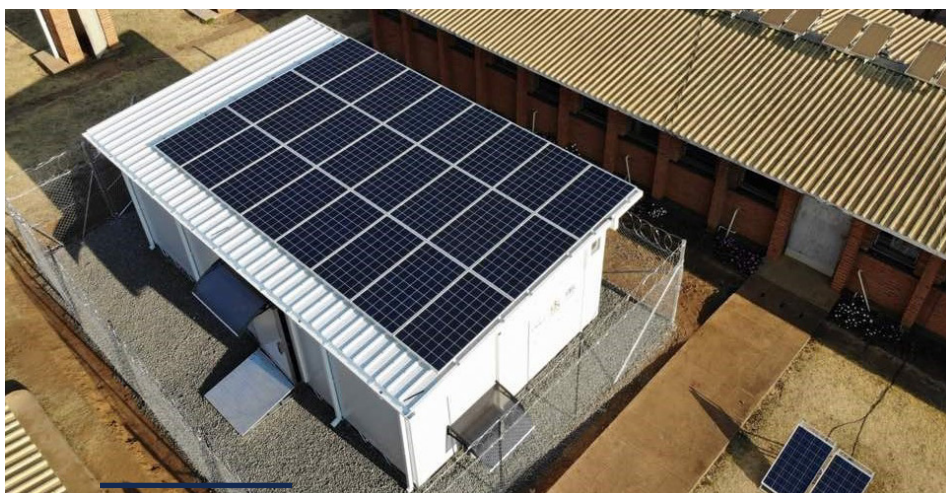
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Cover Photo: More than three million long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito nets arrived in Angola, April 2022. Photo by Marieta do Rosario.



MALAWI

“The supply chain in Malawi has come a long way, with enormous political support, policies, and strategies to guide it forward, but it is a job not yet finished.”

– Judith Heichelheim, IDIQ Director, GHSC-PSM

Solar-powered Solutions for Rural Health Facilities

A 2014 assessment of public health facilities in Malawi found that the vast majority had less than half of the pharmacy storage space needed to meet demand, a situation that would only get worse as the population grew. Between 2016 and 2017, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and partners addressed this challenge by installing 210 prefabricated storage units at health facilities with access to the electrical grid.

However, this still left many rural health facilities without secure storage solutions, particularly those not connected to the electrical grid. In 2019, with support from PEPFAR and the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), GHSC-PSM worked with the Ministry of Health to install an additional 239 units at these rural health facilities. This included 117 solar-powered, climate-controlled units at health facilities not connected to the national electrical grid.

Photo: A 45m² solar powered prefabricated pharmacy storage unit at Chakhaza Health Center in Dowa District, Malawi. Photo by Resolve Solution Partners.



**Read the full story
on our website**



ZAMBIA

Accessibility to PrEP Changing Lives in Zambia

Adolescent girls and young women in Zambia remain vulnerable to HIV infection. In fact, they are twice as likely as their male peers to contract HIV. Limited knowledge and education about the risks of HIV, high levels of risk behaviors such as intergenerational and transactional relationships, and low risk perception are all contributing factors.

Deborah Chimuka speaks with Site Coordinator Priscilla Makasa during the community PrEP refill discussion which help adherence to the drug. Photo by GHSC-PSM.

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“ I am happy today to be HIV negative because I use PrEP consistently. As a young girl, at risk of contracting HIV, taking PrEP has been part of my daily routine for over a year. ”

— Debra (18)

Deborah (18) and Gloria (17) remain HIV negative, thanks largely to supportive families and the great work of the Liyoyelo Dreams Center. Deborah, who is the mother of a two-year-old child, is lucky to have a mother who encourages and supports her decision to take PrEP.

However, it is not easy for the clinic or the girls. According to the Zambia Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) report of 2018, adult HIV prevalence (15-49 years) was found to be at 11.1%. The report also showed that women (14.2%) remain disproportionately affected compared to men (7.5%).



HIV AFFECTED WOMEN

Deborah and Gloria are fortunate to benefit from their participation in programs run by the Liyoyelo Urban Clinic. This clinic, supported by the University of Maryland's **CIHEB Zambia**, has been key in responding to the challenges facing adolescent girls and young women by empowering them to make better health decisions, and by mobilizing communities and families to recognize the risks and support these decisions. The clinic also offers young women access to pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP, a proven effective way to reduce the risk of HIV infection among populations who are at substantial risk of HIV infection.

