



Building Local Capacity
(BLC)



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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES
(JULY - AUGUST 2015)

- Technical assistance to central medical store on tender process management and supplier performance monitoring to ensure uninterrupted availability of ARVs and other essential medicines
- Scaling-up the Short Messaging System (SMS) reminders for ART adherence and retention in care
- Technical assistance to the MoHSS on the 2015 annual HIV drug resistance data abstraction and analysis and provide support to the Kunene region in conducting an exercise in medicine use evaluation
- Training trainers of health extension workers in managing inventories for service kits
- Assessing Tonata for compliance with USAID requirements for grant management and strengthening data quality assurance processes
- TA for compiling and disseminating best practices of Tonata, NANASO and sub-recipients of the Global Fund who are managed by NANASO



CAFO's Future Brightens After Successful Implementation of OVC Grant

The United States Embassy in Namibia, in partnership with Management Sciences for Health (MSH), through the USAID-funded Building Local Capacity Project (BLC) officially closed a grant of U\$500 000 to Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO) on June 17, 2015.

Officiated by the United States of America Ambassador to Namibia, Mr. Thomas Daughton, the event was attended by the Director for early childhood development (ECD) at the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), Ms. Spendu Onesmus; CAFO board members and staff.

The partnership between BLC and CAFO, began in March 2014 until March 2015, and was aimed at supporting ECD centers to improve the quality of services provided so that these centers are eligible for registration with the MGECW and provision of HIV prevention services through Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC). CAFO facilitated the grant to support 137 ECD centers serving a total of 6,018 children aged 1-9 years old and aged 1,528 youth aged from 10-14 years.

In his key note address, US Ambassador Thomas Daughton praised the work of CAFO as a good demonstration of the principle of *"help people to help themselves"*. He said this on account of what he witnessed at the Toivo ya Toivo ECD center he visited earlier that morning. During the event MSH highlighted its role of an enabler and a facilitator of mentoring, coaching and adult learning methodologies used to support CAFO during the grant period to strengthen their capacity to improve service delivery.

Mrs. Laura Cronje, the CAFO Chief of Party highlighted the main successes of BLC support: raising CAFO's profile through documentation and reporting



A child from Toivo ya Toivo ECD showing Ambassador Thomas Daughton how to do handwashing. Photo credit BLC, Namibia. June 2015.

of achievement; partnering and networking with regional and local partners to support the ECD and child feeding programmes. In order to sustain the achievements of the OVC grant, BLC will continue its partnership with CAFO to especially support:

- Strengthening partnerships with other partners implementing OVC programmes in the southern Africa
- Sharing experiences and lessons
- Training in business planning for health to develop skills for identifying new business opportunities, costing services, strategies for approaching and marketing to attract new funding
- Refocusing approaches to current government.

"Earlier this morning I had the opportunity to watch CAFO in action. I visited an ECD Center in Katutura. I watched as tiny children proudly demonstrated one of the many things they had learned at the center, something that most of us probably learned from our parents – the importance of washing your hands! That's such a simple concept, but without the work of CAFO and its partners, the children I met might not have learned it", US Ambassador Thomas Daughton

Contributed by BLC Project team in Namibia

Capacitating Pharmacy Staff in Using the Electronic Dispensing Tool for Improved Antiretroviral Therapy Services

The Ministry of Health and Social Services' (MoHSS) Directorate of Special Programs (DSP) and Division: Pharmaceutical Services (Div: PhSs) held the 2015 National EDT Training (NET) workshop at Heja Game Lodge in Khomas region from June 16 to 18, 2015. During the workshop, the Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) program provided technical assistance to the DSP and Div: PhSs to train a pool of 44 pharmacists, pharmacists' assistants and nurses from 50 public-sector ART sites across the 14 regions in Namibia on the use of the EDT and the EDT Mobile (mEDT) in providing efficient ART services to patients.

The EDT is a SIAPS-supported tool used in all public sector ART pharmacies in Namibia to dispense antiretroviral (ARV) medicines, manage patients on ART and manage the inventory of ARV medicines.

The mEDT is a battery-powered hand held device used to dispense and collect ART data at remote facilities such as outreach sites and primary health care (PHC) facilities implementing the Nurse Initiated and Managed Antiretroviral Therapy (NIMART) services. The three-day training was delivered through presentations and practical sessions on the EDT and mEDT.

The NET included training of newly hired pharmacy staff and contributed to the MoHSS' decentralization of ART services to NIMART sites. Participants were provided with training materials to assist them in passing on the acquired skills to other health professionals in their workplaces who are involved in using the EDT.

