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Practices and experiences in enhancing sustainability gains in the Lake Zone, Tanzania

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Introduction

The purpose of this presentation is to describe the practices and experiences in implementing sustainability activities under the THP specifically:

1. To highlight the importance of stakeholders' involvement.
2. To describe the interventions and results to date.
3. To describe the THP experience in sustaining gains.

Collaborating with Stakeholders

- THP made sustainability a tangible activity of the program.
- THP met with stakeholders to discuss and define sustainability of gains to be made by the program.
- In collaboration with stakeholders, THP defined the expected evidence that will indicate sustainability implementation is in process:
 - Fill gaps in IMCI at PLHF's
 - Fill gaps in c-IMCI training
 - Make IMCI/Malaria focal persons an integral part of the training and mentorship process
 - Improve tools for data collection
 - Integrate Dx and Rx of febrile illnesses into the CCHP
 - Have R/CHMTs take over planning and implementation of the improvement activities
 - Advocate for policy changes based on program experience

Collaborating with Stakeholders (cont'd)

- THP identified key people among the stakeholders to work with from the start:
 - Regional and District team leadership i.e. RAS, RMO, DED, DMOs, Social welfare officers
 - Other partners with prior experience, e.g. Wajibika
- THP then collaboratively defined sustainability using a workshop platform and developed a strategy with the following:
 - MOH officers, professionals, Zonal and Regional authorities
 - the Technical Advisory Group
 - R/CHMTS (Mwanza, Mara and Kagera)
 - Administrative Secretary (RAS), District Executive Directors
 - Private sector companies - the Sahara Media Company and the Geita Gold Mine Company.

Interventions

- Key decision makers and stakeholders were engaged in discussions at the planning and design stage on key issues and challenges to achieving sustainability of child health interventions in the Lake Zone.
 - Policy-related issues that need to be dealt with in regard to achieving sustainability were identified and discussed-didactic training, on-the-job training, mentoring, and supportive supervision for R/CHMTs.
- Training and mentoring health managers to improve skills in planning, budgeting & resource mobilization.
- Linking R/CHMTs to local funding partners e.g. Private sector for Corporate social responsibility opportunities
- Quarterly meetings on implementation progress and future plans

Interventions (cont'd)

- Strengthening health care workers' and facilities' capacity in collecting and using data to improve case management
- Improving the capacity of the Zonal Health Resource Centre (ZHRC) in scaling up training for case management, leadership, and financial management
- Creating and sustaining community demand for quality services

Results

- R/CHMTs from 22 districts agreed on key action points (during implementation progress workshops) resulting in:
 - Financing and distribution of under-fives outpatient cards to their health facilities completed by some CHMTs e.g. Musoma Rural & Magu
 - Some districts have all their health facilities' operating accounts managed by the facility health committees e.g. Karagwe, Missenyi, Serengeti etc.
 - Notable R/ CHMT ownership of planning and implementation of Tibu Homa-supported activities.

Results (cont'd)

- Nineteen (19) CHMTs and three (3) RHMTs have been trained in financial management with the following results:
 - Plans to renovate a paediatric ward at a district hospital with funds from a local donor.
 - A speed boat for R/CH services received as a result of proposal submitted by Muleba District to a local organization to serve difficult-to-reach marshy islands in Lake Victoria.

Results (cont'd)

- Increase in proportion of facilities collecting and using data (67% in March 2014 compared to 46% in March 2013).
- 151% and 266% increase in the number of households enrolled in the Community Health Fund in Missenyi and Musoma Rural districts respectively after one round of campaigns

Lessons Learnt

- A participatory approach to strategy development for sustainability is a viable approach to achieving stakeholder buy-in
- Sustained monitoring, mentorship, and supportive supervision are very dependent on how well the regional and council teams and facility managers are motivated and supported by the regional and council administrative leadership.
- Getting the buy-in of key players i.e. RAS, RMOs, DEDs, NMCP, IMCI Unit has been instrumental in enabling the project to move forward on sustainability.

Lessons Learnt (cont'd)

- Regional and Council capacity to continue mentorship and supportive supervision is necessary for continuity.
- Engaging communities in awareness promotion makes a difference in improving demand for quality services
- R/ CHMTs are often pulled in several directions by competing demands, hence holistic commitment/ approach to project activities as part of their day-to-day duty is limited.
Participation in supportive supervision may miss some critical team members due to other chores.

Lessons Learnt (cont'd)

- District heads often send “acting officers” to meetings and briefings. These “acting officers” cannot make decisions at these meetings and don’t communicate back the decisions made to their superiors and peers.
- Challenges that may reflect poorly on the performance of the CHMTs themselves are often not included in briefings to superiors.

Conclusion

It is clear that a participatory approach enhances stakeholders interest in sustaining project gains. However commitment of both regional and council health personnel is affected by a myriad of factors such as:

- High staff turnover within team membership and within health facilities often disrupting progress made
- Lack of skills and authority among the R/CHMTs to instill behavior change among health workers
- A lack of a motivational strategy to change health worker behaviors is lacking
- Lack of a culture among the R/CHMTs to seek technical support and funding from outside central government is underdeveloped

Thank you