“I decided to start taking PrEP last year at the age of 16 because I was at risk of acquiring HIV. The drugs together with other services provided at the center have greatly helped me to continue being HIV negative till this day”

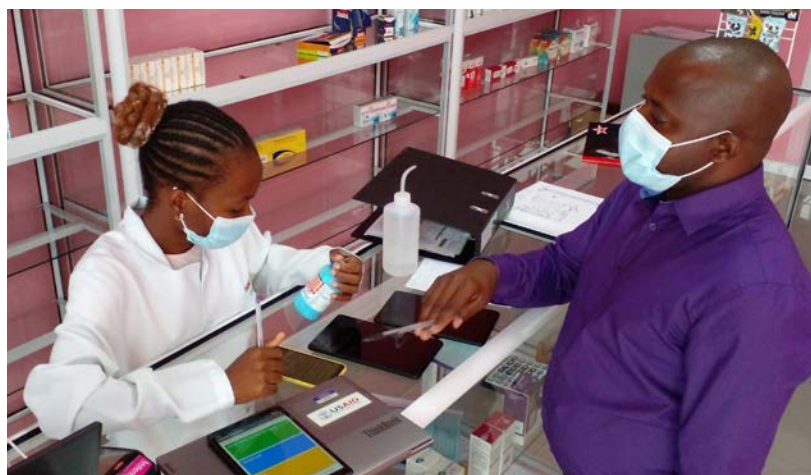
— Gloria (17)

Guaranteeing adequate supplies of PrEP throughout the country is not easy, but the USAID Global Health Supply Chain Program – Procurement and Supply Management (GHSC-PSM) has been a key supply chain partner in the PrEP program. More than 2.1 million bottles of PrEP (August 2022) have been delivered to Zambia, making it accessible to adolescent girls and young women at health facilities countrywide. The project has also procured antiretrovirals, rapid test kits and laboratory commodities so that people can continue to live healthy lives.

The PrEP program began in 2018, thanks to the Zambian Ministry of Health and the **PEPFAR**-supported DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe) initiative, helping to keep adolescent girls and young women safe. Through the provincial field office in Western Province, GHSC-PSM has been key in strengthening the supply chain system by working with provincial and district health office leadership, the Ministry of Health, and the Zambia Medicines and Medical Supplies Agency (**ZAMMSA**) to ensure uninterrupted availability of PrEP drugs through accurate data collection and reporting of consumption data. This is critical information for the Ministry and supply chain partners to use in decision-making to ensure medicine is available where and when it is most needed.



Site Coordinator Priscilla Makasa and Gloria discuss challenges during a community PrEP refill event. Photo by GHSC-PSM.



MOZAMBIQUE

Private Pharmacies Helping to Reach HIV Treatment Goals in Mozambique

Private pharmacies are playing a significant role in changing how people living with HIV receive life-changing medicine. In Mozambique, where approximately 13 percent of adults are HIV positive, clients typically receive their antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) through public health facilities, which are often overcrowded.

Bottlenecks at these public health facilities are thought to be barriers to Mozambique achieving its goal of having 95 percent of HIV positive people on treatment. Providing a more convenient, patient-centered pick-up option is thought to reduce barriers to patient retention and to improve treatment outcomes.

Private pharmacies, on the other hand, are already in many communities and are typically open on weekends and in the evenings. Distributing ARVs through these private pharmacies provides people living with HIV with a more convenient option. The most important measure of success might be the number of patients who no longer lose a full day of work to access their treatment.

There were 74 private pharmacies participating by July 2022, receiving patients from 39 public health facilities. More than 18,500 people living with HIV have registered to pick up their ARVs at private pharmacies, and the number is steadily growing. Mozambique has proved that this model is working and is growing to include more private pharmacies to serve more clients in a private, client-friendly environment closer to their communities.

To establish this decentralized drug distribution (DDD) approach for ARVs, new systems are needed to provide full visibility and traceability of the commodities from the hospital pharmacy to the shelf of the private pharmacy and into the hands of the client.

The USAID Global Health Supply Chain Program—Procurement and Supply Management (GHSC-PSM) project partnered with Mozambique’s Ministry of Health HIV and AIDS Program, CMAM and numerous other local partners, to establish this innovative approach for ARVs.

Pharmacies were recruited to dispense ARVs through a tender advertised in local media, and pharmacists received training from trained provincial staff. Pharmacies are compensated for this dispensing role and receive regular training and financial support to ensure internet connectivity.

