

# Cost Sharing for the Sustainability of the HIV Response in the Dominican Republic:

## Inclusion of ARVs in the Country's Social Security Health Insurance

Nassim Diaz<sup>1</sup>; Claudia Valdez<sup>1</sup>; Jon Cali<sup>1</sup>; Edgar Barillas<sup>2</sup>; M Castillo<sup>3</sup>; Jo Jean Elenes<sup>4</sup>; Carolina Piña<sup>4</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Abt Associates; <sup>2</sup>GIS Grupo Consultor EIRL; <sup>3</sup>National HIV and AIDS Council, Dominican Republic; <sup>4</sup>USAID/Dominican Republic

### Background

The Dominican Republic's Ministry of Health (MoH) finances the procurement of all antiretrovirals (ARV) and laboratory reagents for the national HIV program. These procurements are funded through an annual budgetary line item.

**The current funding system presents a sustainability challenge:** the amount allocated is dependent on the annual political process that determines the national government's budget. It also faces a funding gap of \$14 million to cover the entire National HIV Strategic Plan.

**The challenge:** The National HIV Strategic Plan specifies that HIV services, including antiretroviral therapy, must be covered by the Dominican Social Security System (DSS) to guarantee its sustainability. However, the systems for procuring and financing ARVs under such a system are not aligned.

### Description

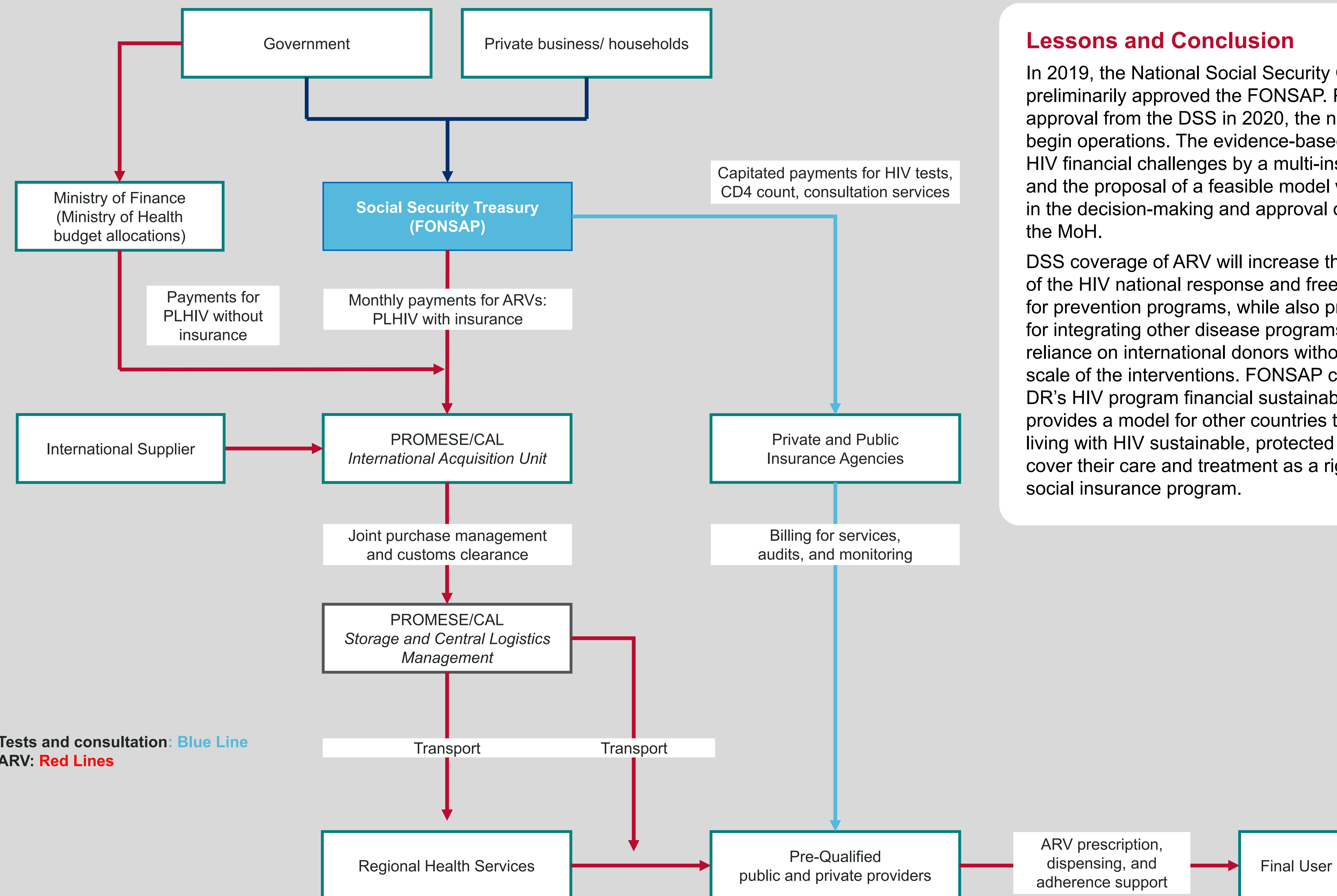
USAID's Sustaining Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS) Plus project supported the finalization and adoption of a new operational model that would be financed by DSS and maintain the scale of MOH's existing procurement mechanism. This model (FONSAP, in its Spanish acronym) was first developed with support from USAID's Health Finance and Governance project.

SHOPS Plus supported a national technical group to host a series of consultative meetings with employers, labor groups, insurance companies, and government entities. At these meetings, SHOPS Plus advocated for the adoption of the new model. SHOPS Plus also conducted a review to identify legal implications of the new model and identified no potential roadblocks.



Contact Information  
[Nassim\\_Diaz@abtassoc.com](mailto:Nassim_Diaz@abtassoc.com)

### A New Model for Financing ARVs



### Lessons and Conclusion

In 2019, the National Social Security Council preliminarily approved the FONSAP. Pending final approval from the DSS in 2020, the new model will begin operations. The evidence-based analysis of HIV financial challenges by a multi-institutional team and the proposal of a feasible model were key pieces in the decision-making and approval of the model by the MoH.

DSS coverage of ARV will increase the sustainability of the HIV national response and free MoH resources for prevention programs, while also providing a model for integrating other disease programs, and reducing reliance on international donors without sacrificing scale of the interventions. FONSAP charts a path for DR's HIV program financial sustainability and provides a model for other countries to offer people living with HIV sustainable, protected resources to cover their care and treatment as a right through a social insurance program.