



Snapshot of Accomplishments Liberia

October 2022 to September 2023

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase private sector engagement to strengthen a network of private health providers to improve the quality of services and access for vulnerable and marginalized populations. 2. Increase COVID-19 vaccine access and coverage through the private sector through optimizing and integrating the COVID-19 vaccine into routine immunization. 3. Operationalize the John F. Kennedy Medical Center's (JFKMC) health management information system through critical information technology equipment and training.
GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS AREAS	National
HEALTH AREAS	COVID-19; Family Planning
TECHNICAL AREAS	Financing; Rules, Regulations, and Norms; Stewardship
REPORTING PERIOD	October 2022 to September 2023

Select Accomplishments

In FY2023, FHM Engage in Liberia made great strides in the implementation of three activities, namely: 1) private sector engagement (PSE), 2) COVID-19 and routine immunization (RI) integration, and 3) information technology (IT) to support the John F. Kennedy Medical Center (JFKMC). FHM Engage also developed a work plan for implementation of a marketplace activity in FY2023 to improve access to

healthcare solutions through the creation of a platform where key health actors can identify, prioritize, and address health market issues; foster partnership; and create access to financing for the local private health actors.

The progress achieved thus far coincides with the program's operational successes, namely the hiring and onboarding of Technical Program Director Sophie Parwon, who has provided technical leadership and coordination with the public and private sectors, local partners, and relevant stakeholders. An overview of the status of each activity is included in the narrative below.

Furthered Private Sector Engagement in Liberia

This year, FHM Engage initiated the PSE engagement activity, completing three objectives centered around: 1) building the capacity of the Ministry of Health (MOH)/PSE Unit to perform its stewardship role, 2) facilitating public-private dialogue through the multi-sectoral PSE technical working group (TWG), and 3) supporting the Healthcare Federation of Liberia (HFL) to improve their private sector representation role.

Under Objective 1, in addition to procuring \$5,000 in office equipment and furniture for the MOH/PSE Unit to support its daily functioning, FHM Engage worked with regional partner Insight Health Advisors (IHA) to provide coaching and mentoring services to the PSE Unit. Results included:

- A complete Organizational Assessment and Development Plan, with specific recommendations on how to expand the Unit's capacity.
- Training for ministry staff in key PSE skills and concepts, including understanding approaches to PSE, PSE frameworks, public-private partnerships, and the functions of a PSE Unit.
- The establishment of a PSE Technical Working Group (TWG) and the beginning of regular, quarterly meetings.

Furthering the program's objectives, FHM Engage also supported the PSE TWG in developing its terms of reference and a PSE Action Plan, organized around four goals, which will be implemented in the coming year. These efforts correspond to the program's successful dissemination of the PSE Strategy in four counties (Bong, Margibi, Montserrado, and Nimba), in which county health teams and private sector representatives gathered to discuss the strategy and next steps forward, including the development of county-level TWGs. These sessions were co-hosted by the MOH/PSE Unit and HFL.



PARTICIPANTS GATHER FOR A GROUP PLENARY SESSION AT A PSE STRATEGY DISSEMINATION WORKSHOP IN MONTSERRADO. CREDIT: FHM ENGAGE

Finally, FHM Engage partnered with HFL to increase its long-term sustainability through the finalization of a Resource Mobilization Action Plan, an Income Generation Plan, and by conducting a Membership Survey. These products provide the opportunity to explore and analyze ways to diversify HFL's income streams and the organization's current membership structure and offered member services in the coming year.

Throughout this activity, FHM Engage worked with an “honest broker,” a local consultant who served as a bridge between the public and private sectors, and facilitated dialogue between FHM Engage, HFL, and the MOH/PSE Unit.

Assessed COVID-19 and Routine Immunization Integration

Following a country scoping trip, FHM Engage, with approval from USAID, amended the COVID-19 work plan activity to refocus the program’s implementation around two critical local partners: DKT and HFL. As part of this sustainability strategy, FHM Engage executed contracts with both organizations, working with DKT’s existing operational infrastructure to advance immunization service delivery at the facility level in six counties and with HFL’s membership network to provide national-level advocacy and coordination. These partnerships are supported by other coordination efforts with implementing partners and county health teams.

Additionally, one of the program’s largest achievements this year for COVID-19 routine immunization was an assessment exercise of 103 private health facilities in the six focus counties which allowed for better understanding of facility readiness to deliver immunization and thus informed which facilities the project should prioritize. We shared and validated findings during a national-level stakeholder workshop, and identified next steps for FHM Engage, the MOH, and partners. Example findings included that only one in five of the assessed private health facilities received incentives to deliver immunization services, and that current COVID-19 vaccination efforts were limited. During this exercise, the project also compiled, verified, collected, and shared data that the Health Information Systems (HIS) unit in the MOH can use to update the master health facility list – including adding 42 private facilities to the list, identifying 22 private facilities as non-functional, and collecting missing geocodes for 72 private facilities – thereby supporting the MOH to have a better understanding of the current scope of private health facilities operating in these counties. A full report of the exercise is forthcoming.

As part of the next steps following the national-level Result Dissemination Workshop, FHM Engage conducted additional engagement meetings in each county, and with USAID-supported implementing partners and relevant stakeholders, to have further discussions on the private health facility assessment findings, generate practical solution-driven actions, and deepen FHM Engage’s understanding of the scope and status of activities being implemented by these partners.

Automated Functions of the John F. Kennedy Medical Center (JFKMC) Maternity Ward

In coordination with the JFKMC Information Technology (IT) Department, FHM Engage has been working to automate the functions of the maternity ward to minimize paper-based transactions and to create an integrated IT system that reduces operational support and maintenance while maintaining or improving service delivery quality. Following the submission and approval of a detailed approach, FHM Engage initiated the procurement for computers, accessories, and IT training in basic computer literacy.

Specifically, FHM Engage released a request for quotations (RFQ) to 16 vendors and received seven offers for IT equipment and one offer for IT training. With local support from Chemonics Global Health Supply Chain – Procurement and Supply Management Project, FHM Engage evaluated all offers against a predetermined list of criteria related to technical specifications and supplier qualifications and selected the respective vendors for IT equipment and training. All the IT equipment has been delivered to the JFKMC Maternity Center and over 160 staff were trained on computer literacy skills.

Researched Data Fragmentation in Liberia

In this past year, FHM Engage produced two knowledge products related to the family planning market in Liberia:


- **A family planning market description**, a visual document that synthesizes and illustrates key data, observations, and insights related to supply, demand, and supporting market functions within the private sector family planning market. The project is using this document as a basis for market development discussions in Liberia with the USAID Mission, the Family Health Division within the MOH, and other partners.
- **A technical brief** that highlights the challenge of data fragmentation and explores two digital innovations to address this challenge – data integration and data interoperability – for the global health community. The brief contextualizes these concepts through the lens of family planning and data fragmentation in Liberia across private and public sectors, offering recommendations and considerations for data harmonization to generate new insights that will transform the way decisions are made to improve health outcomes. This learning product seeks to contribute to priorities of the HIS unit in Liberia around addressing data fragmentation. It is currently in draft form and will be shared with the USAID Liberia Mission in the year ahead.

Cover banner photo: Participants speak together at FHM Engage's Private Health Facility Mapping Assessment Results Dissemination Workshop, hosted in July 2023. Credit: FHM Engage.

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