

Supply Chain Investment Coordination



Building [integrated public health supply chains](#)¹ in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) is critical for getting products to people and achieving universal health coverage by 2030. However, increasing investments for supply chain strengthening programs alone will not build stronger supply chains that are equitable, people-centered, resilient and sustainable. Stronger supply chains require government strategy and stewardship, because government develops the national supply chain strategy and sets goals for supply chain development.

In many LMICs, stakeholders (government, donor and technical partners) work in silos investing in supply chain programs that may be duplicative or may not address the most critical supply chain challenges. Additionally, without a mechanism for on-going review and coordination between partners, supply chain programs developed in alignment with a country strategy may no longer be relevant. Therefore, supply chain investments and programs need a coherent government-led logistics management and coordination solution, because it links supply chain strategy to supply chain program implementation.

Government-led supply chain coordination

VillageReach supports a solution for government led management and coordination of supply chain investments and programs, called [Supply Chain Investment Coordination and Advocacy \(SCICA\)](#). It was developed in collaboration with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) government in 2020. SCICA aims to increase the availability of health products in both quantity and quality by:

- Positioning government as the leaders of the public health supply chain
- Coordinating donor-funded and government-funded supply chain investments for medicines and health products², in alignment with government priorities; and
- Coordinating and assessing supply chain programs.

This solution improves overall supply chain performance by ensuring investments and programs are aligned with country priorities and targeted to address country-specific supply chain challenges.

THE SOLUTION

SCICA uses a continuous improvement cycle to conduct supply chain investment reviews that require regular review sessions (annual and quarterly) for governments and their partners to assess public health supply chain performance.³ The SCICA solution is divided into four steps (Figure 2), which are outlined in the SCICA Charter. The charter is a document that describes how to implement the SCICA solution with an emphasis on continuous improvement, and



Figure 1: Supply Chain Investment Coordination links strategy with implementation

¹ VillageReach defines public health supply chains as all public-sector managed supply chains, i.e., medicines, health products and the immunization supply chain

² Presently SCICA does NOT coordinate investments and programs for immunization supply chains.

³ The SCICA solution does not address managing funds, dispersing funds or implementing programs.

governs all stakeholders involved in the public health supply chain. Each step of the implementation cycle has several activities for stakeholders to complete. The implementation of these steps are operationalized by tools and processes within the SCICA toolkit.



Figure 2: The Supply Chain Investment and Coordination Cycle

STAKEHOLDER BENEFITS

The SCICA solution benefits all stakeholders in the public health supply chain. It creates better alignment not only between governments and their partners, but also between various technical partners and donors. SCICA provides a level of coordination for supply chain investments and programs that helps ensure the consistent availability of quality health products for even the hardest-to-reach communities. The stakeholder benefits below are from the annual SCICA perception survey conducted in the DRC.

Table 1: SCICA Stakeholder benefits

	 GOVERNMENT	 DONORS & TECHNICAL PARTNERS
 Benefits of SCICA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforces existing government ownership and leadership mechanisms. • Ensures a match between local supply system capacity and investments. • Advocates to donors for efficient investment in the supply chain. • Provides a global view of the country's supply chain program performance. • Helps define country supply chain priorities, and ensures alignment of those priorities with donors and technical partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables a framework for the on-going coordinated exchange of supply chain performance information with government. • Aligns supply chain investment and program targets with government priorities. • Focuses investments and program on the most critical constraints in the supply chain for greater impact in improving supply chain performance.

Implementing SCICA

The value of SCICA is relevant across many LMICs that lack coordination across supply chain investments and programs. Any sustainable solution must have government buy-in for successful implementation, which is why SCICA puts government at the center of strengthening public health supply chains. While this solution was originally developed for the DRC, it can be adapted to any country context.

DRC IMPLEMENTATION

The DRC government, with VillageReach technical assistance, is applying SCICA in five national health programs (reproductive health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis) and in four provinces (Kongo Central, Kinshasa, Haut Katanga and Tshopo). The long-term goal is for the solution to be used across all provinces and all national health programs.

The SCICA solution, which was co-developed with the DRC government, was designed based on stakeholder interviews, mapping of current DRC supply chain programs, review of existing supply chain assessments and of other coordination mechanisms (such as the [Groupe Inter Bailleurs Santé \(GIBS\)](#)) and management models such as the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle.

A SCICA charter has been established at the national level. Before implementation in a province, the SCICA charter established at the national level is contextualized to each province. To strengthen the implementation of the SCICA charter throughout the country, the Secretary General of Health signed a Circular Note in 2022 calling on all stakeholders working in the supply chain of medicines and other health products to comply with it. This commitment benefits donors and technical partners by offering them a solution validated by the government, which is part of the Implementation of the National Strategic Health Development Plan.

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