Multi-month dispensing (MMD) of three months is already the national policy in Mozambique, so once patients pick up the last dose of ARVs from the health facility, they have a three-month supply until they visit their selected pharmacy for resupply. During the three months, their records are transferred to the pharmacy, and the provincial warehouse delivers the ARVs to the pharmacy along with a month of buffer stocks. Pharmacies, health facilities, and patients have responded to the new distribution approach with enthusiasm, and the number of patients receiving their ARVs from private pharmacies in their own communities is increasing.

Photo top-left: Private pharmacies already operate in many communities and are typically open on weekends and in the evenings, providing people living with HIV with a more convenient option. Photo by GHSC-PSM.

Photo top-right: Private pharmacies who dispense ARVs receive regular training and IT support from trained provincial staff. Photo by GHSC-PSM.



ANGOLA

Fighting Malaria in Angola

More than 2.5 million cases of malaria were diagnosed in Angola during the first quarter of 2022. The national coordinator of the National Malaria Control Program, José Martins reported that this was an increase of 24 percent over the same period last year.

In March, more than three million long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito nets (LLINs) arrived in Angola. This is part of an initiative funded by the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) that will benefit around 6.2 million people in the provinces of Malanje, Cuanza Norte, Lunda Sul, Lunda Norte, Uíge and Zaire. GHSC-PSM is working closely with the Angola Ministry of Health's (MOH) National Malaria Control Program in the distribution of mosquito nets to six provinces since April of this year.

According to Reginald Badoo, System Strengthening Technical Director, GHSC-PSM procured more than three million LLINs, ensuring these cost-effective, life-saving nets were ready for distribution in record time. Manuel Massamba, PMI Technical Manager, reported that GHSC-PSM is working with local logistics companies to manage storage and distribution of the bed nets, not a small operation considering the shipment comprised of 90 forty-foot shipping containers. Close coordination with private sector partners and local government is helping this campaign succeed, while building the groundwork for future successes.

Following a competitive procurement process with third-party logistics companies, the bed nets were ready for central warehousing, followed by provincial warehousing and distribution to municipalities by Population Services International (PSI). Both the campaign coordinator, Cani Jorge, and the National Malaria Control logistician, Ferreira Manzambi, both from MOH, were amazed that it was possible to reach even difficult-to-reach areas, highlighting

[MOH] was amazed that it was possible to reach even difficult-to-reach areas, highlighting that local delivery companies overcame weather and transportation challenges to ensure that every family was protected against Malaria.

that local delivery companies overcame weather and transportation challenges to ensure that every family was protected against Malaria. Thanks to good coordination and communication between partners, the project has pre-positioned bed nets to ensure that distribution to communities runs smoothly and efficiently.



NAMIBIA

Partnering with Namibia to Prevent the Spread of HIV

USAID recently donated 6.9 million condoms and 2.6 million lubricants through the USAID Global Health Supply Chain Program—Procurement and Supply Management (GHSC-PSM) project to support efforts by the Government of Namibia to prevent the spread of HIV. Namibia has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world but has experienced a condom shortage. As part of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), USAID/Namibia supports 75 facilities in 10 priority geographical areas through Intrahealth Namibia.

“As partners, we must prevent the transmission of HIV. These commodities are so important to fortifying this first line of defense”

— Ms. Jessica Long, Chargé d'Affaires of U.S Embassy



Read the full story on our website

“Condoms are directly responsible for helping the world reach the target of 200,000 or fewer infections by the year 2030,” said Mr. Ben Nangombe, Executive Director of the Ministry of Health and Social Services at the handover event with Ms. Jessica Long, Chargé d'Affaires of U.S Embassy. Photo by GHSC-PSM.



BOTSWANA

An Easier Pill to Swallow for Thousands of Children

To ensure timely availability of medicine and prevent a stockout that would have interrupted life-saving treatment for children living with HIV in Botswana, GHSC-PSM delivered 10,000 bottles (90-count tablets) of dolutegravir (DTG) 10mg to the Ministry of Health and Central Medical Stores. This pediatric treatment is the most effective anti-retroviral (ARV) medication available. It is cheaper, easy to administer, tastes better, and has reduced side effects.

