



GS1 Healthcare Newsletter

GS1 Healthcare Africa

25 January 2021

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Nigeria's traceability strategy signed, a milestone that charts the way for improved pharmaceutical traceability in Africa's most populous country

It was during the 2nd GS1 Africa Healthcare conference in September 2019 and under the coordination of the African Medicines Regulatory Harmonisation (AMRH) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) at which representatives from national governments and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) from across Africa were present, that Professor Moji Christianah Adeyeye, the Director General for of National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control of Nigeria (NAFDAC) stepped onto the podium and proposed a call to action to use GS1 standards to support pharmaceutical traceability in their countries. Approximately 1h later, 25 countries in Africa and 6 donor organisations pledged to use GS1 standards to help achieve greater supply chain integrity and fight fake medicines in their respective countries.

Almost a year after the call to action, Nigeria officially launched their traceability strategy, which charted out the steps that the country would take to build up their traceability system. The Nigeria National Pharmaceutical Traceability Strategy was launched by the Honorable Minister of Health, Dr. Osagie Ehanire. At the launch, The Traceability Steering Committee, a special task force to oversee the implementation of the traceability strategy was officially inaugurated. The Director-General NAFDAC, Professor Moji Christianah Adeyeye and the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Health, Mr. Abdullaziz Abdullahi also made speeches at the launch.



During his speech, Dr Ehanire mentioned that the challenge of poor visibility in the pharmaceutical supply chain in Nigeria necessitated the adoption of innovative approaches and complementary partnerships to disrupt the cycle of wastages from expired commodities, shortages, infiltration of substandard and falsified products, diversion and pilferage of products in the health sector hence the need for Pharmaceutical Traceability.

He mentioned that the launch of the Nigeria Pharmaceutical Traceability Strategy demonstrates the commitment of the Federal Government of Nigeria to improving access to quality medicines and other health commodities in line with the second National Strategic Health Development Plan and was also in line with the Ministry's efforts at achieving goal number three (3) of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Good Health and Well-being of the citizenry.

During her speech, Professor Adeyeye expressed the current situation by saying, "Safeguarding the health of the Nation is a daunting task in the face of the chaotic drug distribution system currently existing in Nigeria. The falsification and diversion of health commodities carry serious health and economic consequences". The consideration of these consequences vis-à-vis the mandate of NAFDAC to regulate and control, among other things, the distribution of drugs and other regulated products is sufficient motivation to adopt and implement strategies that can assist in the fight against the menace of substandard and falsified medicines (SFs), and thereby improve the regulatory control of the medicines supply chain in Nigeria by providing visibility across the value chain.

The minister described his expectation from the traceability system by saying, "The gains of implementing pharmaceutical traceability are noteworthy. Traceability will provide visibility of medicines from plant to patient; promote trust in the pharmaceutical sector and healthcare system; increase opportunity for trade of domestically manufactured pharmaceuticals; increase data quality to support pharmacovigilance; decrease infiltration of substandard and falsified (SF) medications; and ultimately, increase patient safety."

"The launch of the Nigeria Pharmaceutical Traceability Strategy demonstrates the commitment of the Federal Government of Nigeria to improving access to quality medicines and other health commodities in line with the second National Strategic Health Development Plan."

Dr. Ehanire, Honorable Minister of Health of Nigeria



Stakeholders hold a signed copy of the signed pharmaceutical traceability strategy

The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Health, Mr. Abdullaziz Abdullahi also appreciated the zeal to ensure pharmaceutical traceability in Nigeria.

In the 2021 calendar year, the government of Nigeria will be hard at work in laying out the foundation for this traceability system including development and issuance of relevant policies and other critical pieces including definition of the requisite architecture.

For additional information about this, please contact healthcare@gs1ng.org

Collaborating with local stakeholders in Kenya to help lay the foundation for pharmaceutical traceability

GS1 Kenya has been supporting awareness building and sensitization of GS1 standards to the various stakeholders in the government of Kenya in collaboration with partners such as USAID's Global Health Supply Chain - Procurement and Supply Management (GHSC-PSM) Projects.

The landscape in Kenya is a bit complex characterized by a booming local pharmaceutical manufacturing industry and a decentralised model which puts a lot of power in the hands of each of the 47 county leads. Additionally, there is a reputable existence of private health care providers.

