

Professionalizing the Supply Chain Workforce



In order to reach all people, health supply chains need competent, professional leaders who can ensure health products are consistently available when and where needed. Historically, supply chain management has not been recognized as a distinct profession. This means that those carrying out supply chain functions often do not have the specialized skills to support resilient and integrated supply chains. Without professionalized supply chain personnel, supply chain performance is poor, and ultimately health outcomes are low. To date, donors have funded ad hoc supply chain management trainings, but these are not cost-effective or sustainable as they require continued external support. In order to sustainably professionalize the supply chain workforce, local institutions must provide support throughout the career trajectory.

In response to this need, VillageReach will support national governments to develop a path to professionalizing health supply chain management as a recognized discipline, supported by local professional associations and training institutions. The goal of this work is to strengthen the supply and demand of a competent supply chain workforce supported by standards that reinforce supply chain as a professional career to be performed with integrity and prestige. By creating a sustainable pipeline of skilled supply chain professionals, we provide governments with valuable human resources that they can draw on to resolve supply chain problems and reduce stockouts. This work is part of a catalytic investment from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, called **Supply Chain Integrators**, which aims to build health supply chains that are demand-driven, resilient and integrated.

Our Approach

To achieve this objective, VillageReach will build partnerships and collaborate with local initiatives in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Malawi, and Mozambique to shape supply chain into a professional discipline that is reinforced by government standards and professional associations. Recognizing that strong models of innovation lie beyond the public health sector, we aim to leverage existing efforts by partners and engage multi-sectoral partners in the private sector and academic institutions.

Our three-pronged approach aims to transform supply chain workforce development from an ad hoc, global donor-funded effort into a locally driven process that is sustainable, structured, and endorsed by national governments.

1. **Standardize:** Collaborate with governments to adopt an [existing supply chain professionalization framework](#) in order to standardize supply chain roles, map them to competencies and professional career paths and ensure existing supply chain training content is standardized according to global best practices.
2. **Strengthen:** Provide existing supply chain professional associations with country-level support to engage, retain and continually build capacity of members
3. **Integrate:** Work with local academic and training institutions to incorporate supply chain training courses into health sciences curricula, thereby localizing supply chain training in the long-term and enabling students to gain supply chain skills prior to entering the workforce.



We will draw on frameworks and approaches developed by People that Deliver (PtD), SAPICS and the International Association of Public Health Logisticians (IAPHL) to work with governments to professionalize the supply chain workforce. Through this work, we will lay the foundation to create a pipeline of national supply chain leaders to manage resilient, agile health supply chains.

For more information, please contact:

Dauda Majanbu

Manager, Supply Chain

dauda.majanbu@villagereach.org

Rebecca Alban

Manager, Health Systems

rebecca.alban@villagereach.org