

Health Transformation Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 3
September Edition



Introduction

The Health Sector Transformation Project (HSTP) is a multi-donor health initiative funded by the World Bank and a consortium of donors. The HSTP implementation is led by the Ministry of Health through its Project Management Unit (PMU), with UNICEF and WHO serving as managing organizations. Approximately 28 implementing partner health NGOs are delivering services in 40 Lots across the country. The primary goal of HSTP is to strengthen South Sudan's healthcare system by enhancing governance, monitoring, and service delivery. By utilizing integrated service platforms and innovative technology, the project aims to bolster community-level capacity, optimize supply chains, and promote gender-

responsive social and behavioral change. The HSTP aspires to create a sustainable, government-run healthcare system

capable of addressing the complex health needs of the population, particularly those affected by ongoing crises.



Leadership Remarks

As we embark on another edition of the Health Sector Transformation Project (HSTP) newsletter, I want to reflect on the shared commitment of the Ministry of Health and Partners to improving healthcare in South Sudan. Supported by the World Bank and a consortium of dedicated donors, the HSTP is a testament to our collec-

tive efforts to strengthen the health system, with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, WHO, and approximately 40 health NGOs working together to deliver essential services to underserved communities. This newsletter provides updates on our progress, key milestones, and challenges as we strive toward a sustainable

healthcare system. Together, we are addressing immediate health needs while laying the foundation for a brighter, healthier future for all South Sudanese. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to this mission.

Dr. Santo Malek, DG-IHC & HSTP Project Coordinator, MOH

HSTP | 2024—2027
South Sudan

Key Points of HSTP:

- *HSTP is a multi-donor project from 2024-2027*
- *Funded by World Bank & consortium of donors*
- *MOH PMU leadership, oversight of HSTP*
- *UNICEF and WHO are the Managing Organizations*
- *Total of 28 NGOs are Implementing Partners*
- *1158 health facilities across 40 lots supported*
- *HSTP provides basic health and nutrition services and health systems strengthening.*

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Key Milestones

The HSTP has made significant progress, with project effectiveness already realized.

- ⇒ **All 28 Implementing Partners** are fully engaged, facilitating program implementation across 100% of the 28 Lots across 10 States and 3 Administrative Areas.
- ⇒ **The PMU(MOH)** has welcomed new members, including Dr. Kukwaj Nyawello, who serves as PMU Project Manager. The renovated office, supported by UNICEF, has been commissioned by MOH Minister.
- ⇒ **Incentive payments** are being processed across several states, and the sales order for remaining assets is nearing final approval. Some assets have already been handed over directly to Implementing Partners by FCDO, while

others are being finalized.

- ⇒ **UNICEF** has successfully completed the kitting and packing of critical health supplies for all 80 counties in South Sudan. Year two supplies are currently being procured and delivered. To further expedite delivery, UNICEF has increased the number of local road and air transport service providers across the country.
- ⇒ **The World Health Organization (WHO)** organized a briefing with UNICEF and HSTP donors, including the World Bank (WB), GAVI, Canadian Embassy, UNDP, British Embassy, EU, and Global Fund (GF). Feedback on the Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) interventions was gathered, and WHO will revise the workplan for the WB endorsement.

- ⇒ **The MOH** has developed the three tools to support Universal Health Coverage: (1) a tool to monitor service availability during HSTP transition. It is customized for DHIS2 to provides a baseline of services in HSTP and non-HSTP supported facilities; (2) a tool to assess the implementation of Basic Package for Health and Nutrition Services (BPHNS), which will inform its integration into the Essential Health Service Package (EHSP); and (3) a tool for analyzing the implementation of South Sudan's Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) and Essential Medicine List (EML).
- ⇒ **Preliminary findings** are being utilized to optimize essential medicine resources and access to life-saving medicines.

Data and Impact

The World Health Organization (WHO) has shared findings and recommendations from consultations with health facilities with UNICEF. Specific medication needs from Al Sabah Children's Hospital were communicated to UNICEF for consideration in the upcoming procurement cycle. This collaborative approach ensures that the medicines provided align with the actual needs of health facilities.



Pre-testing of Service Availability Tool in DHIS2 in Gurei PHCC by the MOH and WHO

Challenges and Solutions

The project faced delays in achieving effectiveness due to late disbursement of funds, impacting the timely commencement of key activities.

Additionally, challenges arose with the new systems for incentive payments, particularly in validating beneficiary lists, which further delayed payment processing. These issues underscore the need for improved financial flow management and

streamlined processes to ensure efficient project implementation.

Flooding due to climate change has affected last mile delivery to some parts that are already affected. This has caused stockout of some antimalarial commodities and tools.

