Workshop participants in Zimbabwe. Photo: Digital Square

A Stakeholder Workshop to Advance Digital Community Health in Zimbabwe

Digital Square organized a stakeholder workshop as part of the Phase 3 PMI DCHI workplan. Various stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MOHCC) departments of nursing, health informatics and data analytics, information and communication technologies, the National Pharmaceutical Company, and the National Malaria Control Program attended the workshop. The workshop also included district health executives from Mudzi District and two community health workers.

The partners of MOHCC with experience in launching community health digital tools, such as FHI 360, Zimbabwe Assistance Program in Malaria II, Jointed Hands Welfare Organization, and Chemonics, were also present.

The workshop's primary objective was to identify and address gaps in the enabling framework for digital community health. To achieve this, the workshop participants reviewed the country profile and the National Digital Health Strategy 2021-2025, analyzing the opportunities and gaps related to digital community health.

The workshop produced a draft of the digital community health addendum to the Zimbabwe National Digital Health Strategy 2021–2025, which includes specific community health worker (CHW) program plans with defined milestones and metrics for success.

A prioritized list of interventions to strengthen the enabling framework for community digital health was drafted. Some of the prioritized interventions include enforcing the integration and interoperability of community health digital tools and data sharing with MOHCC through the adoption of Open Health Information Exchange (OpenHIE) standards by partners and adding mobile phones to the standard package of work tools given to CHWs.

About this project

The U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) launched its Digital Community Health Initiative (DCHI) with a vision to strengthen quality health delivery at the community level. Led by USAID and co-implemented with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this initiative aims to invest in the scale-up of digitally enabled community health platforms. DCHI is implemented by PATH's Digital Square initiative and its subawardees, including John Snow International, Last Mile Health, and Population Services International. Learn more about Digital Square and the DCHI Initiative.

Inside this issue

- Spotlight on Myanmar, Senegal and Zimbabwe.
- Personal and team event highlights.

Advancing Malaria Initiatives and Strengthening Partnerships in Myanmar

Group photo of participants from preparation meeting for situational mapping. Photo: Digital Square
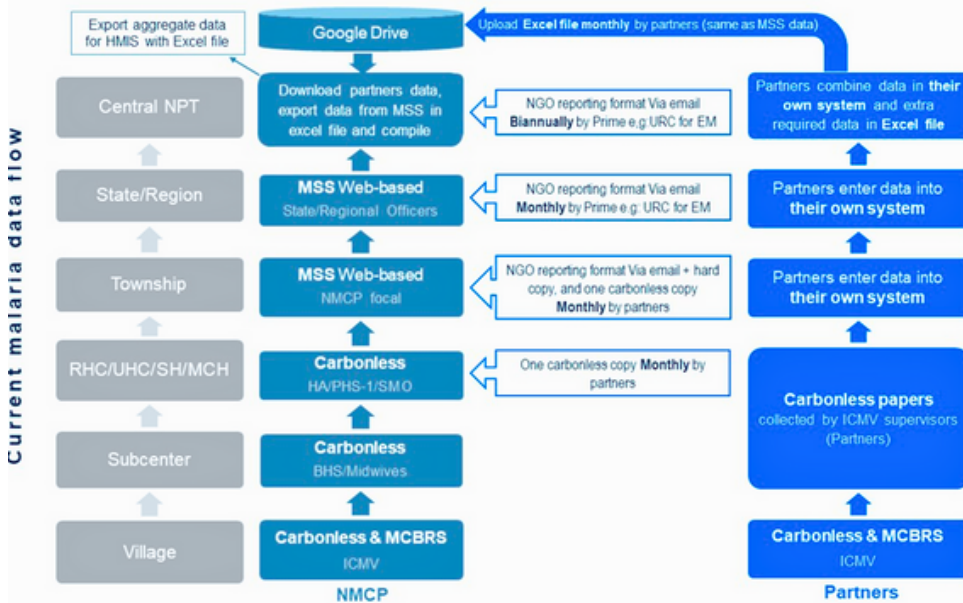
On June 15, 2023, the Digital Square team in Myanmar organized a preparation meeting for situational mapping of the malaria surveillance system at township level in Yangon, Myanmar. The meeting was attended by representatives from ten implementing partner (IP) organizations (American Refugee Committee, University Research Co., Population Services International, Sun Community Health, MMA Malaria, World Health Organization, Malteser International, Myanmar Health Assistant Association, MNMA, United Nations Office for Project Services).

