

# Access to high quality and affordable medicines in Africa and South-East Asia

## Project within the Cross-Sector Cooperation Fund (Polifund)

### The challenge

Health is a human right and the provision of essential medicines is one of the essential components of health care. Nonetheless, even today, millions of people, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, remain without access to high-quality and affordable medicines.

Most people in developing countries have to pay for their medicines out-of-pocket but lack the necessary financial resources. The resulting risks of either non-treatment or financial catastrophe are exacerbated where there is no generic competition to originator products, which acts to push down the price of medicines for the consumer and government procurement agencies. Increasing generic competition via legal and policy means requires cooperation among different government departments and policy coherence which is often lacking.

Regulatory authorities and control laboratories are short of the technical equipment and human resources required to effectively police the market, test control samples and inspect companies. This can result in fake or sub-standard medicines circulating in the markets, with potentially harmful effects for the consumer. One way of improving supplies is to produce medicines locally, though this approach still plays a relatively minor role. Local pharmaceutical companies seldom have the capacity to satisfy national and regional demand; in Sub-Saharan Africa only 25-30% of demand can be met by local production.

All in all, low-income population groups in developing countries thus have insufficient access to medicines of high quality, in the correct dosage form, at the right price, and with appropriate medical support and supervision.

Project name	Access to high-quality and affordable medicines in Africa and South-East Asia
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	East and Western Africa, South-East Asia
Project term	December 2014 – December 2016

### Our approach

The project 'Access to high-quality and affordable medicines in Africa and South-East Asia' addresses multiple factors that impact people's ability to purchase or freely access medicines and other health products such as vaccines. It strives to improve the policy and regulatory environment to provide the basis for better access for poor people in rural areas in these regions.

The primary aims of the project are to improve interdepartmental cooperation and policy coherence, to strengthen regulatory environments and to further strengthen the local pharmaceutical industry. Among other things, governments will be advised on how to improve coherence between health, industrial, trade and intellectual property policies. They will benefit from training courses conducted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and a guide on policy coherence on access to medicines, which will help them to improve access by bringing all relevant ministries and other stakeholders to the table.

In another project in Kenya, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) will support 30-35 local companies by performing gap analyses to identify the steps



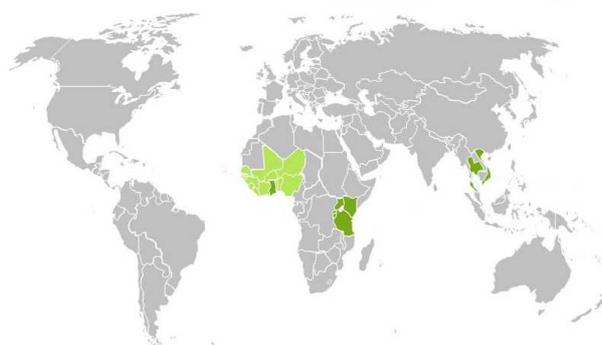
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needed to achieve international Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) standards within five years. In this context, inter-departmental cooperation within the German Federal Government, in particular involving the Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices (Bundesinstitut für Arzneimittel und Medizinprodukte, BfArM) and the Paul-Ehrlich-Institut (PEI), a WHO Collaborating Centre, will help to advance the activities being carried out in conjunction with the Kenya Pharmacy and Poisons Board. These two institutes will also train inspectors from partner countries and advise partners where necessary and feasible.



## Success factors

To achieve the project objective, activities will be implemented in the following three fields of activity:

- Supporting policy coherence
  - Capacity building and development of guidance on improving policy coherence on access to medicines; organisation of stakeholder workshop and public-private partnership competition to improve supply chains in rural areas; South-South exchange on approaches to improving policy coherence.
- Strengthening regulatory environments and quality assurance for health products
  - Gap analyses in 30-35 companies to facilitate the achievement of WHO-GMP standards; on-the-job training of 5-10 Kenyan GMP inspectors; definition of monitoring process towards the implementation of the Kenya GMP Roadmap; inspector training.
- Supporting the local pharmaceutical industry
  - Feasibility study on extending vaccine production in Africa; supporting South-South-North exchange among generic medicines manufacturers' associations; conducting a market analysis of medicines available in the East African Community.

## IZR budget title and Polifund

The BMZ budget title International Cooperation with Regions for Sustainable Development (IZR title) has been in place since late 2011. Projects within this budget title are required to meet certain criteria:

- Global challenges are tackled by way of inter-departmental, cross-border and interregional cooperation;
- Various stakeholders from the spheres of politics, civil society and the private sector are involved;
- New forms of cooperation are supported between industrialised, emerging and developing countries;
- Long-term cooperation and network-building are promoted;
- The costs are shared with cooperation partners and stakeholders; additional funding and resources are to be mobilised.

The cross-sector cooperation fund, known as the Polifund, forms part of the IZR budget title. The Polifund is designed to interlink the German Government's different approaches to achieving common objectives. The aim is to improve the overall coherence of Germany's international commitment. BMZ has commissioned GIZ with the Fund's implementation. The responsibility for the Polifund lies within the Flexible Business Unit *Global Partnerships, Emerging Countries*.

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