

Category: D11 Methods to improve strategic information and data collection to monitor and evaluate prevention, care and treatment programmes

**Title: Routine data quality assessments (DQA): An essential component to improving quality of data for reporting and use.**

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**Text: Background:**

The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (the Foundation) has supported the Ministry of Health (MOH) of Tanzania in provision of prevention of mother-to-child transmission and HIV care and treatment services (C&T) since 2004. Enabled through PEPFAR funding, this support extends to 1,000 PMTCT and 165 C&T service facilities. In 2009 a baseline Data Quality Assessment conducted by the Foundation and CDC in 126 health facilities (75% of C&T health facilities) revealed data discrepancies in 98% of facilities. A 45% average discrepancy was discovered between reported and observed numbers. In response to structured interviews and survey questionnaires 80% of staff reported minimal data use and knowledge of data management.

**Methods:**

Following this DQA specific activities were implemented to address the gaps identified. A data management department was created to improve the quality of data recording and reporting. This department commenced with creating job descriptions and contracts for facility-level data clerks to clarify their roles and responsibilities. Supported data clerks to maintain the functioning of electronic equipment and databases, assessed the status of data entry in each facility and updated the care and treatment database. Together with M&E department, they created standard operating procedures for data management and provided performance feedback, on-the-job training and supportive supervision to address gaps and weaknesses. This support was provided to 50 data clerks and 180 clinical staff in all 165 sites.

**Results:**

In 2010 repeat DQA in 97 health facilities reported a 25% increase in the number of facilities with accurate reporting. The average rate of discrepancies reduced from 45% to 6%. Furthermore 80% of staff interviewed displayed improved knowledge of data use and management, evidenced through improved reports and survey responses.

**Conclusion:** Implementing supportive supervision structures to support data management and use at facility level in combination with regular DQAs improves staff capacity to use high quality data.

Keywords: 1. Data quality assessment  
2. supportive supervision  
3. Information use  
4. Data management  
5. Performance feedback

Country of research: Tanzania, United Republic of

Related to women and girls? No

Ethical research declaration: Not applicable