

Integrating upSCALE into the Ministry of Health

Institutionalising upSCALE through data ownership and data-informed decision-making for community health in Mozambique

Background

In 2016, Malaria Consortium introduced a community-based mobile health (mHealth) intervention project in Mozambique, called inSCALE.^[1] In 2017, this intervention was expanded and scaled up to develop upSCALE, which focuses on the improvement of the quality and coverage of health services at the community level.^[2] upSCALE consists of a smartphone application that guides community health workers — locally known as *agentes polivalentes de saúde* (APs) — through patient registration, diagnosis, treatment and referrals; and a tablet-based application for supervisors to monitor the performance of APs, as well as stock levels of critical commodities in near real-time.

upSCALE has been implemented in seven of Mozambique's 10 provinces, with 3,654 APs and 1,000 APs supervisors using the platform. Between 2017 and 2024, the project reached approximately 600,000 households and recorded three million patient registrations.^[2,3] The government subsequently created the electronic Community Health Information System (eCHIS) to harmonise the country's community health systems into a single, integrated platform. The upSCALE platform provides the main routine and supervisory information framework for eCHIS, due to its preventive, diagnostic, curative and referral functionality — all of which support routine consultations, surveillance, immunisation and supervisory data generation.

Country

Mozambique

Funder

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria via United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Length of project

January 2025 – December 2026

Partners

Ministry of Health (MoH) Mozambique — Community Health Workers' Programme, Community Health Subsystem and Department of Health Information (DIS)

UNICEF

Project outline and objectives

From 2025 to 2026, Malaria Consortium will work closely with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to sustain and scale implementation of upSCALE to reach all APs within each of the seven original provinces. The project will also be extended to the remaining three provinces — Manica, Niassa and Tete — covering 100 percent of APs in the country. Two new modules will be added to the platform: immunisation (to support tracking of under-vaccinated children), and supervision (to support the supervision process at all levels).

The present partnership and cooperation agreement with the MoH builds on the achievements of our previous agreement with UNICEF to improve disease surveillance and community-based maternal and child healthcare. The objectives are to:

- integrate upSCALE within the MoH, while sustaining the platform's current day-to-day operations
- improve the quality of data collected by the MoH to strengthen data-informed decision-making at national and subnational levels
- ensure the country's eCHIS becomes the primary platform for maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) service delivery at the community level.

Activities

Malaria Consortium is expanding the implementation of upSCALE to include an additional 8,788 APs and 1,650 supervisors/coordinators across the 10 implementation provinces. Training and supervision will be offered to APs and government stakeholders at all levels (central, provincial and district). Monitoring of essential health services for children and mothers at the community and household level is taking place through the platform.

Malaria Consortium is designing an epidemiological surveillance module to identify and follow up on children who have not

received full courses of their essential childhood immunisations, and to prepare for and respond to public health emergencies. A supervision module is being developed and implemented alongside the surveillance module.

The project team will continue to develop guidelines, procedures and budgets to integrate upSCALE into the MoH's existing health information systems, and to gradually transfer the management and ownership of the upSCALE platform within the MoH.

Outcomes and impact

Strengthened decision-making and better health

outcomes. By promoting data use and a culture of data-to-action for key health indicators, the project continues to help foster strategic and operational decisions, as well as lead to better community health outcomes. With the expansion and inclusion of new modules, upSCALE supports quality case management and surveillance of disease, as well as monitoring of essential health services for children and mothers at community and household levels.

Local ownership and integration to ensure sustainability.

The latest phase of the project addresses long-term sustainability requirements such as transitioning upSCALE to a local self-hosting server model and greater data integration to showcase the granularity and richness of upSCALE's community data. The continued expansion of upSCALE's capabilities and reach aligns with the needs of the MoH to provide a full package of health and nutrition services within the eCHIS platform.



References

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3. Malaria Consortium. upSCALE: Institutionalising data ownership and data informed decision-making for community health programmes in Mozambique. Malaria Consortium; 2023. Available from: www.malariaconsortium.org/resources/institutionalising-data-ownership-and-data-informed-decision-making-for-community-health-programmes-in-mozambique

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Contact: info@malariaconsortium.org

Cover image: APS Luisa Mate assists a patient in the Tavira community, Manhiça district, Maputo province, Mozambique

Project lead: Leonel Dias

Contact: info@malariaconsortium.org



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