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Humanitarian Community of Practice: A Solution-Oriented Collaboration at the Peak of the Pandemic

Nadia Olson, Lead for Humanitarian and Fragile Settings, JSI

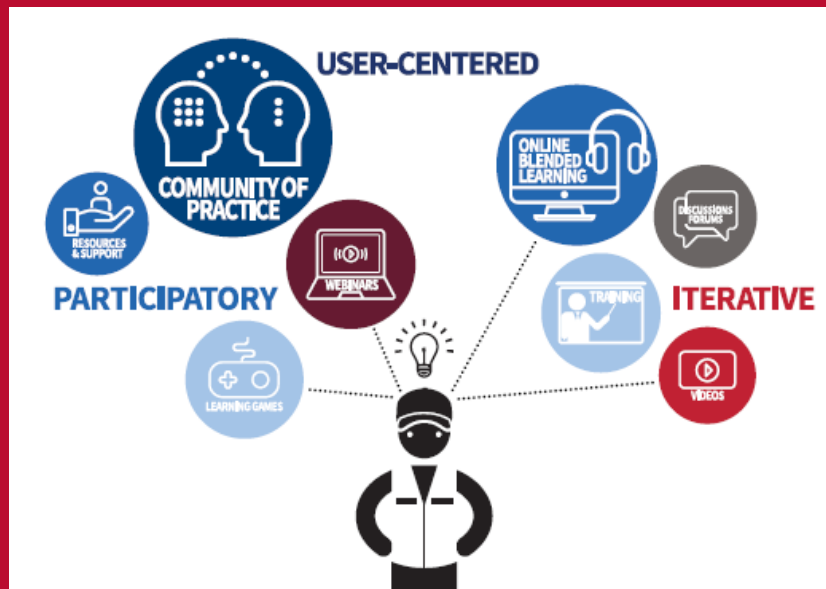
Anne Marie Hvid, Knowledge Management Advisor, JSI

Barbara Lamphere; Senior Technical Advisor, Capacity Building; JSI

Ayuba Nuhu Tarfa; Pharmacy Manager, INTERSOS Nigeria

Health and Humanitarian Logistics Conference 2021

September 20–22, 2021



THE PROJECT

- **PROJECT:**
Building Capacity to Improve Pharmaceutical and Medical Commodity Management in Humanitarian and Disaster Settings project
- **FUNDER:**
USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)
- **IMPLEMENTING PARTNER:**
JSI Research & Training, Inc.
- **GOAL:**
Build the capacity of staff working with humanitarian organizations, including international organizations and local NGOs, to manage pharmaceutical and medical commodity (PMC) supply chains in humanitarian settings.



