

Capacity building to regional and district NTD teams via supportive supervision: A sustainability technique for NTD control in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

Background

The NTD Control Program is working in collaboration with several partners to control the transmission of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) in endemic areas and provide morbidity management of those affected by NTDs. One of the ways to reduce transmission of NTDs is using preventative chemotherapy by mass drug administration (MDA). District councils have been entrusted to conduct school and community-based MDAs. However, the national NTD team plays a role in capacity building to the regional and district NTD teams to ensure that the MDAs are conducted according to the national guidelines. One of ways to build regional and district council capacity is through supportive supervision during pre-MDA activities, during MDAs and after MDAs. Supportive supervision is a way to monitor whether activities happened as planned.

Objectives

To empower the regional and district council NTD teams in planning and implementing pre-MDA, MDA, and post-MDA activities. This may include requesting funds, microplanning, CDD training, community mobilization, drug distribution and community census, MDA, supportive supervision, and monitoring and evaluation/data collection.

Methods

Joint planning and budgeting, supporting the region and district councils in performing pre-MDA, MDA and post MDA activities.

Findings

The results found that early access to funds has facilitated communication between district councils and regions with the national teams. It also helped to facilitate the redistribution of NTD drugs according to the needs of an area of implementation and increase MDA coverage for most district councils that receive supportive supervision during their pre-MDA and MDA activities. In so doing, the districts improve their capacity to manage MDA for NTDs.

Conclusion

Supportive supervision has promoted mentorship to district NTD team members. It has improved communication between the district NTD members with the region and national team, and so has created room for solving challenging issues at the district councils in a timely manner. Supportive supervision thus is a sustainability tool for ensuring there is improved capacity to manage NTDs at the regional and district levels.