GS1 Kenya has also collaborated with private sector. In 2020, they signed an agreement with the association of private hospitals (APH) with the objective of working to establish traceability of the entire value chain from the time the patient visits the health facility through the time they receive medication and leave. GS1 Kenya has identified one such private hospital which is The Nairobi hospital and has signed an NDA on which they will be moving to begin the implementation process in 2021. This work is expected to lay the foundation for engagements with public hospitals including the Kenyatta national hospital.

At the national level, GS1 Kenya has collaborated with development partners including the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to raise awareness and encourage investment in the use of GS1 standards. The members of parliament have been engaged due to their important role in laying the foundation of understanding and building a ready policy environment for new regulation that requires the use of GS1 standards. In addition, GS1 Kenya has engaged with Kenya's Pharmacy and

Poisons Board (PPB), an important stakeholder in setting the requisite policy environment for the use of the standards. These collaborations lay the foundation for work that is expected to mature in 2021.

For additional information about the work in Kenya, contact info@gs1kenya.org

COVID-19 or no, stakeholders in Ghana are progressing in full speed with GS1 implementation

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted plans for many all over the world. In Ghana, the stakeholders had planned to have a strategic plan development workshop in April 2020, but this was not possible. However, the stakeholder group, through the leadership of the Ministry of Health Director, Mrs. Jocelyne Aziz and the team from USAID-GHSC project got together virtually to advance the conversations, this includes forming a virtual group to receive and share routine updates and organizing orientations virtually through Zoom. The persistence demonstrates the commitment and interest that the Ghanaian government has in adopting the standards to support traceability and thus advance the agenda in the country of ensuring patient safety and securing their supply chains.

For additional information about the implementation in Ghana contact info@gs1gh.org and healthcare@moh.gov



Traceability news from the continent

- The Botswana government, under the leadership of Botswana Medicines Regulatory Authority ([BOMRA](#)) conducted a semi virtual strategy development workshop as a foundational activity for the GS1 standards implementation. During this meeting, a group of 21 stakeholders discussed key activities that need to be conducted leading up to the full adoption of the GS1 standards. It is expected that the government of Botswana will, in 2021, commence the implementation of this strategy once it has been approved by senior government officials.



Ms. Boago addressing stakeholders during the strategy development workshop

- The Ethiopian Food and Medicines Control Authority has collaborated with USAID in launching an application that helps Ethiopians identify status of medicines, whether they are authentic or counterfeited. Using the [iVerify app](#), the Ethiopian public will be empowered to ensure they are well informed about the authenticity of the product prior to its consumption or use. For more information about this app, contact the [Ethiopia Food and drug authority \(eFDA\)](#).

Did you know?

This section of the newsletter provides a teaser for you to learn a bit more about GS1 Standards. For this premier issue, you will learn about one of the important building blocks of GS1 based traceability system around the world, the Global Trade Item Number (GTIN).

A GTIN is used to identify any type of item upon which there is a need to retrieve pre-defined information, and that may be priced, ordered or invoiced at any point in the supply chain. It is one of the GS1 identification keys.

In essence, every iteration of a product must have its own GTIN. Taking an example of acetylsalicylic acid 325mg which is manufactured by three different manufacturers in the country, each iteration of the product would have its own GTIN. Additionally, if Manufacturer A decides to introduce a new pack for the same product, they would need to generate a new GTIN. Furthermore, when the product is packaged differently, it would require its own GTIN. So for instance, a single pack would have a unique GTIN as would a pack of 50, 100, 1000, etc.

If you are a manufacturer and would like to create a GTIN for your products, contact a GS1 Member Organisation near you.

Interested? [Learn more about the GTIN and its related rules on the GS1 website.](#)



News from around the world

GS1 Healthcare collaborated with Deloitte in producing a white paper: "[Securing trust in the global COVID-19 supply chain](#)" which explains the challenges experienced in the race to have a secure, accurate and timely supply chain to get COVID-19 vaccines to patients. Read the paper to find out more about the role of global standards at the time of a global crisis.



About GS1 Healthcare

GS1 Healthcare is a neutral and open community bringing together all related healthcare stakeholders to lead the successful development and implementation of global GS1 standards, enhancing patient safety, and operational and supply chain efficiencies.

The development and implementation of GS1 standards is led by the experts who use them: pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, group purchasing organisations, hospitals, pharmacies, logistics providers, solution providers, governmental and regulatory bodies, and trade associations. Evidence available from industry implementations shows that GS1 identification, data capture and data sharing standards in healthcare deliver tangible benefit to all stakeholders. Global members of GS1 Healthcare include more than 100 leading healthcare organisations worldwide.

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