Before the introduction of dispersible DTG 10mg tablets, pediatric patients under 44 pounds (20kg) were given Lopinavir/Ritonavir (LPV/r) as a tablet, suspension, and most recently granules. While it was easy to measure the LPV/r tablet dose, some children had difficulty swallowing the tablets. To mask the unpalatable taste of the LPV/r suspension (which required refrigeration) or granules, caregivers would mix these medicines with food. However, the consequence of this was that some children were not interested in eating.

Dispersible DTG 10mg is not only tolerable, easy to dose and swallow, but also more effective. This will improve treatment adherence and contribute to high viral suppression rates for Botswana's youngest and most vulnerable patients.

Photo: Pharmacy Technician Ms. Gofiwa Reetsang serves 988 ART patients at Gweta Primary hospital in the Tutume region of Botswana. Photo by GHSC-PSM.



ZAMBIA

“People living with HIV are benefiting from having access to more effective and efficient testing facilities, in turn building further confidence in the treatment they are receiving.

This partnership is reimagining the supply chain and building sustainable, long-term solutions that are a win-win-win for the government, for testing facilities and, most importantly, for patients.”

*—Rebecca Logan, GHSC-PSM
Country Programs Director*

Reimagining the Supply Chain and Building Sustainable Solutions

Reaching the third 95 – viral load suppression of people living with HIV – can only be achieved by expanding viral load testing to improve treatment efficacy. This is part of the global health community’s efforts to achieve the 95-95-95 goals by 2030: 95 percent of HIV infected people know their status, 95 percent of these are on HIV treatment, and 95 percent of these have no detectable virus.

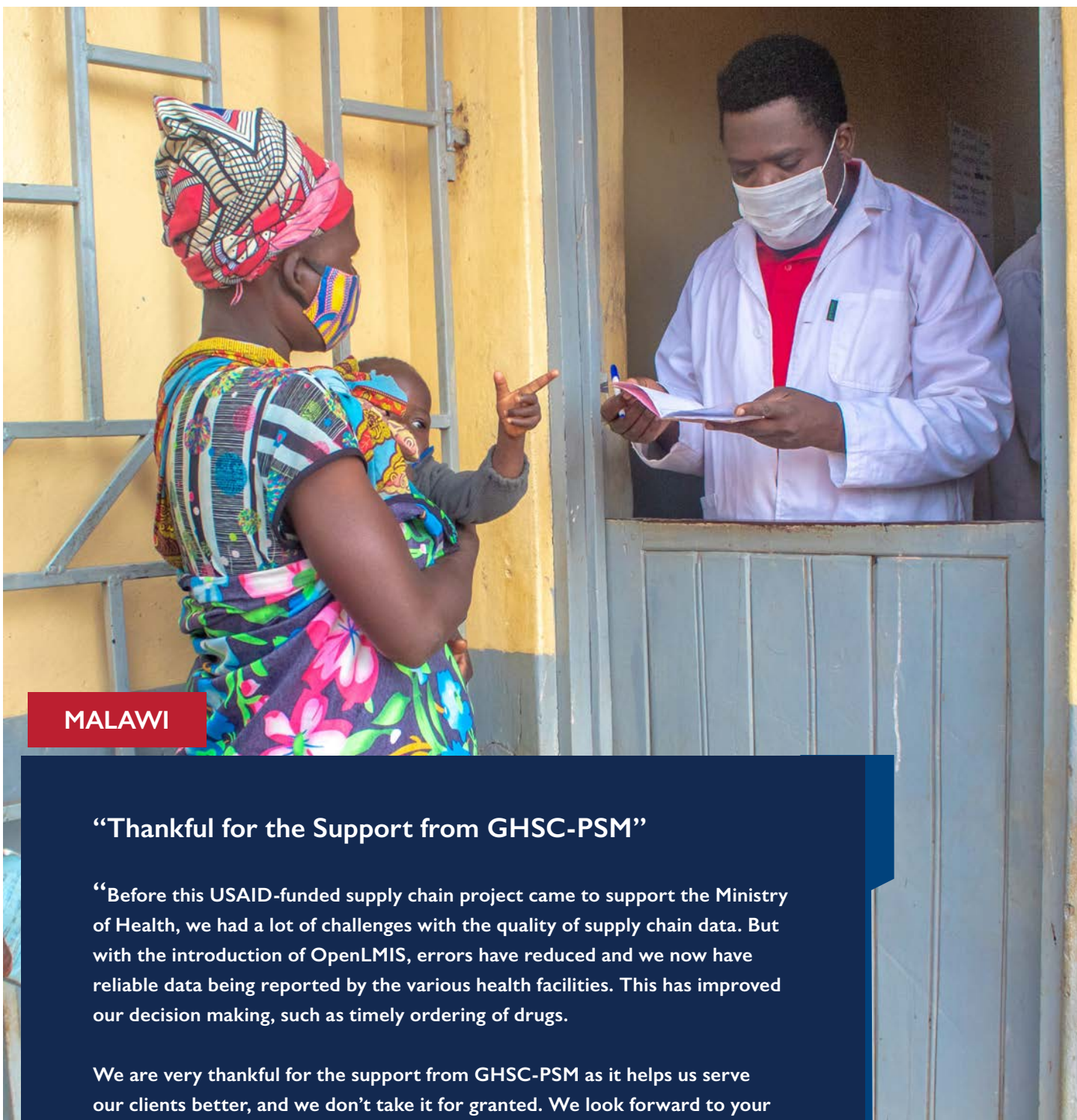
In 2020, the USAID Global Health Supply Chain Program-Procurement Supply Management (GHSC-PSM) project began working with the Zambian Ministry of Health to restructure how viral load testing equipment and commodities are procured and delivered to testing labs throughout the country.