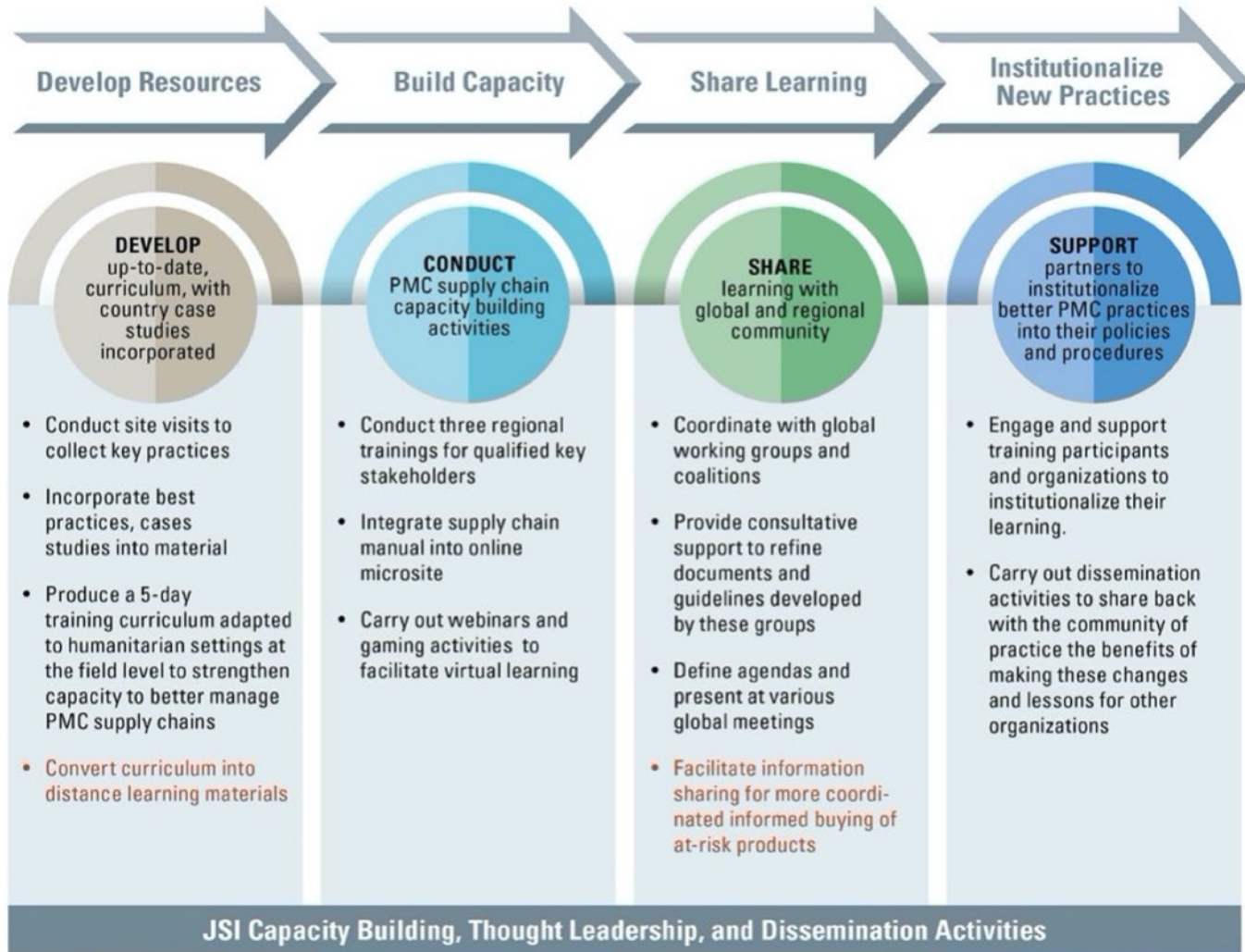
THE VISION

We aim to catalyze a paradigm shift in how capacity building is conducted by employing innovative and **collaborative training methods and technology** and using those resources within and among our organizations to make **performance improvements and set standards** so our health supply chains can **meet the needs of affected populations** in the context of more frequent, increasingly complex, longer-lasting, and further-reaching emergencies.



THE APPROACH

Strategic Approach to Building Capacity to Improve PMC Management in Humanitarian and Disaster Settings



PARTNER SUPPORT

COORDINATION

- Humanitarian partners coordinate with existing global working groups and task forces, as well as within the greater humanitarian community to share learning and offer solutions.
 - Technical Advisory Group
 - Community of Practice
- Partners support each other to—
 - identify products at risk
 - share information for coordinated informed buying
 - source products
 - move freight
 - develop and use forecasting tools



THE WEBINARS

The project's webinars are open to anyone who would like to attend.

They are designed for people who work with health supplies in humanitarian settings.

Webinars have covered—

- Introduction to supply chain management in humanitarian settings (in English, Spanish, and French)
- Supply chain preparedness
- Forecasting and supply planning
- Quality assurance



Preparing the Supply Chain for the Next Emergency

JSI
JSI RESEARCH & TRAINING INSTITUTE, INC.

Gregory Roche
Senior Technical Advisor,
JSI

Barbara Lamphere
Senior Technical Advisor,
JSI

September 16, 2020

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- All webinars are available on [JSI's YouTube channel](#)
- All recordings, materials, and follow-up questions from previous webinars are available on-demand from the International Association of Public Health Logisticians' (IAPHL) [Humanitarian Commodities Logistics Group](#).

THE RESOURCES

In addition to webinars and other training opportunities, the project produces guidance and videos to document best practices for supply chain management in humanitarian settings. These include—

- Briefs and videos featuring case studies with promising practices from the field.
- Translations of best practice guidance, including JSI's Supply Chain Manager's Handbook's Addendum for Humanitarian Settings.