UNICEF is working on a contingency plan to ensure timely delivery of commodities.

There has been reports from the national referral hospitals that the incentives provided covered only a quarter of the health workers.

The MOH PMU operationalization has been delayed by slow progress of staff onboarding and lack of office furniture and equipment. The MOH is engaging UNICEF and WHO to complete the office set up and operationalization and staff recruitment.

Stakeholders Highlight

The Ministry of Health leadership has been instrumental in the successful implementation of the HSS component to date.

WHO and UNICEF organize bi-weekly coordination meetings to discuss updates and align efforts during HSTP implementation. This collaboration enhances coordination and provides opportunities for WHO and UNICEF to leverage resources effectively.

UNFPA and UNICEF have coordinated efforts to ensure the effective supply of reproductive health commodities, working together to prevent duplication and streamline the distribution process. This collaboration optimizes resources and ensures critical reproductive health supplies reach intended beneficiaries efficiently.



Minister of Health, Hon. Yolanda Awel Deng Juac met with UNICEF team led by Deputy Executive Director, Ted Chaiban to discuss HSTP progress.

Community Engagement

Communities at project locations were oriented and trained on the Grievances and Redress Mechanisms (GRM). It was an interactive session aimed at equipping participants with essential skills for managing complaints within the project framework. Key components included:

- Understanding Grievance Mechanisms about various types of grievances related to project implementation and stakeholder engagement, emphasizing the need for robust mechanisms.
- Tools and Techniques: The training provided strategies for effective complaint handling, including active listening, conflict resolution, and prioritization of grievances.
- Promoting Transparency and Accountability in grievance handling, encouraging stakeholders to voice concerns with no fear of retaliation.
- Responsive Communication strategies to provide timely updates and reassure stakeholders during the grievance resolution process.
- Monitoring and Evaluation including methods for monitoring grievance mechanisms to ensure ongoing effectiveness and relevance.
- Case Studies and Best Practices from other projects to identify best practices.

By the end, participants felt more confident in their ability to address grievances equitably, fostering an environment of open communication that contributes to project success.

Upcoming Events

Next month, the HSTP will enter a critical phase with:

- ⇒ **Official launch of Cycle Two** supply deliveries. Building on the successful groundwork laid in the first phase, this next stage will focus on scaling up the distribution of essential health commodities across all 80 counties in South Sudan,
- ⇒ **Signing of Output Agreement** between the Ministry of Health

and WHO to ensure funding support towards the implementation of HSTP planned activities.

- ⇒ **National and Sub-National Consultations** to assess the status of implementation of the current STGs, EML, and BPHNS policies. Findings will inform updates to existing documents.
- ⇒ **PMU Officers recruitment and onboarding** to realize PMU operationalization & effectiveness.



Ministry of Health, RSS

Promotes Health, Provides Care

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Acknowledgment

The **HSTP Newsletter** is produced monthly by the dedicated HSTP communications team that includes members from the Ministry of Health ICT Department, the Project Management Unit (PMU) Communications and Media teams, as well as UNICEF and WHO Communications and Visibility teams. We appreciate your support and engagement in our shared mission to promote health initiatives and updates. Thank you for being a part of our community!

The Ministry of Health is an institution of the Government of South Sudan that works to maintain the health of the South Sudanese people by offering efficient medical services and humanitarian support.

Vision

To achieve global targets for disease elimination and eradication, thereby improving the quality of life and life expectancy of South Sudanese people,

Mission

To enhance the national health system so that it can provide South Sudanese citizens with improved health status through the development and implementation of policies, programs, and other necessary measures.

Mandate

As the national Ministry of Health responsibility is to ensure that South Sudanese citizens have access to essential services and high-quality healthcare.

Partner Spotlights

CUAMM's Impact in the First 100 Days of HSTP

Doctors with Africa (CUAMM) has played a crucial role in strengthening healthcare in South Sudan, particularly in Lakes State.

During the first 100 days of the Health Sector Transformation Project (HSTP), CUAMM ensured uninterrupted health services across eight counties, which included one state hospital, two county hospitals, 20 primary health care centers, and 46 primary health care units. In collaboration with the State Min-

istry of Health (SMOH), County Health Departments (CHDs), and UNICEF, CUAMM integrated project staff and aligned work plans, facilitating the timely distribution of staffing and incentive lists for the supported facilities.

CUAMM also successfully accomplished the last-mile delivery of HSTP's C1 consignment to 69 health facilities, effectively overcoming flood-related challenges. Furthermore, they maintained an efficient emergency referral system, ensuring that critical patients received timely care.

