



USAID
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KENYA

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING

A strong, well-functioning and sustainable health system – capable of efficiently delivering and managing health care services – is vital to improving the health status of Kenyans. Health systems in Kenya are constrained by insufficient financial resources, a shortage and poor distribution of healthcare workers, weaknesses in legislation and information systems and a lack of management and other technical expertise. Accessing quality health services is especially difficult for women and youth.

Strengthening the health system is at the core of the Government of Kenya’s universal health coverage agenda. USAID supported the formulation of foundational health policies, laws, and guidelines stemming from the 2010 Constitution and assists Health Ministries and counties to better plan, manage and finance quality health services to meet local needs.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

USAID’s approach in leadership and governance is to assist the Government of Kenya to strengthen governance structures and functions; institutionalize management and budgeting procedures, create leadership and governance curricula; and improve access to management training courses to enhance the delivery of health services at the county level.

HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HEALTH

The World Health Organization has characterized Kenya as facing an acute shortage of health workers. In addition, poor distribution and retention of health care workers remains a serious concern, particularly in regions where the need is greatest. USAID’s approach to human resources for health has helped to finance critical gaps in health workforce needs with the Ministry of Health taking over financing for these positions. USAID’s approach also includes actions to strengthen workforce planning, human resources information management, regulatory and professional bodies, and pre-service and in-service training. Through the Afya Elimu Fund, a revolving medical education loan fund, USAID is partnering with the Government of Kenya and the private sector to sustainably increase the number of Kenyans entering the workforce in high disease burden areas.

HEALTH FINANCING

The high cost of healthcare remains a major barrier to access, especially for the poor who spend a large share of their household income to meet their healthcare needs. A priority for health financing is to ensure that existing funds are used efficiently and to reach poor and underserved populations. USAID is supporting increased domestic resource mobilization for health and improved planning and budgeting processes at the county level. USAID works with the Government of Kenya to develop health financing

policies and strategies; supports innovative private health financing mechanisms that target increased coverage for the poor and those lacking access to care; and continues to support the National Hospital Insurance Fund reforms.

HEALTH PRODUCTS AND TECHNOLOGIES

The Kenyan Government has prioritized efforts to strengthen management of health products and technologies, with emphasis being placed on ensuring these commodities are accessible and affordable; meet defined standards for quality, efficacy and safety; and are appropriately utilized. USAID has contributed to gains already made in this area through strengthening the national procurement and supply chain system and also building oversight capacity for county level systems that impact the supply chain and commodity management.

At national level USAID has provided targeted assistance to the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA) for several years. In September 2015, USAID signed a \$650 million contract with KEMSA to procure, warehouse and distribute US funded HIV/AIDS commodities that were previously procured and supplied through U.S. implementing mechanisms. Under this new contract, U.S. funded health commodities for the malaria program; contraceptives; and MNCH equipment and supplies are warehoused at and distributed through KEMSA. At the county level, USAID supported the establishment of county oversight structures to provide leadership in commodity management at the sub-county and facility levels.

HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Health information systems are critical to determining the health status of Kenyans and to inform effective policies and programs. USAID has aligned its own reporting needs to Kenya's performance management efforts, and continues to support the Kenyan Government's District Health Information System. Reporting rates in the District Health Information System are currently high but lack complete and accurate health data. USAID has supported the development of national training materials for the District Health Information System entry and use, which are being rolled out in partnership with the Government of Kenya. As county governments lead local data collection and decision-making, USAID continues to provide technical leadership in this area. This will enable the Government of Kenya and all other key stakeholders to access complete and accurate health information to better plan, implement and evaluate health efforts.