

Last Mile Supply Chain

Ensuring the availability of medical products at health facilities across Mozambique

A sports utility vehicle traverses through grasses at the last mile. Photo Credit: Denis Onyodi

Background

In 2013, the Mozambique Ministry of Health (MISAU) adopted the Pharmaceutical Logistics Strategic Plan (PELF), prompting several reforms to improve the distribution of critical medical products to health facilities. It also expanded the use of electronic logistics management information systems (eLMIS) to ensure end-to-end visibility and quality of key logistical information throughout the supply chain. One key element of the PELF was the introduction of private sector transporters as part of the public health supply chain, avoiding the expense and complexity of purchasing and maintaining vehicles and the associated transportation information technology.

Inspired by the successful introduction of outsourced direct-to-health facilities delivery in Tete Province from 2015, VillageReach supported MISAU and USAID in implementing outsourcing across the country while integrating the distribution of medicines and vaccines into a single supply chain under the management of Central Medicine Stores (CMAM). The Last Mile Supply Chain (LMSC) program proved, through deployments in 10 of 11 provinces, that integrated outsourcing of all lifesaving products directly to health facilities can work at scale.

Program summary

The primary objective of LMSC is to improve the availability of health products and vaccines at the last mile, aligning with long-term national strategies while taking short-term steps to address chronic logistics and transport challenges at the sub-national level. The program began in Zambézia, the second most populated Mozambican province, with deliveries to two districts in October 2018. By the end of September 2021, LMSC had expanded to support monthly deliveries across every district in 10 of Mozambique's 11 provinces, distributing lifesaving health products to a total of 1,500 health facilities.

Strategic public and private sector partnerships are core to LMSC, to ensure effective implementation, maximize results and safeguard long-term sustainability. The MISAU, CMAM, Provincial Health Directorate (SPS), Provincial Warehouse (DPM), and the intermediary warehouses in each province are the critical public sector partners. Technical partners have included Project Last Mile, Africa Resource Center (ARC) and private sector companies like Bolloré Transport & Logistics and Agility.

Reaching “The Last Mile”

Delivery of lifesaving health products to the health facility level when and where they are needed most.



Program approach

The technical approach to LMSC is based on three key principles to address current challenges. They include:



Capacity building to support logistics management and private sector collaboration

LMSC focuses on improving long-term logistics capabilities at the sub-national level. Extensive training and mentoring on topics such as transport processes, performance management, data analytics and cost management aims to deepen collaboration between SPS and third-party logistics firms (3PLs) at the provincial level and the management capacity of CMAM when working with fourth-party logistics firms (4PLs).



Transition to government

The LMSC program prioritizes the documentation of processes, tools and best practices, and the provision of associated training and technical support to ensure CMAM and provincial government stakeholders can operate without external technical assistance. LMSC has developed a Transport Services Solutions Toolkit, including tools for Transport Cost Analysis, as an easily accessible resource for all stakeholders engaged in supporting outsourced distribution for CMAM.



Strengthened stakeholder and technical management

LMSC is helping to establish a provincial logistics technical working group (TWG) composed of SPS and key supply chain transport partners to provide planning, accountability and recommendations for continuous system improvements.



Pharmacy assistants are reviewing orders for shipment to health facilities in Zambezia province. Photo Credit: Denis Onyodi

Program results

The primary goal of the LMSC program is to improve the availability of health products when and where they are needed for testing and treatment. Based on results through September 2021, LMSC contributed to ensuring health facilities received commodities, consistently, in full and on time:

99.0%

of all commodity deliveries distributed according to plan

99.5%

of all deliveries received in full (matching quantity sent/received)

78.0%

of all deliveries made to health facilities within 25-35 days

Looking forward

LMSC has been crucial in setting up Mozambique's supply chain for success by ensuring the timely availability of medical products at health facilities across the country. September 2021 marked a major pivot in the focus of LMSC, with the announcement of the USAID Commodities for Health: Ensuring Guaranteed Access and Reliability (CHEGAR) award and the direct management of the 4PL contract and relationship shifting to USAID.

In this new phase, LMSC will play a key role in facilitating USAID, provincial governments' and CMAM's performance management of 3PLs and 4PLs and building government capacity to fully manage the outsourced transport system. This will require setting up collaborative relationships between public and private sector stakeholders that will be sustained now and into the future.

About VillageReach

VillageReach transforms health care delivery to reach everyone, so that each person has the health care needed to thrive. We develop solutions that improve equity and access to primary health care. This includes making sure products are available when and where they are needed and primary health care services are delivered to the most under-reached. Radical collaboration with governments, the private sector and other partners strengthen our ability to scale and sustain these solutions. Our work increases access to quality health care for 58 million people in sub-Saharan Africa.

VillageReach in Mozambique

VillageReach works with the Mozambique government and the private sector to drive sustained impact at scale for over 20 years. Today, our supply chain design approach, in collaboration with the Ministério da Saúde de Moçambique, helps ensure health products are available to under-reached communities at a national scale.