





THE ACCESS PROGRAM Scaling Up Health technologies

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Accessible Continuum of Care and Essential Services Sustained (ACCESS) program is a five-year (2018-2023) integrated health project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and led by Management Sciences for Health (MSH). By working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), the goal of the program is to accelerate sustainable health impacts for the Malagasy population through three primary objectives:

- Quality health services are sustainably available and accessible to all Malagasy communities in the program's target regions
- Health systems function effectively to support quality service delivery
- The Malagasy people sustainably adopt healthy behaviors and social norms

There is great variation between and within the ACCESS target regions in terms of geography and infrastructure, epidemiology, demography, economic and socio-cultural factors, health sector performance, and level of organizational capacity within the MOPH and in communities. Consequently, the program's strategic approach requires tailored and decentralized implementation, building on what exists and responding to the needs and opportunities specific to each region and district.

MOBILE HEALTH APPLICATION

Two priorities of ACCESS are improving the quality of service delivery and improving access to high quality data. In 2017, the MOPH adopted the use of a *CommCare* mobile health application, which had two versions:

(1) a version for Community Health Volunteers (CHVs), which included features for dayto-day beneficiary support and monthly reporting;

(2) a version for the health center (CSB) chiefs to improve the supervision of CHVs and the collection of CHV reports. Community-level data can also be viewed online via *CommCare* HQ, as well as the national DHIS-2 instance.



The support algorithms built into the application aid CHVs with counseling and treatment, thereby improving the quality of care. By removing the need for paper data entry, the application's automatic data collection and sharing also increases both the accuracy and timeliness of data submission.

ACCESS is working closely with the MOPH to scale up the use of the *CommCare* application -- over 5,000 users (both CHVs and CSBs) are expected to be reached over the life of the project. In addition to the existing functionalities -- which will be updated as needed -- new opportunities to capitalize on the mobile tool will be developed and pursued.

COMMUNITY-BASED SURVEILLANCE: The CommCare application helps improve data quality and reporting timeliness, which contributes to informed decision-making and outbreak responses at the national level. In fact, CHVs are conducting surveillance activities at the community level, and can send automatic alert signals to their supervisors through the application.

SUPERVISION: The CommCare application has a built-in supervision grid for CHVs and CSBs, which automatically generates performance scores and improves the supervisory system at all levels.

E-LEARNING: To improve service quality in health facilities, ACCESS is developing e-learning tools that complement the program's innovative capacity building approach. The e-learning tool will strengthen health workers' theoretical knowledge with an interactive self-learning process that is available on tablets.

PARTNERSHIPS: The ACCESS program is planning to build strong partnerships with the private sector, specifically telecom operators, which will give further leverage to the mHealth activities. These partnerships offer opportunities for cost-sharing, access to additional technology, infrastructures, connectivity, and equipment.

Using Drones to Deliver Medical Commodities

The distribution of health commodities to remote areas remains problematic in many hard-to-reach areas, mostly during disease outbreaks or when the supply chain system fails. ACCESS is working with the MOPH to pilot the use of drones to transport health commodities to isolated communities. The pilot phase will start with malaria commodities, including rapid diagnostic tests and malaria medicines (artemisinin-based combination therapy).

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

DIMAGI

Dimagi is a social enterprise based in Cambridge, MA, USA. It designs clinical interfaces, health information systems, and mobile technologies that are adapted to low-resource settings. Dimagi's mobile platform, CommCare, is an innovative data collection tool that frontline health programs are using in multiple developing countries. The mobile application can be customized, works offline, and has smart features like broadcast messaging or scheduled reminders.

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