



Strengthening the Essential Drug Procurement Program, PROMESS



PROMESS, the Program for Essential Medicines and Supply created in 1992, has been under PAHO/WHO technical and managerial leadership. It represents the efforts and contributions of committed partners to improve access to essential medicines and supply:

- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),
- The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),
- The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and
- The Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID)

Working together with these partners in a coordinated manner has been essential during the crisis after the earthquake, and collaborations with more partners have also been established:

- Supply Chain Management System (SCMS),
- US Army,
- Clinton Foundation, and
- Pharmacie et Aide Humanitaire (PAH)

As the humanitarian operation intensified, more and more shipments of medical supplies started arriving at Port-au-Prince airport, located close to PROMESS. To meet the increased logistical challenges, PAHO/WHO started using LSS/SUMA, the Logistics Supply Management System, to track and process humanitarian supplies and donations in several locations:

- a) With support from the Argentinean White Helmets, LSS/SUMA was operating out of the PROMESS warehouse, coordinating the acquisition and distribution of donations and other supplies received through the Port-au-Prince airport.
- b) At the airport in Port-au-Prince, working with customs authorities and Haiti's Civil Defense.
- c) At the port, inventorying supplies arriving by ship.
- d) LSS/SUMA has also been set up in Jimaní, Dominican Republic, along the border with Haiti, to coordinate the arrival of humanitarian supplies transiting by land. They ran a program to coordinate all donations from many governments into a single system.

The U.S. Government has provided support to PROMESS by sending pharmacists and medical logisticians. It also provided security to the premises and engineering support to clear the rubble for incoming containers of medical supplies.

Following the quake, PROMESS was the only source of drugs and medical supplies in the country, and it was faced with a dramatic increase in demand from established health facilities and from temporary field hospitals. As PROMESS became more effectively organized to respond to these new challenges, the Haitian government, PAHO/WHO and USAID have been visiting organizations, hospitals and clinics throughout Haiti to assess medicine shortages and coordinate effective supply of medicines.

PAHO/WHO Country Office (CO) was damaged by the earthquake and the CO staff had to be relocated to the PROMESS premises. A new satellite dish and a few temporary offices had to be installed to reestablish communications and to allow the Country Office to remain operational.

PROMESS has received around USD 5 Million worth of donation of medicines from 11 countries: The Queen Sofia Foundation of Spain, USA, Argentina, Dominican Republic, Switzerland, Italy, Canada, Chile, France, Austria and Taiwan.

Activities carried out:

- Distribution of over USD\$ 4,500,000 in Essential Drugs in 2009
- Distribution of over USD \$ 2,000,000 in supplies from January to March 2010
- The provision of 80% of drugs from the official list
- In the first 45 days after the earthquake, PROMESS distributed more than 345,000 boxes of essential medicines and supplies, including antibiotics; vaccines; drugs for mental health conditions; drugs for treatment of TB, diabetes and malaria; anesthetics; analgesics, etc
- Thanks to a global agreement with the World Food Program (WFP) for collaboration in logistics, PAHO/WHO was able to send more than 25 metric tons of essential medicines, supplies and equipment by helicopter to hospitals and health centers in areas where health services are being overwhelmed by the needs of displaced people.

HAITI

PAHO/WHO's Technical Cooperation
in the aftermath of the earthquake 2010



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- A new kit (emergency kit) has been specifically designed .More than 400 kits have been distributed to departmental hospitals, to 300 health institutions, to 100 mobile clinics and to the logistics service.
- During the 3 months after the earthquake 70% of the help was given to the public institutions
- PAHO has published a guide called "Be a Better Donor: Practical Recommendations for Humanitarian Aid," which is available at www.paho.org/disasters, to establish standards for donation practices. PAHO/WHO monitored drug donations to make sure they comply with these guidelines and to ensure that they fully respect the authority of Haiti's health officials and comply with the health policies and administrative procedures that exist in the country.
- PAHO/WHO, through PROMESS, remains the leading actor in procuring, storing and distributing TB drugs in Haiti, including those coming through the Global Drug Facility (GDF).
- Japan has provided USD 150.000 funding for the provision of TB drugs for Leogane for a period of 6 months.

Next actions:

- Mobilize financial and human resources to strengthen PROMESS and improve access to essential drugs by for the Haitian people.
- Continue to support national authorities to establish a national drug policy with 3 priorities:
 1. Access to essential medicines
 2. Rational use of medicines
 3. Regulation of drug policy
- Provide coordination between PROMESS and provincial decentralized public warehouses,
- Support a more active distribution system to improve delivery to the health facilities,
- Promote and participate in the development of a national integrated procurement and supply system for essential medicines and medical supplies, with PROMESS acting as the National Central Supply Agency for Haiti.