THE NETWORK

- Humanitarian partners form a network through participation in—
- The Technical Advisory Group
- Webinars, Blended Learning courses, and other training opportunities
- The International Association of Public Health Logisticians (IAPHL), as well as its Humanitarian Commodities Logistics subgroup.

<https://iaphl.org/>

<https://community.iaphl.org/iaphl/hcl>



International Association of
Public Health Logisticians

Logisticians from different humanitarian organizations often don't know each other even if they work in the same country. Because health logistics is a highly specialized field and organizations typically have very few people who work with supplies, it is important for the logisticians to have external connections.

IN-PERSON TRAINING

Nairobi, Kenya - August 23–27, 2021

- First in-person workshop (with COVID mitigation measures)
- For 29 professionals who oversee supplies for humanitarian response
- 5 days focused on strengthening supply chain management skills of mid-level country and regional staff from BHA implementing partner organizations working in fragile and humanitarian settings.



Participants of the SCM workshop during a field visit to the Kenya Red Cross warehouse facility.

Photos: Johnson Anyona/inSupply Health

THE BLENDED LEARNING COURSE

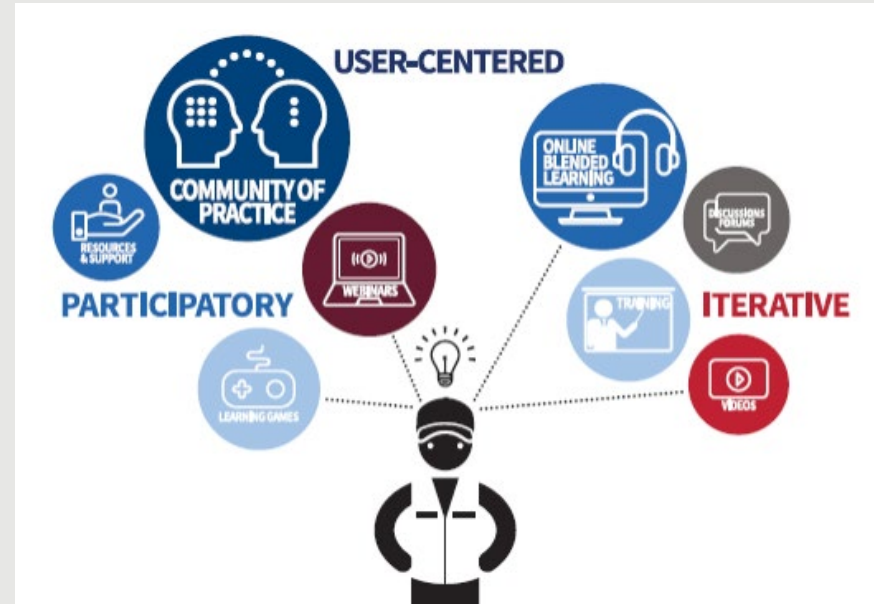
- **COURSE:**
5 blended course groups, each with 12 participants.
- **DURATION:**
Each course group works over 3 months, first course group started March 2021
- **WORKLOAD:**
2-3 hours of work per week required
- **PARTICIPANTS:**
BHA partner staff
- **GRADUATES:**
First cohort of students completed the course in June, with others following in July, August, and September. Recently started group to complete in December.

COURSE OUTLINE

- Weeks 1 & 2**
 - Introduction to the Course
 - Supply Chain 101
 - **Live Facilitator-Led Discussion**
- Weeks 3 & 4**
 - What Makes Humanitarian Health Supply Chain Logistics Different
 - Supply Chain Practices in Humanitarian Response
 - **Live Facilitator-Led Discussion**
- Weeks 5 & 6**
 - Logistics Management Information Systems
 - Supply Chain Performance Management
 - **Live Facilitator-Led Discussion**
- Weeks 7 & 8**
 - Product Selection
 - Quantification
 - **Live Facilitator-Led Discussion**
- Weeks 9 & 10**
 - Procurement
 - Inventory Strategy
 - **Live Facilitator-Led Discussion**
 - **Final Assessment Assigned**
- Weeks 11 & 12**
 - Risk Management
 - Supply Chain Coordination
 - **Live Facilitator-Led Discussion, Final Assessment Review, Action Plans Due**

