



mHealth: Tanzania



Project Name: Supporting Systems to Achieve Improved Nutrition, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (SUSTAIN-MNCH).

Country/Province/Specific Location: Singida Region (Iramba & Singida rural districts)

Project Timing: January 2012-April 2015

Health Programming Models: [ttC](#)

Target Population: 30,100

CHWs Utilizing mHealth Solution: 32

Community Members Reached via mHealth: 30,100



Project Overview

In March 2013, D-tree International began working with World Vision Tanzania (WVT) to develop and implement a mobile phone-based application that assists community health workers (CHWs) to deliver a set of very specific maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) protocols that have been developed in Tanzania for use at the community level. The application aims to assist CHWs to provide behavior change messages and identify problems as they arise as well as lead the health worker through a step-by-step process to know exactly what to do and what to say to the client. CHWs are also able to identify, register, and monitor pregnant women and children and additionally encourage the mothers to receive antenatal care at a clinic, deliver at a health facility, go for postnatal checkups, and take their children to well child clinics.

During the monitoring process, the mobile solution also provides CHWs with a checklist of danger signs for the mother (during pregnancy, labor, and postpartum) and newborn, and gives instructions on how to counsel a woman regarding antenatal clinic visits, facility-based deliveries, and postnatal clinic visits. CHWs upload all patients' data to a cloud-based server hosted by the University Computing Center (UCC) at the University of Dar es Salaam. Summary reports can then be prepared from the database and shared with supervisors.



The guidelines used in the application have been developed in consultation with the Government of Tanzania and other stakeholders in maternal and child health in Tanzania and has been approved by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) Division of Reproductive Health.

Researchers from the University of Toronto evaluated the impact of the application on the knowledge and behavior of pregnant women around accessing antenatal care and delivering at health facilities in the Singida rural and Iramba districts. The research concluded that the mHealth intervention had a positive impact on facility delivery. Although there are many other factors that smartphones cannot directly address, phones add value and may be an effective component of intervention packages. Moreover, CHWs are highly valued “cultural translators” that provide a crucial link between healthcare providers and communities. There remains potential for even greater impact with proper financial incentives, supportive supervision, and other sources of motivation and support. These lessons drawn from this research will inform MoHSW and other stakeholders on scaling up similar interventions in the country. WVT is also expecting to scale up this intervention to involve more CHWs in other areas.

mHealth Solution

Specifics of the mobile health solution utilized are delineated below:

- ▶ **Technology:** MoTECH Suite
- ▶ **Mobile Phone:** NOKIA X2-02 & RM-694 (Android)
- ▶ **Mobile Network Operator:** Airtel

Stakeholder Engagement

Key stakeholders at the international and national level collaborating on this mHealth initiative include:

- ▶ Ministry of Health & Social Welfare
- ▶ D-tree International
- ▶ University of Toronto

Funding

- ▶ Canada DFATD

Contacts

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