



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

Integrating upSCALE into the Ministry of Health

Background

Malaria Consortium introduced a community-based mobile health (mHealth) intervention project in Mozambique, called inSCALE, between 2009–2016.^[1] In 2017, this intervention was expanded and scaled up to develop upSCALE, a platform owned and led by the government that focuses on the improvement of the quality and coverage of health services at the community level.^[2] upSCALE consists of a smartphone app that guides community health workers, locally known as *agentes polivalentes elementares* (APEs), through patient registration, diagnosis, treatment and referrals. upSCALE also has a tablet-based app for supervisors to monitor APE performance and stock levels of critical commodities in near real time.

The upSCALE project is currently being implemented successfully in seven of Mozambique's 11 provinces. Between 2017 and 2022, more than 200,000 households received healthcare supported by the upSCALE app, and almost 650,000 patients were registered on the platform. For the current project phase, we are collaborating with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and UNICEF to integrate upSCALE into the MoH's surveillance systems. This will support the collection of disease-specific data to inform decision-making around community health interventions, especially for maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH).

Country

Mozambique

Donor

UK aid from the UK Government, via United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Length of project

January 2023 – December 2023

Partners

Ministry of Health (MoH) Mozambique –
Community Health Workers' Programme
UNICEF

Strategic objective

Data-informed decision-making and digital solutions

Project outline and objectives

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 Electronic Community Health Information System (eCHIS) becomes the primary platform for MNCH service delivery at the community level.

The government has created the eCHIS to harmonise the country's several community health systems, one of which is upSCALE, into a single, integrated platform. Within the eCHIS, upSCALE will support improvements in the quality of community health services provided. For example, upSCALE data can be used to help improve routine health consultations, surveillance and the generation of supervisory data.

A key component of the current upSCALE platform is a nutrition screening module for children under five. Malaria Consortium will support revisions to this content from a nutritional surveillance perspective. Once the module is fully developed, it will support counselling on breastfeeding and nutrition/feeding best practices, screening and referral for malnutrition, distribution of nutrient supplementation and management of commodities. The MoH is aiming to roll out the module by the end of 2023.

Activities

To achieve these objectives, Malaria Consortium will:

- develop clear implementation guidelines, standard operating procedures and budgets to integrate upSCALE into the MoH's existing health information systems, along

with plans for implementation activities at central and provincial levels

- gradually transfer the management and ownership of the upSCALE platform within the MoH
- generate and disseminate evidence of upSCALE's effectiveness to improve project implementation and inform other national and international mHealth and digital solutions
- continue to use upSCALE to improve quality case management and disease surveillance, and to sustain the current high level of implementation coverage in the seven provinces
- offer training and supervision to APEs and government stakeholders at all levels (central, provincial and district)
- promote data use and a culture of data-to-action for key health indicators — this will not only help to foster strategic and operational decisions, but will also lead to better community health outcomes
- monitor essential health services for children and mothers at the community and household level through upSCALE
- strengthen the nutrition module and contribute to the development of new content through
 - a comprehensive content review and consultations with key partners, including UNICEF and the Department of Nutrition
 - providing technical assistance to develop new workflows and content
 - user testing in a province, to gather and review data on case detection, referral and follow-up procedures
 - training and quality assurance.



References

1. Malaria Consortium. Implementing mHealth solutions: To improve community health worker motivation and performance. London. 2016. Available from: www.malariaconsortium.org/resources/publications/878/implementing-mobile-health-solutions.
2. Malaria Consortium. upSCALE: Strengthening mobile health in Mozambique: Improving disease surveillance and community-based maternal and child healthcare. London. 2022. Available from: www.malariaconsortium.org/resources/publications/1532/upscale-strengthening-mobile-health-in-mozambique.

© Malaria Consortium / June 2023

Unless indicated otherwise, this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-profit or educational purposes without permission from the copyright holder. Please clearly acknowledge the source and send a copy or link of the reprinted material to Malaria Consortium. No images from this publication may be used without prior permission from Malaria Consortium.

UK Registered Charity No: 1099776

Contact: info@malariaconsortium.org

Cover image: APE attending to a patient in Umpala, Mozambique

FightingMalaria
 MalariaConsortium
www.malariaconsortium.org



**malaria
consortium**
disease control, better health