

# Technical Reference Team

## Recommendation 6: Supply and Awareness

### Background

The UN Commission on Life-Saving Commodities for Women and Children (the Commission) was formed in 2012 by the UN Secretary-General as part of the global Every Woman Every Child (EWEC) movement. EWEC challenges the global community to increase access to and appropriate use of essential medicines, medical devices, and health supplies that effectively address the leading preventable causes of death during pregnancy, childbirth, and childhood.

Led by a wide range of high-level leaders from around the world, the Commission developed a framework for action on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (RMNCH) products that can be applied nationally and utilized in global RMNCH initiatives. The framework outlines a priority list of 13 commodities, key barriers to access and use, and 10 cross-cutting recommendations to rapidly increase both access and use. By increasing access to and use of these 13 commodities, it is estimated that 6 million women and children can be saved by 2017.

### Moving forward

To help carry forward the Commission's recommendations at the global and national levels, **Global Technical Reference Teams (TRT)** were established. One group was formed for each of the 13 commodities and 10 recommendations, and an advocacy working group is dedicated to advancing cross-cutting goals. The TRTs carry out their work through a variety of mechanisms, including guidance documents and tools to support countries in their efforts to implement recommendations and address global and regional bottlenecks. These reference teams are coordinated by a Strategy and Coordination Team hosted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

### Spotlight on Recommendation 6

Supply chain management bottlenecks exist across



Photo courtesy of Naashon Zalk/Full Frame

A health care worker ensures the vaccines she will soon deliver are kept cool. Cold chains are an important tool and can help ensure the safety and efficacy of many lifesaving maternal, newborn, and child health products.

supply chain functions, including quantification, procurement, distribution, storage, information monitoring, and inventory management. Unpredictable supply chains are often a barrier to ensuring commodity availability. Recommendation 6 calls upon all EWEC countries to improve the supply of life-saving commodities and utilize information and communication technology (ICT) best practices to make these improvements by 2015. To realize this goal, Recommendation 6 conveners are:

- Gathering and compiling good practices and success stories in supply chain management for dissemination to and utilization by countries.
- Developing guidance for quantification (forecasting and supply planning) of RMNCH essential medicines for utilization by countries.
- Documenting and disseminating knowledge and good practices on public-private partnerships to improve supply chain management.
- Enhancing open-source health supply chain ICT systems for use in supply chain management in the eight pathfinder countries.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda.

### Group membership

The Recommendation 6 TRT is jointly led by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). John Snow, Inc., the Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services program led by Management Sciences for Health, and VillageReach serve as major focal points for key activities.

### Progress to date and upcoming activities

The Recommendation 6 TRT is collecting proven approaches for supply chain management, including addressing barriers along the entire supply chain, effective ICT solutions at scale, supply chain integration, commodity security coordinating committees, and integration of Health Management Information Systems (HMIS) and Logistics Management Information Systems (LMIS) data collection. The group is also recommending supply chain performance indicators and will develop a guidance document for quantification of these commodities that includes forecasting algorithms for each commodity.

The Recommendation 6 TRT will document and disseminate good public-private partnership practices on health supply chain management. This includes the creation of an advocacy toolkit, framework, and pilot program for engaging private-sector partners to strengthen supply chain systems within countries.

The TRT will also work to enhance the ability of existing electronic programs (e.g., OpenLMIS, CommTrack, and DHIS2) to create interoperable tools for supporting the LMIS needs of the eight pathfinder countries and will develop necessary commodity-specific functionality for open source LMIS systems that can integrate with a common HMIS in at least one country.

### Available resources

The Recommendation 6 TRT is developing a series of tools to assist countries in improving their supply chain management functions, including:

- A barriers framework for supply chain (July 2013).
- Forecasting, quantification and supply planning definitions (July 2013)

- Briefs on best and emerging practices for supply chain management (September 2013).
- Country case studies and lessons learned in supply chain integration (September 2013).
- A guide to best practices in supply chain integration (October 2013).
- Inventory and case studies of ICT tools available to support country supply chain strengthening (October 2013).
- Case studies on effective integration of HMIS and LMIS data (October 2013).
- A best practices resource on coordinating committees on supply management (October 2013).
- A list of key supply chain indicators for routinely measuring performance (October 2013).
- A quantification guidance package (draft for field test October 2013).
- An advocacy toolkit and framework for engaging the private sector in supply chain management (October 2013).
- Upgraded ICT systems, including CommTrack, which manages commodities at health facilities and among community health workers; DHIS2, which provides logistics management features; and OpenLMIS, which supports the medical commodity replenishment cycle (October and November 2013).

The Recommendation 6 TRT provides technical assistance to identify country-specific supply chain barriers and potential solutions using global best practices—and other promising approaches (including developing and strengthening coordination committees)—develop forecasting and supply plans, engage the private sector, assess recommendations on ICT solutions, and customize and deploy supply chain information systems.

### Contact us

For more information or to request tools and technical assistance, contact Jennifer Bergeson-Lockwood, USAID ([jbergeson-lockwood@usaid.gov](mailto:jbergeson-lockwood@usaid.gov)), Jagdish Upadhyay, UNFPA ([upadhyay@unfpa.org](mailto:upadhyay@unfpa.org)), and Kabir Ahmed, UNFPA ([kahmed@unfpa.org](mailto:kahmed@unfpa.org)).