



THE KENYA RMNCH SCORECARD

Background

A Call to Action

Kenya's under-five mortality rate has declined from 1990, however it remains quite high at 71 per 1000 births compared to the country's MDG 4 target of 33 per 1000 births¹.

Likewise, with the most recent maternal mortality ratio estimated at 400 per 100,000 live births – and in some regions 1000 per 100,000 live births² – progress towards achieving the MDG 5 target of 120 per 100,000 has been insufficient. The Government of Kenya has instituted several strategies to accelerate reductions in maternal and child mortality which aim at reducing inequalities in health care services and scaling up high impact maternal newborn and child interventions. As focus shifts from the MDGs to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) it will be crucial to track the impact of these and other future strategies at national and sub-national level.

The Response

Kenya introduced a Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (RMNCH) scorecard management tool as an accountability mechanism to enhance transparency and action on priority RMNCH interventions. The tool has been used at national level since May 2014. The Ministry of Health convened a 1.5-week exercise to identify opportunities to strengthen the impact of Kenya's RMNCH management tool, from 21-30th January 2015. The exercise was supported by the African Leaders' Malaria Alliance (ALMA), a forum of African heads of state and government. Interviews were carried out with the Minister of Health, MOH directors, Programme managers and program staff and discussions with county governors and senior technical staff from five counties (Isolo, Lamu, Mandera, Migori and Wajir). In addition, Machakos County was visited.

¹ http://countdown2015mnch.org/documents/2014Report/Kenya_Country_Profile_2014.pdf

² <http://www.ke.undp.org/content/kenya/en/home/mdgoverview/overview/mdg5/>

Progress

To accelerate progress, the focus of the Ministry of Health to-date has been on regularly producing and publicizing the scorecard to guide action areas. Since its first publication in Q3 2014, the scorecard has been published every quarter including in the Quarterly Health Information System (HIS) e-bulletin. The Ministry of Health has now rolled out the scorecard to Kenya's 47 counties; county-level training in the development and use of the scorecard took place between March and May 2015. This is to ensure that rapid action is taken at country level to address bottlenecks and deliver results.

Strengths of the Kenya RMNCH Scorecard

- Implementation of Kenya's RMNCH scorecard tool is embedded in the Ministry of Health performance contracts and as such it is published regularly and disseminated widely and in a timely fashion, within one month of the end of each quarter.

- The roles and responsibilities for scorecard generation and dissemination are clear and functioning well. The high levels of dissemination of the scorecard have contributed to the impressive buy-in and demand for scorecards at both national and county level.

During a county-level scorecard training workshop, county MOH staff expressed appreciation for the scorecard as a tool with the potential to adequately highlight the opportunities and challenges of RMNCH programs under Kenya's devolved governance system as well as promote teamwork across programs and stakeholders involved in RMNCH.

- There is strong political and civil society involvement in health at county level ensuring an enabling platform for the scorecard to be effectively utilized by these critical stakeholders at Community District and county level.

Future actions

The Kenyan Ministry of Health committed to the following actions: to accelerate progress towards the MDG targets and guarantee results:

- Fast track the decentralization of the scorecard to county-level including completing roll-out by the end of May 2015 and, in collaboration with partners, providing ongoing support for the scorecard use.
- Strengthen the use of the scorecard tool for accountability and action at national level.

- Officially launch the scorecard tool in order to expand its visibility and use at all levels of government and within civil society.
- Widen access to the RMNCH scorecard web platform at national and subnational levels to optimize the use of the scorecard tool

Conclusion

The RMNCH scorecard is an integrated action oriented accountability tool that is increasingly being used at national and county levels in Kenya to track progress of priority indicators. It is a strong foundation for Kenya to build on as it transitions from the MDGs to the SDGs which will require focus on accountability and outcomes for maternal and child health at all levels of implementation.