Participants were also supported in developing action plans to optimize the use of the EDT and mEDT at ART facilities in their respective regions. The participants are now able to optimally use the EDT, especially the mobile devices that were recently



A SLAPS facilitator demonstrates use of the EDT to a group of participants during a practical session of the EDT training in June 2015. Photo by SLAPS/Namibia Staff.

distributed to ART sites by the DSP, with the support of USAID and other partners. Optimum use of the EDT provides the ART program with access to reliable patient and ARV medicines data so that complete data is available in a timely manner for informing the management of the HIV treatment programme at site level and nationally.

Effective implementation and use of the EDT also enables access by regional pharmacists to region-specific profiles on the existing national database (NDB) to facilitate their participation in the monitoring of ART data quality, ART-related activities in their regions and the local use of ART data. The efficient provision of ART services to patients improves ART treatment outcomes and saves the lives of ART patients.



Photo of the mEDT device. Credit: SLAPS/Namibia staff.

Contributed by Bayobuya Phulu and Samson Mwinga (Senior Technical Advisors, SIAPS)

Improved Skills and Stronger Organizational Capacity of Tonata to Deliver Services to PLHIV

The USAID-funded Building Local Capacity (BLC) project has been providing technical support to Tonata, a network of people living with HIV (PLHIV), since October 2014. The organizational capacity assessment (OCA) administered at the beginning of the BLC support discovered that Tonata did not have human resource guidelines. In March 2015, USAID granted the network a capacity building grant worth US\$20,000, which has facilitated skills development for the board and staff.

The support facilitated the following:

- Development of a work plan
- Programme management plan
- Human resource and financial policies
- Monitoring and evaluation framework

The board members have been equipped with skills to review, develop and approve policies and guidelines for improved human resource and financial management. The work plan which will be implemented from May - December 2015 will facilitate and guide the implementation of activities in order to achieve strategic objectives. The plan has timelines for implementation, which will enable Tonata to monitor, review its performance and make strategic implementation changes in order to achieve the desired results.

BLC facilitated the review of data collection tools to align them to national HIV and PEPFAR indicators that Tonata reports on or will potentially report on.

The tools included the support group membership registration form, reporting and capacity assessment tool. The above tools were reviewed and combined to include the new PEPFAR age desegregation, members receiving antiretroviral therapy, prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT), skills development training,

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Enhancing the Skills of Central Medical Stores Staff in Supply Chain Data Analysis and Visualization

A well-functioning pharmaceutical supply chain greatly relies on the ready availability of stock status data, which must be analysed to generate information for commodity supply management decisions.

Most pharmaceuticals purchased by the Central Medical Store (CMS) in Namibia commonly have long supplier lead times, averaging 11 weeks, and therefore call for judicious supply planning.

The CMS has access to good quality historical electronic data on product demand and orders filled by the depot. However, this data was not routinely analysed and used to guide supply planning. As a result, the combined CMS order fulfilment rate to lower level facilities for antiretroviral and other essential medicines and clinical supplies declined to a low of 65% in the financial year ending March 2015.

The Syspro® software installed by MoHSS at CMS for inventory and orders management captures all transaction data and can generate many reports; however, the system cannot create meaningful summary data visualizations or dashboards without end-user manipulation. The lack of adequate spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel®) skills among the CMS staff made it difficult for them to manipulate the data extracted from the Syspro® and to analyse it to generate summary stock status information such as stocked out products and those below minimum stock level, requiring immediate procurement action and



Benjamin Onger, SCMS Senior Technical Manager (standing) facilitates the data analysis and visualization training for five CMS staff. Two MSH staff also attended the training to sharpen their Microsoft Excel® skills. Picture by MSH staff. June 2015.

those above maximum stock level, at a risk of expiration. To address this gap, the USAID-funded Supply Chain Management System (SCMS) project conducted a two day hands-on Excel® training at intermediate-to-advanced level for five (5) CMS staff involved in demand forecasting and supply planning of pharmaceuticals. The training equipped the staff with skills needed to manipulate large data sets using Excel® database features and to summarise and visualize the data using pivot tables.

The trainees were pleasantly surprised by the versatility of Excel®, a tool that was readily available on their desktops, in creating data visualizations. Immediately after the training, the CMS Network Administrator, who was among the trainees, put the newly acquired skills to use by creating a stock status dashboard that is directly linked to the Syspro® database which only

needs to be refreshed to provide the latest stock status data. Before, it would take CMS staff about two days to generate such data. The CMS has the sole responsibility for procuring and distributing pharmaceuticals and clinical supplies for all public sector health facilities in Namibia.

In FY 2014/15, the CMS procured commodities valued at about N\$ 1 billion.

“Thank you very much, I got a lot of knowledge about capturing of data and manipulation, and then everything was brightened as I will now document and report easily”, Central Medical Stores Dispatch Pharmacist

Contributed by Benjamin Onger
Senior Technical Manager (SCMS)

Improved Skills and Stronger Organizational Capacity of Tonata

Continued from page...2

key populations and added code for support groups and members to facilitate easy analysis of data for planning and implementation of support.