THE LEARNING

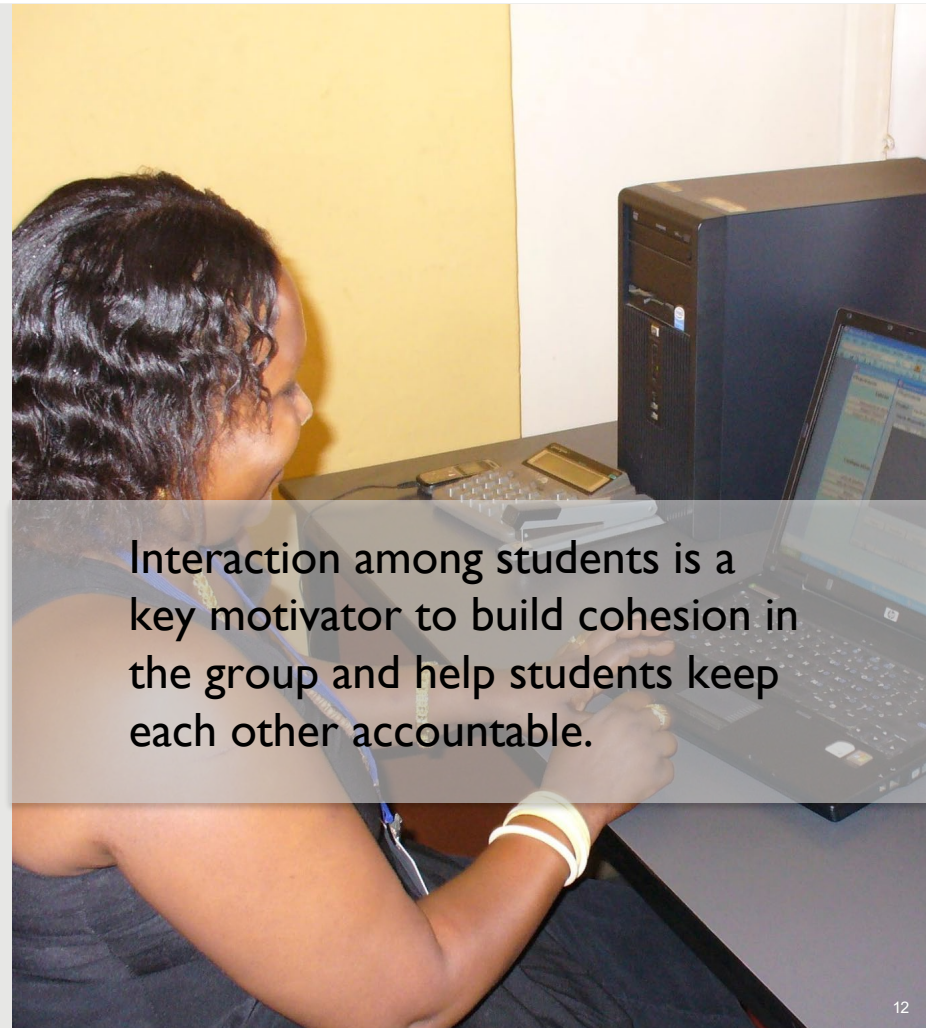
- Participatory, iterative, user-centered
- Helps participants identify practical supply chain solutions they can apply in their organizations.
- Combines a variety of learning formats and media, including discussion groups, reading, questionnaires, videos, webinars, assignments, and online gaming.
- 12 sessions, each on a different topic of supply chain management.
- Live online discussion every two weeks, covering the previous two sessions and featuring different supply chain experts for additional perspectives.
- Gaming used at the end of sessions to review and test learning.



Deliberate use of multiple modes of learning—presentations, group work, interactive forums—keeps participants engaged.

