



A Critical Analysis of Medicine Policy in East Africa: An Original Research Perspective from Liberia

Samuel G. Weah¹, Josephine Kofa²

¹ Department of Internal Medicine, University of Liberia

² University of Liberia

Published: 27 November 2018 | **Received:** 23 September 2018 | **Accepted:** 03 November 2018

Correspondence: sweah@yahoo.com

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18527558](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18527558)

Author notes

Samuel G. Weah is affiliated with Department of Internal Medicine, University of Liberia and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Josephine Kofa is affiliated with University of Liberia and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Abstract

Medicine policy is fundamental to effective health systems, but its implementation in post-conflict and resource-limited settings presents considerable difficulties. This study critically examines the development and execution of national medicine policy in Liberia, providing a case study pertinent to wider policy discourse in similar contexts. The purpose was to critically analyse Liberia's national medicine policy. The objectives were to assess the policy formulation process, evaluate implementation fidelity, and identify key facilitators and barriers to achieving its intended outcomes. A qualitative, document-based case study design was employed. Data were collected via a systematic review of policy documents, legislative frameworks, and official reports. This was supplemented by key informant interviews with purposively sampled stakeholders from government, healthcare facilities, and international agencies. Data were interpreted using thematic analysis. A significant gap was identified between policy intent and practical implementation. A critical shortage of skilled human resources was found to undermine procurement and distribution systems. Furthermore, a majority of interviewed stakeholders reported that financing mechanisms were inconsistent and insufficient for sustainable medicine security. Liberia's medicine policy, while well-designed in principle, has been impeded by systemic weaknesses in implementation. The disconnect between policy objectives and operational capacity continues to challenge reliable access to essential medicines. Recommendations include strengthening pharmaceutical workforce capacity through targeted training, institutionalising sustainable financing for the medicine supply chain, and establishing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track policy implementation. Medicine policy, pharmaceutical policy, health systems, implementation research, Liberia, West Africa, essential medicines This research provides an in-depth, contextual analysis of medicine policy implementation in a post-conflict setting, highlighting systemic barriers that can inform policy strengthening in Liberia and comparable health systems.

Keywords: *medicine policy, health systems, post-conflict settings, Sub-Saharan Africa, implementation research, pharmaceutical sector, resource-limited settings*



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