

WHO Global NTD Programme

Supply Chain Technical Support Mechanism for NTD Programs

Project Progress Meeting

Date: 25th September, 2024

Time: 08.30-17.00

Location: WHO Headquarters, Geneva

Background

Medicines donated mainly by pharmaceutical companies through WHO are a pillar in the fight against Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). Eleven pharmaceutical companies have been donating medicines over several decades, covering a significant proportion of the cost of interventions against NTDs. WHO handles about 80 percent of the globally donated medicines for NTDs. Strong health commodity supply chains are a cornerstone of Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) programs, protecting investments in life-saving medicines and ensuring they reach targeted populations. However, numerous challenges within the first and last miles of the NTD supply chain have been identified, leading to delays, stockouts, and inefficiencies in implementation of mass drug administration activities

Key challenges at country levels include but are not limited to: i) delayed and incomplete submissions of drug requests (as part of the Joint Application Package); ii) weak systems and processes for NTD stock management and reverse logistics; iii) the rarity of NTD program inclusion in the national logistics management information systems (eLMIS); iv) not receiving medicines on time or in quantities requested; and v) delayed customs clearances. At the global level, challenges include but are not limited to: i) inaccurate short-term forecasts and lack of long-term forecasts; lack of end-to-end visibility of inventories; ii) lack of information on funding availability for mass drug administration (MDA) to ensure that donated medicines are distributed to targeted populations; and iii) unrealistic timelines from order date to country-level MDA implementation dates.

The *Supply Chain Technical Support Mechanism to NTD Programs (SCTSM)* project is a five-year initiative (November 2023 to October 2028) aimed at enhancing coordination and collaboration among manufacturers, the World Health Organization (WHO), funding and technical partners, and countries, with the aim of improving the NTD supply chain in Africa. By aligning with industry best practices for supply and demand management, this mechanism aims to address end to end supply chain challenges and ensure the timely availability of medicines and reduction of wastage in NTD programs.

Purpose of meeting:

Provide an update on the progress of the project, share learnings from the scoping activities and gather feedback on project plans and priorities moving forward. Provide an opportunity for country NTD programs to present 3 year forecasts, that consider available funding and upcoming surveillance that may change the program activities. Discuss medium term forecasting methodologies and results and agree on a way forward to ensure forecasts can provide pharmaceutical partners with the information they need to produce medicines and supply countries in an effective and efficient way.

Objectives:

1. Update on project progress, roadmaps and plans for year 2
2. Understand processes, challenges and new tools for global and country forecasts
3. Review 3 year country forecasts for WHO managed PC-NTD medicines for project countries
4. Discuss refining and incorporating country forecasting into global estimates to ensure they provide the needed information

Meeting Outputs/Deliverables:

1. Feedback and input into project progress and plans for the next year of the project
2. Feedback on country roadmaps for the 8 project countries
3. Agree on a methodology and next steps to finalize global and country forecasts

Request for Country NTD Programs

Country programs are invited to present 3 year forecasts to the group virtually during this meeting. These forecasts will provide visibility to global level into the long term medicine needs of the recipient countries and enable pharmaceutical companies to accurately procure raw materials, effectively plan for production, and efficiently ship medicines to countries. These forecasts will not replace the existing request process through the Joint Application Package, but will complement and provide information for completing future requests. The SCTSM Project has developed a simplified methodology and tool, with inputs from global partners, to enable countries to easily forecast for the next three years.

Draft Agenda

TIME	ACTIVITIES	Facilitator
8:30 - 9:00	Welcome Opening	WHO Geneva / ESPEN
9:00 - 9:30	Project progress in year 1 and year 2 priorities	SCTSM
9:30 - 11:00	Results of country scoping and roadmaps	SCTSM
11:00 - 11:15	BREAK	
11:15 - 11:45	Global and Country Forecast update	SCTSM
11:45 - 12:15	New NTD deliver tools and processes	StandardCo / SCTSM
12:15 - 13:00	Review existing global forecasts	WHO Geneva / ESPEN / SCTSM
13:00 - 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 - 16:00	Country presentations of 3 year forecasts	Country NTD Programs
16:00 - 16:15	BREAK	
16:15 - 16:45	Next steps on country and global forecasts	SCTSM
16:45 - 17:00	CLOSING	WHO