THE SOCIAL SPACE

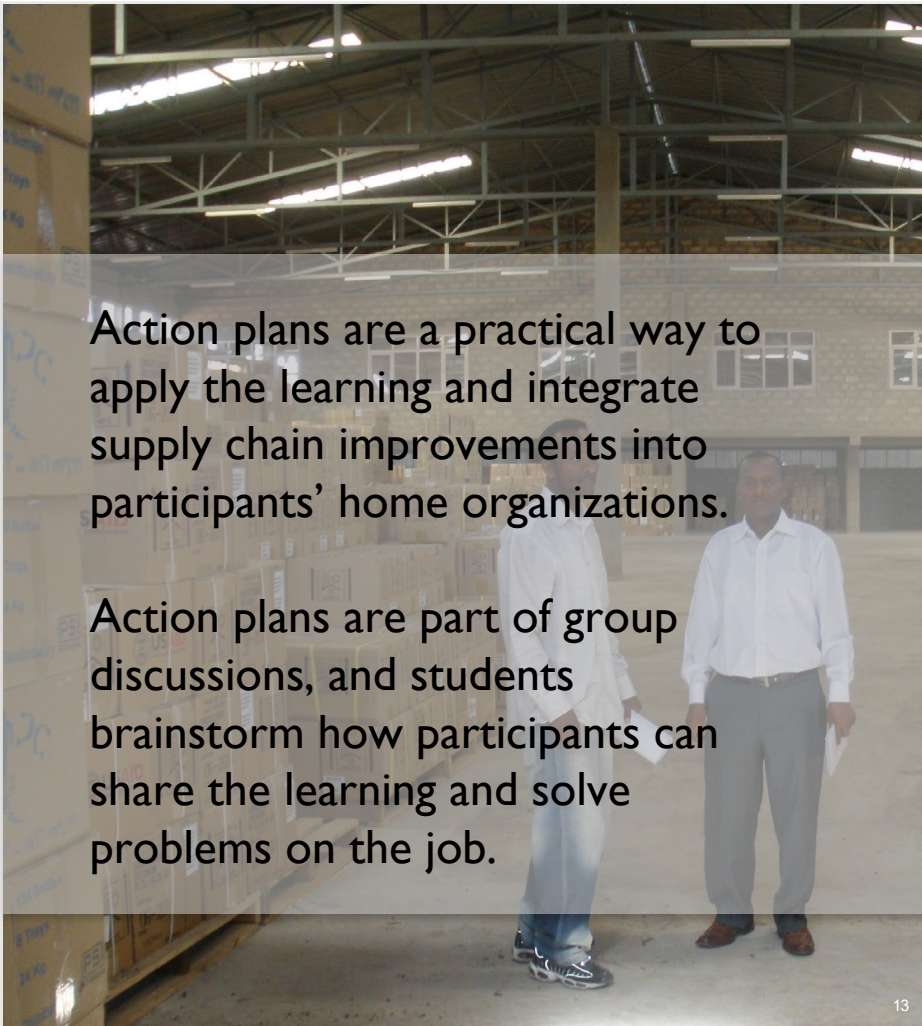
Each course has its own **WhatsApp group** where the 12 students can get to know each other and discuss assignments. This social space helps students gain trust with each other and create connections to colleagues.



Interaction among students is a key motivator to build cohesion in the group and help students keep each other accountable.

THE ACTION

- Participants **document their supply chain management challenges**, ranging from funding and procurement coordination issues, to stockouts and problems with quality assurance, security, data availability, transportation, and disposal of unused products.
- As participants move through the course, they create an **action plan** to implement with colleagues in their home organization during and after the course.

