



CHISU Results in Action

Developing a New Malaria Strategy to Guide Implementation of Malaria Activities in Malawi From 2023 to 2030

BACKGROUND

Malaria remains a major public health issue in Malawi, which had 5.9 million cases as of 2021. An important piece in the fight against this disease is a policy environment that enables sustainable data use culture by strengthening the demand for data—including the demand for malaria data. The Country Health Information Systems and Data Use (CHISU) program supports health information systems (HIS) governance as well as improved availability and use of quality health data in Malawi as the country works toward malaria elimination.

Malawi's National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) Strategy for 2017 to 2022, as well as the overall Health Sector Strategic Plan, ended in December 2022. The end of these strategies coincided with the need for the country to submit a strategy-based grant application for the Global Fund New Funding Model (NFM) III by March 2023. As the country's fight against malaria is largely funded by the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) and the Global Fund, developing a new strategy was critical for the country to continue funding its malaria activities.

STEPS TAKEN

In response to this challenge, NMCP and other implementing partners came together to form a Malaria Program Review Task Force during a quarterly CHISU-supported malaria monitoring and evaluation (M&E) technical working group (TWG) meeting. During the meeting, CHISU was appointed to lead the Task Force to develop the country's new malaria strategy.

Country Health Information Systems and Data Use (CHISU) is USAID's flagship data and information system program to strengthen host country capacity and leadership to manage and use health information systems to improve evidence-based decision-making. www.chisuprogram.org

In line with World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines, CHISU worked with the NMCP to analyze malaria data and convened and facilitated a series of data-focused program review meetings and workshops—during which malaria thematic groups reviewed their data to identify gaps and prepared reports that would inform the new national malaria strategy. After preparation of the reports, CHISU worked with NMCP technical staff to coordinate and participate in WHO field visits and meetings to validate the findings of the review report and present key issues to the senior management of Malawi’s Ministry of Health (MOH). After the program review, CHISU facilitated further strategy development meetings and workshops during which the strategy document was written and costed out. After the workshops, the draft strategy was approved by MOH senior management.

RESULTS + NEXT STEPS

Malawi’s new malaria strategy stipulates evidence-based implementation and allocation of interventions to districts, strengthening use of data for active malaria surveillance, and monitoring malaria activities at all program levels. The strategy has already been used in the Global Fund NFM III grant application and officially went into implementation at the commencement of the Malawi government new financial year on April 1, 2023.

In his acknowledgement, Secretary for Health Dr. Charles Mwansambo expressed gratitude to PMI and to the Global Fund for their technical support and resources provided that led to the development of the strategy—as well as their ongoing financial support to Malawi’s NMCP.



Photo: Participants in a malaria strategy development workshop supported by CHISU and NMCP in Malawi in early 2023.



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