The main objectives of the meeting were to develop a shared understanding of situational mapping, to identify the specific contributions of each implementing partner, and seek feedback and guidance on the approach to be taken for the situational mapping process.

Data flows for malaria case-based reporting surveillance

The implementing partners defined clear roles and identified contacts for township/geographic area contributions. This allowed PATH/Digital Square to delegate responsibilities, assume a facilitation and advisory role, and most importantly, foster community ownership of malaria initiatives. Moreover, allocating geographic assignments will enable the situational assessment to progress efficiently once approval is obtained from the Ministry of Health and Sports (MOHS).

The data flows were refined to account for nuances (e.g., to allow for data aggregation at higher levels since not all IPs have offices at the township level before the data is sent to the NMCP) to strengthen the malaria surveillance system. WHO also provided an update on the malaria case-based surveillance reporting tool and MOHS-desired DHIS2 integration. IPs are in agreement and making plans for nationwide uptake.

Health Care Digitalization Efforts in Senegal

Workshop for developing a joint roadmap for the full digitalization of health care in Senegal

Digital Square actively participated in a workshop organized by the MSAS Secretary-General to develop a joint roadmap between the Ministry of Health and Social Action (MSAS) and its partners for the comprehensive digitization of the health care system. The workshop consisted of working group sessions to finalize a collection sheet detailing the current projects of partners. During the meeting, partners had the opportunity to share key guidelines for health care digitization, conduct a SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat) analysis of the overall digitalization process, and identify potential avenues for collaboration among technical and financial partners.

Moreover, Digital Square used this valuable platform to present the enterprise architecture concept and how it provides decision-making guidance within the health care system. The presentation highlighted how an enterprise architecture strengthens the capacity for managerial decision-making and provides an environment for the seamless integration of business processes, software, networks, and hardware components, forming a comprehensive system for health care operations.

Technical Validation of the Community Health Digitalization Triennial Plan in Senegal

In Senegal, Digital Square has supported the technical validation of the three-year plan to digitalize community health. This plan outlines the necessary interventions to promote the digitalization of community health and ensure synergy among various entities within the MSAS. The goal is to create an environment conducive to community health digitalization and improve coordination to reduce fragmented interventions, alleviate the workload of CHWs and mitigate the potential negative consequences of poorly managed tool deployments.

Additionally, this plan will allow Digital Square to assess the estimated budget required for digitalizing community health, guiding the MSAS, United States President's Malaria Initiative, and other partners in their investments. Furthermore, it will promote the use of digital tools in community health programs. Through this collaboration, Digital Square aims to support the MSAS in enhancing the quality and accessibility of health services at the community level through the effective use of digital tools.

This involves developing digital solutions at the community level and strengthening human resources and technical capabilities to ensure optimal and sustainable use of these tools. Ultimately, this triennial plan will significantly contribute to strengthening governance mechanisms and tools for community health digitalization.

Staff highlights

Noah Charvat, Senior Program Assistant, and his partner, Abby, spend a few days camping at the beautiful Lake Kachess in Washington state.

2023 DHIS2 Annual Conference

PSI and Madagascar MOH staff Photo: PSI

The DHIS2 annual conference took place at the University of Oslo, Norway, from June 12–15 and brought together a diverse group of health care professionals, policymakers, and technology experts from around the world. The conference served as a platform to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices in the field of health management information systems (HMIS).

With a strong focus on HMIS strengthening, the conference showcased the power of DHIS2, an open-source software platform, in revolutionizing data collection, analysis, and visualization for improved health outcomes.

Participants engaged in insightful discussions and interactive sessions, highlighting the critical role of DHIS2 in enhancing data-driven decision-making, resource allocation, and monitoring of health programs. The conference not only fostered collaboration among stakeholders but also emphasized the importance of interoperability and standardization to strengthen health information systems globally. Overall, the DHIS2 conference reaffirmed its commitment to advancing HMIS strengthening efforts and inspiring innovation in the field of health data management.

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