



Photo credit: Ayenew Haileselassie, Abt Associates  
*Zahab Ahmed, pharmacist fills the prescriptions of patients at the community pharmacy.*

# Community Pharmacies Boost Drug Supply and Revenue in Harari Region

In 2022, the Harari Regional Health Bureau opened nine community pharmacies at eight health centers and one hospital using a 1.2 million birr loan from the local community-based health insurance (CBHI) program. The pharmacies are intended to improve the availability and accessibility of drugs for patients and the community, and to generate income for the health centers.

Jinela Health Centre is one of the beneficiaries of the project, which used the 1.2 million birr to stock its new community pharmacy. The pharmacy opened its doors in May 2023 and has been contributing to addressing the drug supply shortage. Advantages of the community pharmacy include:

- The purchase of drugs anytime, whereas the health center purchases drugs only on a quarterly basis for the regular pharmacy.
- Expanded variety of drug stocked, not just those on the essential drugs list.

Zahab Ahmed, one of the pharmacists, said that the community pharmacy had bought drugs four times in the six months it had been open. “Whenever there is stockout, we buy immediately,” she said.

Since the opening of community pharmacies, CBHI members have been able to avoid incurring out-of-pocket expenditure at private pharmacies. Between the health center and the community pharmacies, there

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is now 100% availability of the 170 drugs required to be available at the health center level, according to Mohammed Ibrahim, Director of Jinela Health Centre. Mohammed Ibrahim, head of the health center, said that the community pharmacy has covered a 20% gap the health center used to have.

Half of the profit from the community pharmacy goes into the health center's internal revenue, while the other half is shared among the health center staff involved in the operation of the pharmacy. This creates an incentive for the staff to work hard and provide quality service to the customers.

Scott Hocklander, USAID's Mission Director for Ethiopia visited the health center and its community pharmacy in October 2023, accompanied by a team from the USAID office and the USAID Health Financing Improvement Program.



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