



Managing the malaria medicine supply chain

- Drug stock outages dramatically decreased in remote clinics
- Improved access to anti-malarial drugs for 40 million people in Tanzania
- Accurate inventory and drug usage data enables predictive supply to outbreak hot spots
- Helped to reduce the number of deaths from malaria



“SMS for Life has demonstrated that we can overcome the longstanding problem of stock-outs at health facilities”

“SMS for Life” Program Director and former CIO at Novartis



▶ Over 40 million people have improved access to anti-malarial drugs

HOW IT WORKS

Once a week text messages are sent to each health facility reminding them to count their stock and send back their data. If they respond by 5pm on Friday afternoon they receive free credit on their mobile phones – an incentive for a fast response. If no response is received, the system automatically sends a reminder text message.

All of these actions are fully automated by the MATS platform. The aggregated data is updated in real time and accessible via a secure web-based dashboard. As well as tabular and graphical representation, GIS integration means that stock levels and stock usage can easily be seen geographically, as color-coded maps per district.

District medical officers can access this information via a computer or on their smartphones for immediate follow-up action.

District medical officers can interrogate aggregated data to provide early warnings about potential new malaria outbreaks and to move stocks to different regions, as demand requires.

With the successes achieved for improving access to malaria medicines, SMS for Life has also expanded its disease scope. A total of 200 health facilities are currently connected to report stocks of Tuberculosis and Leprosy medicine and coverage is expected to grow further.

RESULTS

SMS for Life began as a six-month pilot, across three Tanzanian districts to ensure access to essential malaria treatments for 888,000 people. During the pilot, stock-outs of ACT drugs dropped from 26% to 0.8%. SMS for Life has since been extended right across Tanzania, covering a population of over 40 million.

Further implementations have rolled-out in Kenya, Ghana, and Cameroon. The approach is now being used for other drugs including antibiotics and RDTs.

Accurate inventory and drug usage data is enabling more effective central planning, including predictive supply to outbreak hot spots.

The Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria selected the “SMS for Life” program as a Finalist for the Technology for Health award 2011.

“Reducing antimalarial drugs stock-outs saves lives, so we are delighted that the SMS for Life programme will now be rolled-out across Tanzania.”

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