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TRANSLATING  
RESEARCH  
INTO ACTION



**JOHNS HOPKINS**  
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL  
of PUBLIC HEALTH



UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH CO., LLC

# INTEGRATED COMMUNITY CASE MANAGEMENT (ICCM)

## IMPROVING DATA TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS

### CHALLENGE

Diarrhea, pneumonia, and malaria account for more than 50% of mortality in children under five in sub-Saharan Africa, and effective treatments are available for all three illnesses yet these often do not reach the populations with the greatest need. WHO and UNICEF both support integrated community case management, or iCCM, as a strategy to address the gap in access to health care services to typically hard to reach populations. iCCM strategies use Community Health Workers (CHWs) to identify and treat children suffering from pneumonia, diarrhea, and malaria in the community. Despite international support, many countries have yet to implement or scale-up their iCCM programs.

TRAction supported implementation research targeted at addressing the key barriers to iCCM implementation and scale-up across the globe.

### STUDY APPROACH

The “Improving Data to Improve Systems” study was embedded within iCCM programs of four sub-Saharan African countries and focused on the monitoring and evaluation challenge to iCCM. The study team worked to assess iCCM indicators and data quality in each country’s monitoring system, identify priority gaps, and in Malawi, to identify and test potential solutions.

### KEY FINDINGS: FOCUS ON MALAWI

#### Lack of iCCM integration into national M&E systems

- ▶ Data are available for many iCCM indicators, but systems are not in place to be able to collect them. Data are frequently not available for costing indicators.

STUDY INFORMATION

**LOCATION**  
Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique

**TIMELINE**  
April 2011 to July 2014

**IMPLEMENTED BY**  
Institute for International Programs, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Save the Children

**KEY QUESTIONS**  
The aim of this study was to improve monitoring of iCCM programming. TRAction and its research partners addressed the following objectives:

- ▶ Assess iCCM monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems
- ▶ Identify priority gaps in iCCM M&E systems and potential innovative approaches to data collection
- ▶ Examine feasibility, cost and quality of innovative approaches
- ▶ Document benefits and use of improved iCCM M&E in programmatic decisions

**PROJECT STATUS**

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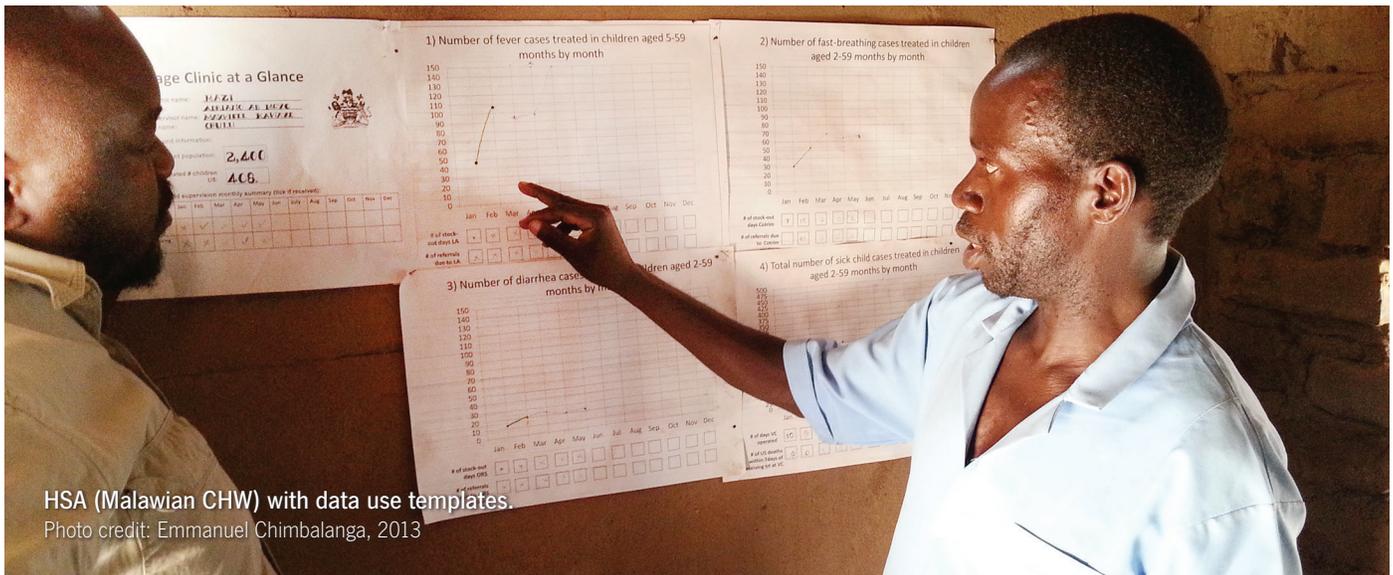
graph LR
    A((Implementation)) --- B((Analysis)) --- C((Sharing Results))
  
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#### Good iCCM Data Quality

- ▶ There is a well defined structure for iCCM reporting. Forms are submitted with reasonable levels of reporting, completeness, and consistency.

### August 2014

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HSA (Malawian CHW) with data use templates.  
Photo credit: Emmanuel Chimbalanga, 2013

## Low Levels of Data Use

- ▶ Data use is limited, especially at lower levels of the health system.

## Innovative Approaches have Potential for Impact

- ▶ A data use improvement package helped increase data use at the community level and improved reporting consistency in some indicators.
- ▶ Use of cell phone reporting is an inexpensive, feasible method to produce high-quality monitoring data.

## IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

These findings indicate that iCCM has yet to be well integrated into national M&E systems, and that the resulting lack of data may play a role in the limited scale-up of iCCM. Further **integration** is needed, and based on initial findings of high data quality, would likely provide reliable data on iCCM programs.

**Innovative approaches**, including those tested by the study team, are needed, particularly to address data use issues. Partners in Malawi are already working on adapting these approaches for wider application.

## RESEARCH INTO ACTION

TRAction and its partners used findings from this research to develop recommendations that will facilitate scale-up of iCCM programs. Findings were scaled up and shared with stakeholders through a variety of channels:

- ▶ Data use package integrated into the iCCM strategy and training package in most districts of Malawi;
- ▶ Cell phone reporting method scaled-up;

- ▶ Integrated into lessons learned documents which were shared with representatives from 70 countries at the iCCM Evidence Review Symposium;
- ▶ Presented country-level results to the Ministries of Health and other key stakeholders in all countries in which case studies were completed;
- ▶ Shared with implementing partners through participation on the iCCM Task Force;
- ▶ Integrated into TRAction iCCM policy briefs which provide recommendations for policy makers and program managers on iCCM implementation and start-up.

Findings and recommendations will continue to be disseminated at both the country and global level as TRAction and its partners develop technical documents, participate in working groups, and attend key events.

## TRACTION PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Translating Research Into Action (TRAction) Project, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, focuses on implementation and delivery science—which seeks to develop, test, and compare approaches to more effectively deliver health interventions, increase utilization, achieve coverage, and scale-up evidence-based interventions. TRAction supports implementation research to provide critically-needed evidence to program implementers and policy-makers addressing maternal and child health issues.

For more information on the TRAction Project:  
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