BLC facilitated the development of a support group reporting form as Tonata had no standardized reporting form for the support group activities. The development of this form will enable support groups to report on programme relevant issues as well as

enable Tonata to receive consistent and standardized reports from support group members on implemented activities. The reporting form will also inform the organization about the challenges, opportunities and linkages in the support groups.

The tools and guidelines will enable Tonata to put in place the appropriate systems and structures to identify needs, implement and evaluate needed services for their members.



Silas Sbangolela -standing, the Tonata Monitoring and Evaluation Officer facilitating one of the sessions during the M&E training. Photo credit: BLC/Namibia June 2015.

BLC project staff in Namibia

Strengthening Regional Management Teams' Oversight of Accountability for Pharmaceuticals

When health facilities experience stock outs of antiretroviral and other essential medicines, it is usually common to point a finger at the higher level medical depot that supplies them with these products.

Typically with any supply chain, the quality of demand information coming from the lower level health facilities is critical in forecasting requirements and ensuring that adequate supplies are available to meet the health needs of the population.

With this in mind, the USAID-funded Supply Chain Management System (SCMS) project organised a two-day workshop for representatives of regional management teams (RMT) in Windhoek from June 25th to 26th, 2015. The workshop was attended by 25 MoHSS staff, including 5 chief medical officers and 12 regional pharmacists representing 13 of 14 administrative regions of Namibia. Also in attendance were six pharmacists from the Division of Pharmaceutical Services at the national level and two from referral hospitals. The workshop aimed at achieving a mutual understanding of the requirements for better managing pharmaceuticals at all levels of the public sector pharmaceutical supply chain given the large expenditure committed by the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) to availing antiretroviral medicines (ARVs), other essential medicines and related supplies.

In FY 2014/15, GRN committed about N\$1 billion to the procurement of pharmaceuticals and related supplies, with ARVs and HIV rapid test kits comprising 41% of this expenditure. The workshop also served as a platform for the Division of Pharmaceutical Services to provide formal feedback to the RMT representatives on the findings and recommendations of the annual site level pharmaceutical supportive supervision visits (SSVs) conducted in February 2015.

Challenges in inventory management at the health facility level, and the resultant understocking or overstocking, were highlighted as among the areas that had

continued to undermine the effective delivery of HIV-related pharmaceutical services at health facilities in the past three years.

The primary purpose of the workshop was to emphasize the role of the RMTs in facilitating the implementation of these recommendations especially the ones that require a budgetary provision. The Deputy Director of the MoHSS Division of Pharmaceutical Services, Mr. Lazarus Indongo delivered the keynote address during the official opening ceremony. He reiterated the MoHSS efforts to alleviate the chronic shortage of pharmaceutical staff at health facilities in the country and highlighted the recent recruitment of 20 pharmacists from Ethiopia. He awarded certificates of recognition to three hospitals and three primary health care facilities that demonstrated excellence in pharmaceutical management based on the SSVs assessment.

The hospitals honoured were Katima Mulilo, Opuwo and Swakopmund district hospitals in Zambezi, Kunene and Erongo regions respectively. The PHC facilities were Sendingplass clinic, Nkurenkuru health centre and Aranos health centre in Omaheke, Kavango and Hardap regions respectively.

During the same event, the MoHSS officially launched and disseminated the revised Pharmaceutical Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manuals for hospital and PHC levels. These two documents were updated through collaborative technical assistance funded by the Global Fund Against AIDS, TB and Malaria and USAID through SCMS and SIAPS projects.

Namibia's health system is decentralized according to the 14 administrative regions of the country. The regional management teams are responsible for leadership and management functions to support regional health activities. Regional pharmacists, who are part of the RMT, are primarily accountable for coordination and implementation of pharmaceutical services at regional level. The national level, through the Division of Pharmaceutical Services is



Deputy Director of the MoHSS Division of Pharmaceutical Services, Mr. Lazarus Indongo (right) officially unveils the revised pharmaceutical management standard operating procedures for hospital and primary health care levels and presents copies of the manuals to Dr. Noel Siame, the Zambezi region Chief Medical Officer. Picture by MSH staff. June 2015.

responsible for formulating policies, strategies and standards as well as providing technical oversight through supervision, monitoring and evaluation of pharmaceutical service delivery.

Contributed by: Benjamin Onger
Senior Technical Manager (SCMS)

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The SIAPS/SCMS/BLC Namibia e-Newsletter is a bi-monthly newsletter that keeps you abreast of activities funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by MSH in Namibia.

Key focus areas are HIV /AIDS Management:

- Strengthening Health Systems
- Capacity Building
- Human Resource Development
- Service Delivery

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