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LOCAL HEALTH SYSTEM SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT

NOVEMBER 2020

The Local Health System Sustainability Project (LHSS) is USAID's flagship initiative to better integrate health systems strengthening. Its goal is to help low- and middle-income countries transition to sustainable, self-financed health systems as a means to support access to universal health coverage.

AT A GLANCE

Funder: USAID

Mechanism: Task Order 1 contract under USAID's Integrated Health Systems IDIQ

Period of performance: August 2019– August 2024

OBJECTIVES

- **Increase financial protection.** Too many people cannot afford basic health care. LHSS will contribute to reducing financial barriers so that the cost of essential health services neither prevents people from accessing services nor causes financial hardship.
- **Increase population coverage.** A person's ability to access health care should not depend on their social status or where they live. LHSS will help governments improve access to essential health services and ensure that health services are responsive to all clients' needs.
- **Increase service coverage of quality essential services.** Equitable access makes little difference if health services are of poor quality. LHSS will help countries build ways to continually improve the quality of patient-centered services and ensure that care meets minimum standards.

SUSTAINABILITY: A KEY PRINCIPLE

LHSS will equip host countries to sustain progress after the project ends. It will do so by ensuring that local institutions and organizations have the technical capacity and expertise to independently design, implement, and manage continued health system strengthening activities. This goal is supported by LHSS's "country-first" approach to technical assistance, in which the project works closely with local partners to understand local priorities and economic and political dynamics, and to co-create and implement solutions that keep local actors and institutions in the driver's seat.

WHAT MAKES LHSS SPECIAL

The LHSS Project has the ability to mobilize local and international technical assistance in a wide range of areas, customized to a country's context and needs. Unlike projects that target just one aspect of a health system, LHSS works across the health system to develop integrated, sustainable solutions. It is a one-stop shop for countries seeking to create **sustainable, high-performing health institutions** – whether public, private, or nonprofit – that deliver high-quality health care that is **accountable, affordable, accessible, and reliable**.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

As of November 2020, 16 activities were underway across Latin America and the Caribbean, East and Southern Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. These regional and country-focused activities help governments put in place

sustainable solutions on a wide range of issues – from enhancing governance, financing, and quality assurance mechanisms to meet the health needs of migrants in Colombia, to strengthening public financial management systems and increasing domestic financing of care for HIV and TB patients in Vietnam, and much more. LHSS is also assisting with urgent COVID-19 pandemic response needs in nine countries while simultaneously boosting the resilience of their health systems to future shocks.

LHSS also collaborates with local partners to find solutions to critical health system strengthening challenges shared by many low- and middle-income countries. This global body of work is generating evidence, resources, and insights that will help governments around the world make progress on common challenges like institutionalizing transparent national priority-setting processes for health; fully executing health budgets; obtaining accurate and reliable data on pharmaceutical expenditures; engaging with private sector actors; addressing the social determinants of health; and operationalizing policies to improve the quality of health care, among others.

JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE

In recent years, USAID has reoriented its mission around the concept that “the very purpose of foreign assistance must be ending its need to exist.” LHSS fully supports partner countries on their journey to self-reliance. Through strengthening local capacity, the project will prepare local organizations to receive transition grants—ultimately enabling countries to continually improve health system performance without donor support.

“USAID’s focus on health systems strengthening is to support partner countries on their journey to self-reliance and prosperity to meet their commitments for improved health and well-being of their population.” – Project contract

PROJECT CONSORTIUM

The project is led by international consulting and research firm Abt Associates, with contributions from 11 partners.

Prime	Responsibilities
Abt Associates	Technical and financial oversight; monitoring, evaluation, and learning; quality assurance; selected technical areas including resource tracking, human resources for health, private sector, and digital technology
Partner	Responsibilities
Save the Children	Community health systems
Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)	Quality of essential health services
Results for Development (R4D)	Benefit packages, strategic purchasing
Training Resources Group (TRG)	Organizational capacity building
Avenir Health	Epidemiological and costing modeling
Banyan Global	Gender equality and social inclusion, private sector financing
Harvard School of Public Health	Health systems research capacity building
Health Information Systems Program (HISP)	DHIS2 adaptation, capacity building in data for decision making
Internews	Media for health advocacy and UHC promotion
McKinsey	Fiscal space, public financial management, tax revenue
THEnet	Health workforce strengthening

KEY PERSONNEL

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USAID CONTACT

USAID missions and country representatives interested in buying into the project should contact Scott Stewart, USAID Contracting Officer’s Representative, at [sstewart@usaid.gov](mailto:ss Stewart@usaid.gov)

This fact sheet was made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States government.