Supporting Communities to use Health Data: A Resource Package
Introduction

• Community-based interventions are gaining recognition for their contribution to improved RMNCH

• During the 2017 Institutionalizing Community Health Conference (ICHC), countries expressed the need for comprehensive resources, tools and guidelines on community-level RMNCH data use. The need was reiterated later that same year at a workshop in South Africa, Improving Routine Data for Child Health in National Health Information Systems.

• Working group at Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP) developed Supporting Communities to use Health Data: A Resource Package to address this need
  - With input and review by the Health Data Collaborative Community Data subgroup
Resource Package Objectives and Audience

Objectives:

- To provide guidance on the core elements and steps to strengthen communities’ capacity to collect, analyze and use RMNCH data for action
- To provide links to existing tools and resources pertaining to data use at the community level, including data analysis, interpretation and decision-making

Audiences:

- Program managers and organizations (governmental, non-governmental, community-based, faith-based, etc.) that work with communities to strengthen their capacity to collect, analyze, and use data at the community level

The complete package can be found here:
www.mcsprogram.org/resource/supporting-communities-to-use-health-data/
Scope

- **Uses the following definition of data use at the community level:**
  - Data and information (formal and informal) regularly expected, analyzed, interpreted, and used for decision making by community actors to monitor and manage performance, track service quality and use, identify community needs, health status, practices, and trends, and ensure shared accountability

- **Focuses on strengthening use of data by community actors**

- **Does not include:**
  - Guidance for higher levels (facility-based health workers or district managers)
  - Guidance for policy makers seeking to make community-based policies
  - Use of survey or census data collected by actors external to the community
Structure

• 33 pages with three annexes in format of “how-to” manual
• 5 Modules:
  - Module 1: Engage data users and producers
  - Module 2: Conduct data assessments to improve data use at the community level
  - Module 3: Build and strengthen core competencies for data use
  - Module 4: Support communities to translate data into action
  - Module 5: Ensure systems and policies support sustained community data use
Module 1: Engage Data Users and Producers

This module reviews different types of community stakeholders and the importance of engaging them in the community health information system (CHIS), by reviewing processes and providing templates for collaborative mapping and stakeholder engagement.

**Stakeholder Analysis Matrix**

Program issue: 

Proposed activity: 

Date: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of stakeholder organization, group or individual (National, regional or local)</th>
<th>Stakeholder description (Primary purpose, affiliation, funding)</th>
<th>Potential role in the issue or activity / Vested interest in the activity</th>
<th>Level of knowledge of the issue (Specific areas of expertise)</th>
<th>Level of commitment: Support or oppose the activity, to what extent, and why?</th>
<th>Available resources: Staff, volunteers, money, technology, information, influence</th>
<th>Constraints or Limitations: need funds to participate, lack of personnel, political or other barriers</th>
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Module 2: Conduct Assessments for Improving Data Use at the Community Level

This module builds on the stakeholder engagement process to outline the importance of identifying stakeholders’ information needs; provides guidance for prioritizing information needs; and identifies potential sources of data that will yield needed information and improve availability of data. Additionally, an initial assessment can identify common barriers to data use and opportunities to improve data use at the community level.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Data Type</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples of actions that can encourage community-level data use</th>
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| Service delivery data; Data for logistics management tracking for commodity tracking and supply | Data collected on 1) health services sought and provided using registers, forms, digital health applications, wall charts, to include distribution of family planning commodities, childhood illnesses treated through iCCM, commodity stock management (if applicable); and 2) health promotion activities, such as the number of households visited to promote maternal and newborn health or number of educational sessions held about best sanitation practices | Simplify registers and consolidate forms, such as those used in My Village, My Home⁴² and family health folders in Ethiopia⁴³  
Provide recurring coaching and supportive supervision on tools and approaches so CHWs are able to interpret findings and identify appropriate responses  
Tap into functional structures with authority to take action |
| Data for accountability                                                      | Data collected during community meetings, where stakeholders such as                                                                                                                                         | Adapt tools that community users can use. These could include videography                                                      |
Module 3: Build and Strengthen Core Competencies for Data Use

This module describes processes and tools for data collection, management, analysis, presentation, interpretation, and using data for action.

*Figure 4: Example of Community bulletin board, Ethiopia, Save the Children*
Module 4: Support Communities to Translate Data into Action

This module addresses the **impact that community-level data can have** – specifically, how these data and information products can be used to spur community action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Problem Addressed</th>
<th>Community Analysis</th>
<th>Decision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>During August-November, CHW attrition increased, and 10% of children weighed</td>
<td>The economic situation in the area is promoting external migration. In the</td>
<td>• Continue weight monitoring of children</td>
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<td>showed inadequate weight gain.</td>
<td>community there is only one CHW in place. Some members of local health committees have also emigrated.</td>
<td>• One more CHW will be assigned</td>
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<td>• New community members will be elected for the health committees</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>During August-November, 7% of all children have had inadequate growth during two</td>
<td>Children in these communities experienced an increased in diarrheal and ARI</td>
<td>• Encourage drinking boiled or chemically purified water in the homes</td>
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<td>consecutive periods.</td>
<td>diseases.</td>
<td>• Refer children with danger signs to health facility</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Train 5 more community volunteers on nutrition</td>
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<td>• Refer children with nutritional deficits to nutritional center</td>
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</table>
Module 5: Ensure Systems and Policies Support Sustained Data Use

This module describes how data management and supervision systems support community-level data use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Sub-National / Regional/ District</th>
<th>Health facility/ catchment communities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicators</strong></td>
<td>Establish a set of indicators for tracking community level data use</td>
<td>Identify and integrate relevant indicators in to sub-national level information management systems</td>
<td>Identify the indicators that are of mutual interest at the community level</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Processes</strong></td>
<td>Ensure community level data utilization processes are captured in national M&amp;E plans and are funded, including data flow</td>
<td>Address systems barriers by ensuring adequate financial, human and technical resources are provided. For example, financial or resource incentives</td>
<td>Establish a routine for data utilization processes (e.g. monthly community dialogue, data review workshops with community</td>
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Acknowledgements

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Jennifer Yourkavitch

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Thank You!

For any questions on the Resource Package, please reach out to Reeti Hobson at

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Photo Credit: Kate Holt/MCSP
Upcoming MCSP Resources

• National Community Health Information Systems in Four African Countries: Descriptions and Lessons from the Field

• MCSP briefs on Community Health Contributions- Multi-Country Assessment: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique, & Rwanda

Please visit the MCSP Resource page for additional resources https://www.mcsprogram.org/resources/
For more information, please visit www.mcsprogram.org

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