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# Operationalizing the forecast and supply plan

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## Guidance Manual on Forecasting and Supply Planning

for Vaccines and other  
Immunization Supplies

# Contents

## Operationalizing the forecast and supply plan

This guidance manual explains why it is important to consider the key activities required to initiate the operationalization of the forecast and supply plan and briefly discusses them. The document is organized into the following sections.

- Acronyms
- Definition of terms
- 1. Overview of operationalization of the forecast and supply plan**  
Explains why it is crucial to consider the operationalization of forecast and supply
- 2. Key activities involved in operationalizing the forecast and supply plan**  
Highlights the key activities to be considered when operationalizing the forecast and supply plan
- Key takeaways
- References



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## Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
FSP	Forecasting and supply planning

## Definition of terms

Term	Definition
Forecast	The quantity of doses of each vaccine that are estimated to be consumed or utilized for a specific period in the future. This term and projected vaccine demand are used interchangeably throughout the guide.
Stock allocation	The process of estimating and deciding the quantity of product needed to meet the requirements of specific stores or health facilities for a defined period.
Supply plan	A plan that indicates when, where and how many doses of each vaccine should be delivered to ensure adequate stock levels are maintained throughout the supply chain based on the forecasted consumption, stock status and inventory policies.



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## Overview of operationalization of the forecast and supply plan

The finalization of the forecast and supply plan marks only the beginning of the implementation cycle. Some immediate actions are required to initiate its implementation. These activities **enable the programme to mobilize adequate funding, initiate timely procurement, ensure alignment of FSP assumptions with stock allocation assumptions and ensure**

**implementation of recommended actions** to improve forecasting and supply planning (FSP) performance.

## Key activities involved in operationalizing the forecast and supply plan

See table below.

#	Task	Description	Guidance	Responsible
1	Support mobilization of financial resources and initiate procurement	The FSP team should work with responsible stakeholders to ensure funds are released on time and to kick-start the procurement process.		FSP team and the entity responsible for leadership oversight
2	Support programme efforts to align FSP assumptions with stock allocation assumptions	The FSP team should verify that final FSP assumptions are used to inform the actual commodity allocation. Where these do not align, advocacy should follow.	<p>Implementation of this task typically involves revising the assumptions and data in the applicable stock allocation tools.</p> <p>This may also entail revision or adaptation of stock management and distribution policies. This must be done early enough to ensure that the FSP assumptions inform the first allocation for the forecast implementation cycle.</p> <p>The assumptions may be revised during programme implementation, especially in instances where actual utilization does not align with the forecast, thus highlighting the need for constant review, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 8 'Forecasting and supply planning review'.</p>	FSP team and the entity responsible for leadership oversight
3	Support programme efforts to implement recommendations from the FSP exercise	<p>The team should advocate for activities related to the recommendations from the FSP exercise to be integrated into the work plan of the programme/unit responsible for leadership oversight.</p> <p>The team should also track the implementation status of these activities.</p>	The implementation status of the recommended activities should be discussed during review meetings.	FSP team and the entity responsible for leadership oversight

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## Key takeaways

- **The adoption and finalization of the forecast and supply plan mark only the beginning of the implementation cycle.**
- **The FSP team should advocate for activities related to the recommendations from the FSP exercise to be integrated into the work plan** of the programme/unit responsible for leadership oversight.
- Key activities required to initiate forecast and supply implementation include: (1) supporting **mobilization of financial resources and initiation of procurement**; (2) supporting programme **efforts to align FSP assumptions with stock allocation assumptions**; and (3) supporting programme **efforts to implement recommendations** from the FSP exercise.



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## References

John Snow, Inc., 'Quantification of Health Commodities: A guide to forecasting and supply planning for procurement', John Snow, Inc., Arlington, Va., 2017, <[https://publications.jsi.com/JSIInternet/Inc/Common/download\\_pub.cfm?id=18172&lid=3](https://publications.jsi.com/JSIInternet/Inc/Common/download_pub.cfm?id=18172&lid=3)>, accessed 3 November 2021.

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