Bundling reagents and ensuring lab equipment is maintained properly by suppliers has reduced costs, improved in-country viral load/early infant diagnosis (VL/EID) services, and has enabled better health outcomes for the people living with HIV.



Read the full story on our website

Photo: People living with HIV now benefit from having access to more effective and efficient testing facilities with waiting times reduced by half to seven days, building further confidence in the treatment they are receiving. Photo by GHSC-PSM.



MALAWI

“Thankful for the Support from GHSC-PSM”

“Before this USAID-funded supply chain project came to support the Ministry of Health, we had a lot of challenges with the quality of supply chain data. But with the introduction of OpenLMIS, errors have reduced and we now have reliable data being reported by the various health facilities. This has improved our decision making, such as timely ordering of drugs.

We are very thankful for the support from GHSC-PSM as it helps us serve our clients better, and we don't take it for granted. We look forward to your continued support to ensure future success. Your support has also gone a long way in bringing a new lease of life to the district health supply chain. As you know, without medical supplies, it would be difficult to assist patients.

Members are now more energized, meet more regularly than before, and this allows them to make key supply chain decisions such as commodity ordering.”

—Dr Wesley Nyirenda - Director of Health Support Services, Rumphi District Hospital

Photo: Pharmacy technician, Raphael Kamange, dispenses life-saving ARVs to adult and pediatric patients at Mponela Rural Hospital in Dowa, Malawi. August 2022. Photo by GHSC-PSM.

RESOURCES

African Society of Laboratory Medicine (ASLM)

ASLM is an independent, international, not-for-profit organization that coordinates, galvanizes and mobilizes stakeholders at the local, national, and international levels to improve local access to world-class diagnostic services and ensure healthy African communities now and for the long-term.

<https://aslm.org/>

Africa Resource Center (ARC)

ARC works with ministries of health to address the critical areas for building more efficient and effective health supply chain systems.

<https://www.africaresourcecentre.org/>

COVID-19 Resources

GHSC-PSM project is closely monitoring COVID-19 spread and working to mitigate its impact on the global health supply chain.

<https://www.ghsupplychain.org/COVID-19-Resources>

Confronting Substandard and Falsified Covid-19 Vaccines: Strategies and tools for global settings

High global demand and insufficient supply have resulted in an inequitable global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, creating an economic incentive for falsified vaccines and opportunities for substandard vaccines, resulting from an unintentional error in production, distribution, storage, and handling. To help address this issue, the U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP) has released this new resource.

<https://www.usp.org/covid-19/vaccines>

ABOUT US

USAID GLOBAL HEALTH SUPPLY CHAIN PROGRAM

Procurement and Supply Management

The USAID Global Health Supply Chain Program-Procurement and Supply Management (GHSC-PSM) project enhances the health care experience in the communities we serve through transformative supply chain solutions. GHSC-PSM purchases and delivers health commodities, strengthens national supply chain systems, and provides global supply chain leadership to ensure lifesaving health supplies reach those in need, when they need them. By working closely with country partners and suppliers worldwide, the project aims to promote wellbeing and help countries develop sustainable supply chain systems. GHSC-PSM has programs in nine countries of Southern Africa: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. For more information go to <https://www.ghsupplychain.org/PSM>.