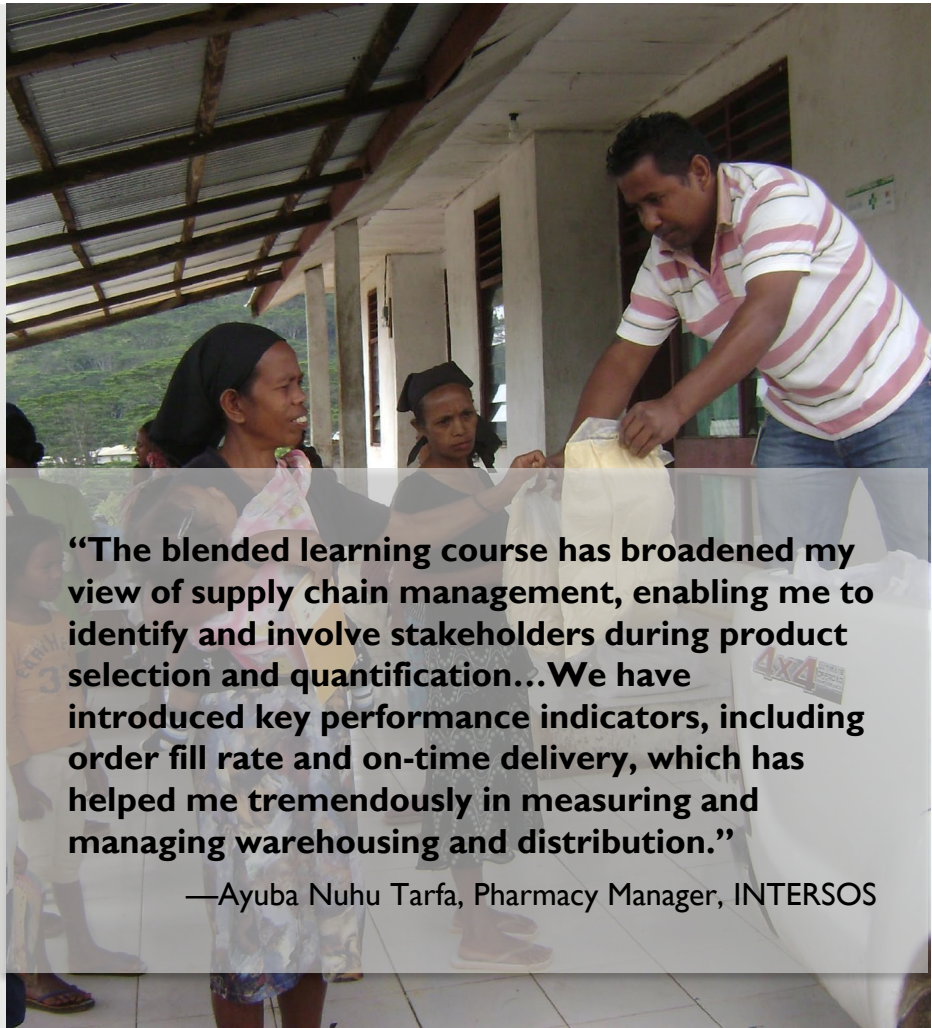
A photograph of two men standing in a large warehouse. They are surrounded by stacks of cardboard boxes. The man on the left is wearing a white shirt and blue jeans, and the man on the right is wearing a white shirt and dark trousers. They appear to be in a professional setting, possibly a supply chain or logistics environment.

Action plans are a practical way to apply the learning and integrate supply chain improvements into participants' home organizations.

Action plans are part of group discussions, and students brainstorm how participants can share the learning and solve problems on the job.

THE ACTION

The scope of the action plans varies from small adjustments in existing processes to comprehensive and structural changes that involve major funding and multi-year plans, such as moving from paper-based to electronic logistics management information systems and using bar code scanning to track the authenticity of medicines.



“The blended learning course has broadened my view of supply chain management, enabling me to identify and involve stakeholders during product selection and quantification...We have introduced key performance indicators, including order fill rate and on-time delivery, which has helped me tremendously in measuring and managing warehousing and distribution.”

—Ayuba Nuhu Tarfa, Pharmacy Manager, INTERSOS

THE BARRIERS

- Most students work full time and fit their assignments into busy work schedules.
- They work around time differences that range as many as 10 time zones among the group.
- Some connect from refugee camps with spotty internet access or use their phones for access.
- Some struggle with language barriers.



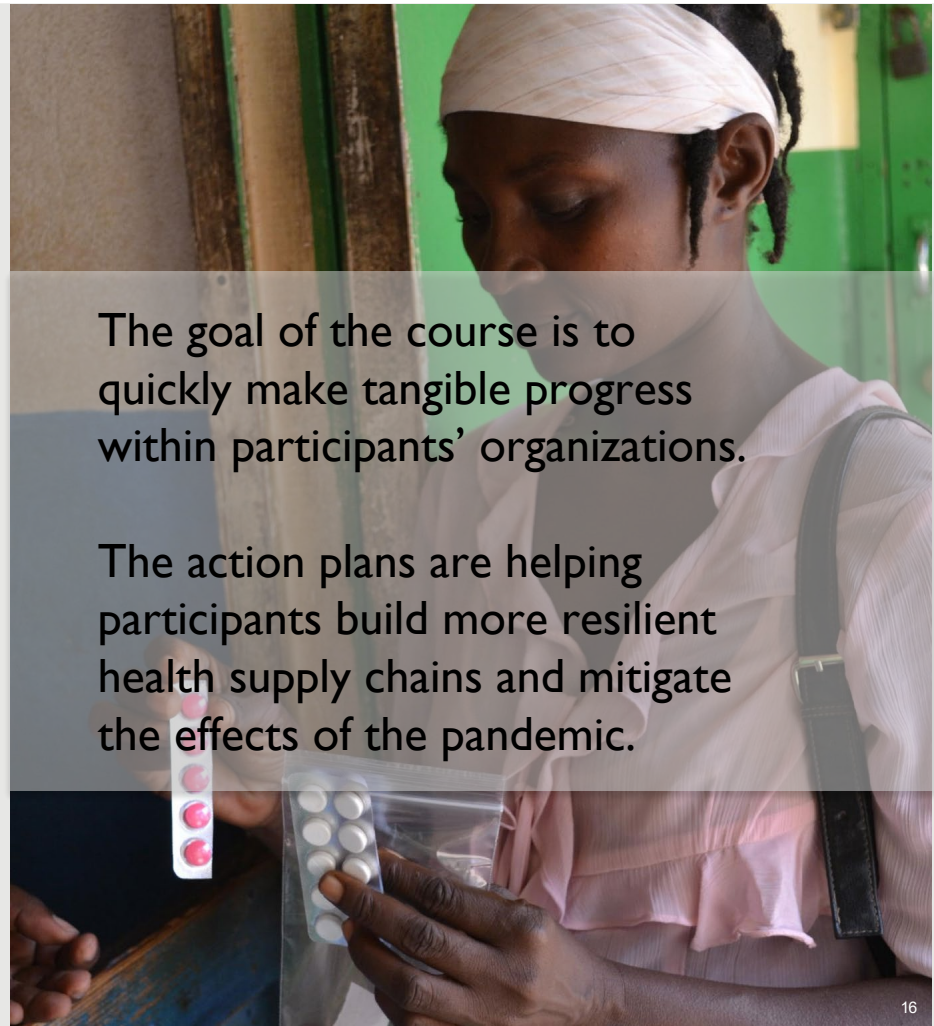
Even though participants are highly motivated, not everyone graduates. On average, 10 of the 12 participants will receive a certificate of completion.

THE OUTCOMES

- Some participants are sharing their knowledge by training others in their organization.
- Some are sharing tools and standardizing processes.
- Some are improving physical infrastructure and assessing risk.
- All are working toward their action plans.

The goal of the course is to quickly make tangible progress within participants' organizations.

The action plans are helping participants build more resilient health supply chains and mitigate the effects of the pandemic.





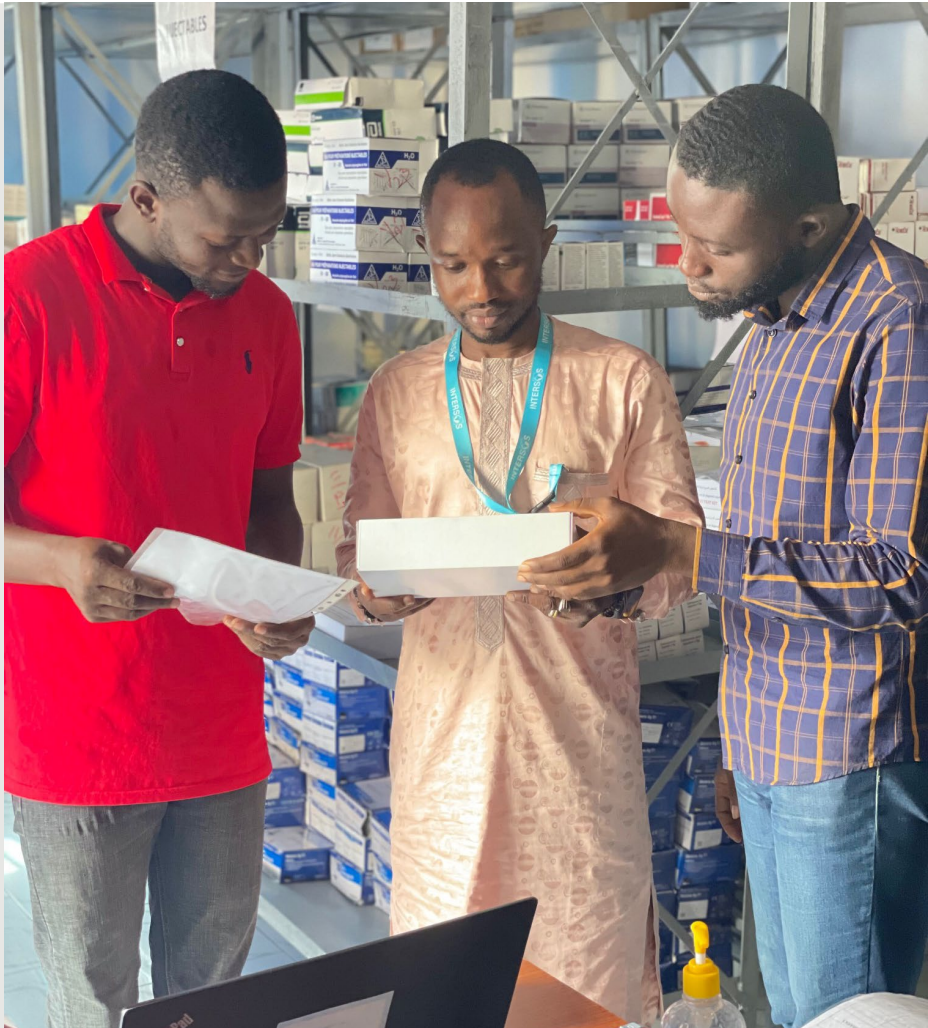
A BLENDED LEARNING PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVE

Ayuba Nuhu Tarfa
Pharmacy Manager, INTERSOS
Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria



BACKGROUND

- **Ayuba Nuhu Tarfa, Pharmacy Manager with INTERSOS in Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria** was among the first to graduate from the blended learning course.
- Ayuba manages medicines and other health supplies for more than 300,000 people who are displaced because of the conflict with Boko Haram and live in camps in Northern Nigeria's Yobe, Adamaua, and Borno States.



THE CHALLENGES

- Stockouts and overstocks of certain medicines.
- Selection of medicines needed for the population served.
- Performance monitoring and improvement.
- Risk management and preparedness.



THE SOLUTIONS

Reducing stockouts and overstocks by using improved methods of quantification based on data from the refugee camps

- We hired five pharmacy assistants who work with camp staff and local health departments to collect data weekly for the medications dispensed.
- Based on the blended learning course, we trained pharmacy assistants, medical doctors, and staff from the INTERSOS logistics department on improved quantification methods and data use.
- By using consumption data and enhancing how we use existing systems, we can quantify health commodities more accurately, which helps in addressing stockouts due to quantification and saves resources.



THE SOLUTIONS

Improving product selection by revising the national essential medicines list

- Working with the State Ministry of Health, we plan to coordinate among stakeholders to review and update the national essential medicines list used by INTERSOS, which determines the medicines that can be ordered.



Source: www.avert.org/news/

THE SOLUTIONS

Performance Monitoring and Improvement

In order to improve on our warehousing and inventory management, and distribution, we took into account the core key performance indicators (KPIs) to help us monitor our performance.

- **Stock accuracy**: this KPI provides us with the ability to compare stock on hand to the stock recorded on bin cards, and the pharmacy inventory tool. Doing so helps identify stock discrepancies.
- **Order fill rate**: we get to know how well our central pharmacy is doing in meeting the demands received from INTERSOS's field of operations (pull system).
- **On-time delivery**: we are able to measure the reliability of delivery of drugs to our field of operations as delays will have a negative impact on drug availability and services to beneficiaries.

Tracer Commodities

Measuring the stockout rate by tracer commodities gives us a clear picture of the extent of stockouts throughout our supply chain processes.

THE SOLUTIONS

Risk management and preparedness

- In managing risk that poses a great danger to the availability, and to the quality of drugs and their efficacy, drugs on the verge of stockout are being sourced from implementing partners either as donation or loan.
- Also, we fixed the roof of the warehouse as we anticipated leakage, which if not addressed will affect drug quality and its efficacy due to heavy rainfalls.



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