

SEAM Ghana

Essential Medicines Franchise: Creating Linkages between the Public and Private Sectors

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Background

In order to implement the SEAM Ghana franchise program, it has been necessary to establish new organizational linkages and redefine existing relationships. A key challenge was establishing collaboration between private, for-profit organizations and those that provide public, social, professional, or regulatory services. Specifically, the for-profit organization created to administer the franchise, GSMF Enterprises Ltd. (GSMFEL), a subsidiary of the nonprofit organization GSMF (formerly known as the Ghana Social Marketing Foundation), needed to build sustainable linkages with and address the concerns of a range of private and public sector stakeholders while keeping the primary focus on public health. A vital partner in balancing these concerns is the Pharmacy Council, the Ministry of Health (MOH) body that serves as the national regulatory authority for delivery of pharmaceutical care in Ghana.

Building Organizational Linkages

To help ensure successful implementation of the franchise initiative, SEAM Ghana and the MOH worked together to foster relationships with a range of stakeholders and sought to elicit their views and concerns.

Private sector stakeholders include suppliers of drugs and consumables for the franchise, transport/delivery services, and organizations with expertise in designing and conducting training.

The key **nonprofit** stakeholder in the franchise initiative is GSMF, a Ghanaian nonprofit organization with an established track record in social marketing, whose subsidiary, GSMF Enterprises Ltd. (GSMFEL), is acting as franchisor.

Key **professional bodies** engaged in the process include the Ghana National Chemical Sellers Association and the Pharmaceutical Society of Ghana.

The Pharmacy Council is the **regulatory body** providing oversight of drug retailers and the services they provide, and the Ghana and Food and Drug Board is responsible for the overall quality of pharmaceutical products in Ghana.

Management Sciences for Health (MSH) has served as the primary provider of **technical assistance** in developing the franchise. In addition, several local private sector companies and consultants have contributed to the process; notably, the design and delivery of franchisee training has been entirely outsourced to private sector providers.

Primary **donor support** has been provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This support has made it possible for the franchise concept to be developed and operationalized. In addition, the Challenge Fund of the Department for International Development (DFID), UK, has provided significant funding support to the franchisee training program.

Steps in Program Development

The Ghana essential medicines franchise program was developed through a series of steps carried out in close consultation with partners and stakeholders.

1. An assessment of the Ghana pharmaceutical sector was conducted in 2001 as a collaborative effort of the MOH, SEAM/MSH, and the Ghana National Drugs Programme (GNDP).
2. In early 2002, SEAM/MSH chose Ghana for full-scale program development, including a franchise component.



Newly opened CAREshop

3. MSH and GSMF combined resources to establish GSMFEL as the franchisor dedicated to delivering the franchise network.
4. The requirements, standards, and logistics for the franchise shops and franchise staff, and subsequently the CAREshop brand, were developed through the efforts of GSMFEL, SEAM Ghana, and selected private sector companies such as suppliers and training organizations.
5. GSMFEL and GSMF, with partners SEAM Ghana and the MOH, held a series of ten workshops with stakeholders, including the Ghana National Chemical Sellers Association, the Pharmaceutical Society of Ghana, and the Pharmacy Council, to solicit input.

6. Additional funding was identified and secured from the Ghana Business Linkage and Challenge Fund, DFID, and donors in the Ghana private sector. Each organization, including SEAM Ghana, agreed to fund specific components of the CAREshop network development.

