AMP Health works in partnership with the Malawi Ministry of Health and Population to strengthen leadership & management capacity in the Community Health Services Section (CHSS) and the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI). AMP Health recently concluded the 3-year Foundation Phase partnership with the CHSS team, and is about to place a Management Partner to work with the team for a 2-year Extension Phase. The Ministry is currently operating under the Health Sector Strategic Plan II 2017-2022, with the goal of moving towards Universal Health Coverage. In both programs, increased leadership & management are essential to maximizing the potential of all resources, including personnel.

Community Health Services Section: AMP Health launched its partnership with the CHSS team in 2016, and has recruited a Management Partner to work with the team for a 2-year Extension Phase. The 5-person team has utilized more than 15 new leadership & management tools and practices to improve individual, team, and system effectiveness.

Expanded Programme on Immunisation: AMP Health has engaged all 10 EPI team members since beginning its partnership in 2018, and introduced leadership & management tools which have strengthened the planning and introduction of three new vaccines.
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES SECTION

When AMP Health began supporting the Ministry of Health and Population in 2016, Malawi did not have a National Community Health Strategy or a team dedicated to overseeing and coordinating the country’s large, complex community health system.

During the partnership with AMP Health, the Ministry completed an in-depth Community Health Situation Assessment, formally established the CHSS, and developed the country’s first-ever National Community Health Strategy. Following these achievements, the CHSS team established new coordinating forums, district positions, and processes which have contributed to increased alignment and productivity from individuals, teams, and the community health system overall.

THE MANAGEMENT PARTNER contributed to the establishment and growth of the CHSS at the national and sub-national levels, supporting the development of a unifying vision & mission, clear roles and responsibilities, and principles promoting teamwork, unique personalities, and fun. The MP and CHSS team jointly developed practical tools and skills including a management tool supporting team planning, external progress reporting, and accountability.

LEADERSHIP LAB is an annual convening which brings all country teams together to collaborate and learn. Sessions on stakeholder management have been critical to building a coalition of allies within and outside the government to support the health system. New management skills have been embedded into the team’s daily conversation and decision-making to maximize one of the most limited resources: time.

FOCUS WORKSTREAMS are an opportunity for teams to identify their highest priority work areas and immediately apply the newly acquired leadership & management competencies to deliver on them. The CHSS team selected “changing approaches of stakeholders in prioritizing the National Community Health Strategy” as a topic. The team recognized that the skills needed were not technical, but rather those centered around influencing others and raising the program’s visibility. This enabled them to design an effective approach to engaging and changing the mindsets of their diverse stakeholders.
Since January 2018, AMP Health has worked in partnership with Malawi’s Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI), which sits within the Directorate of Preventive Health Services. In the first year of the partnership, the team prioritized work planning and improving implementation to support Gavi HSIS grants and the introduction of three new vaccines - Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine, Human Papillomavirus Vaccine, and the Malaria Vaccine Implementation Program. The team has utilized a work planning tool and day-to-day task categorization and prioritization to introduce all three vaccines on schedule.

The EPI team ultimately works to provide quality and safe vaccines to all children without discrimination based on gender, geography, or sect. It works towards this goal by focusing on preventing vaccine preventable diseases, supporting with Polio eradication and measles elimination, and ensuring that these services are tailored to reach all children, including those in hard-to-reach areas and underserved communities. The Ministry is currently operating under the Health Sector Strategic Plan II 2017-2022, with the goal of moving towards Universal Health Coverage.

**THE MANAGEMENT PARTNER**

supported the creation of a program-wide work planning tool to support the management of day-to-day timelines, work tasks, and delegation, and has led learning sessions on problem identification using the “5 Why’s” technique, and EPI-specific quality improvement cycles & processes.

**LEADERSHIP LAB**

resulted in the EPI team adopting the backwards-planning methodology for all new vaccines. The team has continued to engage with lessons learned specifically on motivating others, conflict resolution, and decision-making.

**LIVE LEARNING DAY**

sessions on time management concepts and practices prompted the team to adopt an “urgent and important” matrix to support day-to-day task categorization and prioritization. Most recent sessions have focused on mapping out relevant internal and external stakeholders and their roles in the team’s work, as well as the importance of consistent and honest communication within the team.
AMP Health has recently recruited a Management Partner to support the Extension Phase with the CHSS team. The new Management Partner will commence work soon to help reinforce best practices from the Foundation Phase, such as using strategy and planning tools like bottleneck analysis and costed annual work plans, as well as introduce more advanced leadership & management approaches to the team’s work, such as improving quality management within the team with the use of risk management processes. Culture change at an institutional level requires significant time and extended commitment. The decision to proceed with an Extension Phase reflects the continued commitment that the Ministry has made to leadership & management, and evidence that the current program has resulted in significant progress.

The EPI team and Management Partner are in the second year of the initial Foundation Phase, and are focusing on strengthening sub-national leadership & management capabilities to adopt and learn from best practices at the national level. This includes improving data analysis & utilization for decision-making, reinforcing team management practices, and more formally developing skills around individual and team management capabilities.