



PEPFAR Supporting Country Ownership: Advancing a Sustainable Response

“We’re now entering the second decade of PEPFAR. And as you’re aware, the program has taken steps over the past few years to move from an emergency program to a sustainable initiative. U.S. programs, I think it’s fair to say, are still absolutely critical. But now, wherever possible, those programs are going to support countries’ own initiatives against this epidemic, and that’s what’s really exciting about it. That’s, frankly, exactly what our foreign assistance is supposed to do, is to help other countries to be able to take the reins and empower them to be able to confront challenges like HIV and AIDS themselves.”

- Secretary of State John Kerry, September 25, 2013

The goal of creating an AIDS-free Generation is a shared responsibility with partner countries in the central convening role. Neither the U.S. nor any other single entity can accomplish this goal alone. Rather it requires all partners to step up their efforts, including by supporting host countries to effectively coordinate all those providing financing, technical support, and carrying out programming within and outside of the health sector. Putting country leadership – both government and civil society – in an empowered and accountable position to meet the needs of their populations will further the goal of a successful and sustainable HIV response.

PEPFAR supports country ownership across four dimensions. This approach prioritizes joint planning and is defined by the continuum of actions taken by political and institutional stakeholders in partner countries to plan, oversee, manage, deliver results, and finance within their health sector. In turn, these actions should advance sustainable, quality health programs that are locally-owned and responsive to the needs of those who access them.

In its second phase, PEPFAR has transitioned from emergency programming to a focus on supporting country led and planned programming in the AIDS response – a key to long-term sustainability. PEPFAR fosters country ownership by investing in high-impact and evidence-based country-led priorities, plans, and systems. Through U.S. investments in HIV/AIDS, systems of care have been established that countries are further leveraging to improve their citizens’ overall health. As PEPFAR prioritizes country ownership, it works to advance programs based on science, support the development of capable leadership, and promote good governance, accountability, and supportive economic and social policies.

Partnership Frameworks (PFs) provided a five-year joint strategic framework for objectives, contributions, targets, and cooperation on AIDS among the U.S., the partner government, and other key stakeholders. PFs have been a key tool in advancing PEPFAR’s support for country ownership. In the next phase of the program, PEPFAR Country Health Partnerships (CHPs) will build on the success of these 22 PFs.

PEPFAR CHPs represent the next frontier of PEPFAR’s effort to embed country ownership and sustainability in the AIDS response by collaborating with country partners and other stakeholders to advance a fundamental shift from a traditional donor-recipient relationship to co-investment and true partnership. PEPFAR CHPs will continue to promote the principle of country ownership by further empowering countries as they work to improve the health of their citizens and achieve an AIDS-free generation at home.

Putting Country Ownership Into Action

In **South Africa**, as the South African Government (SAG) has assumed increasing responsibility for financing its own national AIDS response, the U.S. has taken steps to integrate the vast network of HIV prevention, treatment, care, and health systems strengthening activities it supports into the broader strategic vision of the SAG. The SAG and local civil society, along with the PEPFAR country team and other external partners, have jointly addressed challenges and priorities, and agreed on a shared vision for strengthening coordination, planning, information management, human resources capacity, and financial management, and sustainability in moving these efforts forward. Recently, the U.S. collaborated with the SAG in the development of a framework for the U.S. Global Health Initiative Strategy and PEPFAR Partnership Framework Implementation Plan, which lays out a phased approach for transitioning HIV treatment and care programs currently implemented by PEPFAR to the leadership of the SAG.

In **Namibia**, the government, PEPFAR, and the Global Fund established the Human Resources for Health Task Force, culminating in a joint request to the Ministry of Finance for a phased approach to reallocating health worker positions from Global Fund and PEPFAR payrolls to the public system. These investments set the stage for an eventual transition to country-led and financed HIV/AIDS efforts supported by U.S. technical collaboration.

In **Uganda**, the PEPFAR-supported Health Initiatives for the Private Sector (HIPS) project leverages the role of the private sector in improving and expanding access and utilization of health services. HIPS recently demonstrated that transferring a portion of the antiretroviral drugs procured by the Uganda government and international donors to accredited private health care providers resulted in HIV treatment reaching additional patients at little or no cost to the government. In exchange for these drugs, employer clinics assume the non-drug costs of treating patients, spending \$80-\$100 per person/year for the necessary staff, tests, and other services, resulting in a net cost savings to the government.

Tanzania's national HIV/AIDS response leverages PEPFAR technical assistance to support grants from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. These government-implemented grants are responsible for funding the majority of HIV/AIDS commodities in the country, with the Ministries of Health and Finance in both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar serving as the grants' Principal Recipients. These grants work in a complementary fashion with the support being provided by PEPFAR in the country, with Global Fund paying for the procurement of antiretroviral drugs, and PEPFAR funding test kits, training, and the delivery of treatment to patients. Joint planning to meet the treatment needs of Tanzanians is helping to expand access and ensure sustainability.

In **Haiti**, the U.S. government and the government of Haiti have consolidated their once parallel supply chain systems into a single, national system to reduce logistical redundancies. In 2013, PEPFAR's Supply Chain Management System project began delivering both HIV/AIDS and family planning commodities. The government of Haiti is assuming an increasingly collaborative role in U.S. procurement processes, serving as members of technical review panels, and managing steadily increasing financing to support the procurement system.

Four Dimensions of Country Ownership:

Country Ownership Continuum:

