United States President's Malaria Initiative
Digital Community Health Initiative
March Newsletter

Representatives from the Mozambique Ministry of Health, UNICEF, Malaria Consortium, Dimagi, and Digital Square meet to discuss the new community health information subsystem in March 2023. Photo: PATH Mozambique.

Community Health Information Subsystem in Mozambique

In Mozambique, Digital Square is supporting the Ministry of Health (MOH) to build a new community health information subsystem to advance the primary health care for universal health coverage agenda. One of the pillars of the community health subsystem strategy is the design and implementation of a community health information subsystem that integrates digital tools.

As part of Phase 3 of the Digital Community Health Initiative (DCHI), Digital Square has been supporting the MOH to develop the *Community Health Information Subsystem Implementation Plan* to strengthen community digital health governance and to expand the use cases and functionalities for community digital health tools.

upSCALE, a digital health tool used by community health workers (CHWs), is currently being used in many health domains, including prenatal care, newborn screening, postpartum care, family planning, nutrition, HIV, TB, and COVID-19 (for educational messages). This digital tool, based on CommCare, also aids CHWs in treating malaria and diarrhea, if present.

upSCALE was intended to be scaled up for national use with the *Community Health Information Subsystem Implementation Plan*. However, governance issues regarding its use led to the development of a parallel system based on District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS2) capture.

Digital Square, the MOH and other implementing partners met to discuss the new community health information subsystem.

Digital Square played an instrumental role in increasing coordination and governance, and it successfully advocated against the use of a dual system that would burden CHWs with additional training and dual entry. As a result, in March 2023, the MOH reached a consensus on using upSCALE as the sole community digital tool for national rollout through the community health information subsystem.

About this project

The U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) launched its Digital Community Health Initiative (DCHI) with a vision to strengthen quality health delivery at the community level. Led by USAID and co-implemented with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this initiative aims to invest in the scale-up of digitally enabled community health platforms. DCHI is implemented by PATH's Digital Square initiative and its subawardees, including John Snow International, Last Mile Health, and Population Services International. Learn more about Digital Square and the DCHI Initiative.

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Implementation of an Electronic Community Health Worker (CHW) Registry in Zambia

Digital Square is supporting the Zambian Ministry of Health to implement the electronic Community Health Worker registry throughout the country to improve the community health information system and enhance the delivery of malaria services by CHWs. To support this initiative, Digital Square is conducting user training workshops in four provinces (Southern, Eastern, Central, and Luapula) with the goal of achieving nationwide utilization of the electronic CHW registry.

The registry is a KoboCollect mobile application designed for use by health facility staff who supervise CHWs in their areas, with the purpose of gathering and reporting data on CHW deployment, saturation, and attrition to the MOH Human Resource Information System (HRIS).

Thus far, Digital Square has provided training to 125 health care workers, including nurses and environmental health technicians (EHTs) at the health facility level, community health officers (CHOs), and information officers who work at district and provincial management levels. These training sessions are conducted as "training-of-trainers" workshops, where participants will then disseminate the knowledge gained to other health facilities within their respective districts.

Digital Square has continued to support the MOH to provide technical supportive supervision of the CHW registry in Southern and Eastern Provinces. The CHW registry will improve management and planning of the community-based volunteers and harmonize gray areas that have been identified, such as fragmentation. During the visits, the Provincial Health Director, the District Health Director, the District Health Officer, facility staff, the EHT, and community focal point personnel met to discuss the importance of the CHW registry and its long-term impact on managing and planning for CHWs through the HRIS.

Upcoming priorities

- Digital Square is supporting a stakeholder workshop to formulate a digital community health addendum to the Digital Health Strategy 2021–2025 in Zimbabwe.

Success Story

- Digital Square, with close collaboration with PSI, published the Spotlight on Nigeria: Digital Health's Catalytic Effect on Nigeria's Malaria Elimination Efforts on March 23, 2023.

Staff highlights

Happy 40th birthday to Dr. Adrienne T. Brown, PATH Health Information System Consultant! She celebrated her birthday on March 1. One of her celebrations has been taking in some nature in Mozambique while enjoying the African sun and the waves of the Indian Ocean.

From left to right: Keempe Mizinga (EHT, Siavonga Hach), Tembo Robson (CFPP, Siavonga District Health Office), Grace Tembo (CCHO, MOH HQ), Melody Kalombo (CHO, MOH HQ), Chishala Bwalya (Project Officer M&E, ZDCH Project, PATH), Nathan Mwansa (CLO), Josephine Chakulya (Nurse), Vhoela Mutemwa (Registry Officer), and behind in uniform is Mary Mwansa (Nurse) at Siavonga Hach Facility, Siavonga District. Photo: PATH/Mercy Mwanza (PATH Fellow), March 2023.

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EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS2), Power BI and Superset training participants in Nairobi, Kenya

In March, PSI conducted a DHIS2, Power BI, and Superset training at the hub in Nairobi, Kenya, which brought together more than 40 participants from over 15 countries. The participants came from Zimbabwe, Kenya, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Laos, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Uganda, Vietnam, Nigeria and Myanmar.

It was an excellent opportunity to emphasize the growing importance of digital health capacity-building and data-driven decision-making in creating more resilient health systems worldwide.

By fostering a data-driven culture, health care professionals and policymakers can identify trends, allocate resources efficiently, and address potential issues before they escalate, ultimately leading to more resilient health systems.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Global Digital Development Forum

The Global Digital Development Forum will take place on April 26–27, 2023. The virtual GDDF format that spans the globe from 4:00 GMT to 20:00 GMT will include in-person watch parties in Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, India, Brazil, Ethiopia, and Guatemala (with more coming) and an exclusive in-person Washington, DC, event.

Africa Digital Health Summit

The 3rd Africa Digital Health Summit (ADHS 2023) is scheduled to take place on June 22-23, 2023, in Lagos, Nigeria, on Digital Transformation of Health Systems: The Role of Collaboration and Partnerships. Session proposals are due on April 15, 2023.

Staff highlights

Nina Getachew, Digital Square's PMI DCHI's Project Administration Officer, rescued a 9-week-old puppy. Meet the newest member of PMI DCHI, Tuli, an Australian Shepherd and Border Collie mix. He will be joining our meetings soon.

Gracey Vaughn, Digital Square's PMI DCHI Global Project Lead, and her family celebrated the baptism of her youngest daughter, Evelyn.

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