

Beginning in October 2012, five donors (Australia, Canada, the European Union, Sweden and the UK) are providing £120 million through the Health Pooled Fund (HPF) for a programme in South Sudan lasting three and a half years. The UK leads and manages the HPF on behalf of other contributing donors. The programme supports the delivery of the Government's Health Sector Development Plan 2012-2016 in six of the country's ten states, to assist the transition from a non-governmental organisation (NGO) led health service to one that is led by government.

Data were not yet available to indicate whether the HPF is contributing towards the achievement of South Sudan's targets to reduce maternal and child mortality. However, data show that outcomes in at least two project areas are improving. The project was successful in sustaining the essential NGO-provided health services existing in the absence of adequate government resources, the initial intended focus of the programme. The HPF had been successful in achieving its targets in the area of health services delivery.

Once the support to health services delivery was in place, the focus was to shift to supporting work to establish structures at the community level, to increase the local accountability of health services, and also on health system strengthening (HSS) activities. Less success has been achieved in HSS, with two out of five milestones not being achieved by the end of 2014.

While the community engagement work stream has proceeded reasonably, largely meeting the project log frame targets to date, it has developed in the absence of central guidelines for its rollout.

A major investment of Public Financial Management (PFM) strengthening during 2013 was to develop a set of PFM benchmarks. The benchmarks have been agreed with the Ministry of Health; however, this review considers that they do not present a balanced set of criteria for PFM strengthening.

The review further comments on:

- Value for money
- Governance and management
- Risk management
- Support beyond March 2016