

A NEW ONLINE MONITORING AND SUPERVISORY SYSTEM HELPS STRENGTHEN THE DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES IN PAKISTAN'S KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA PROVINCE



BACKGROUND

Monitoring the delivery of public sector health services can be very challenging. Health system managers need to consider how to guide, monitor, and coach workers to ensure they comply with standards of practice and deliver high quality health services. An effective supervisory process allows supervisors and supervisees to work as a team to meet common objectives and promotes accountability and transparency at all levels of the health system – resulting in higher quality health services and better health outcomes.

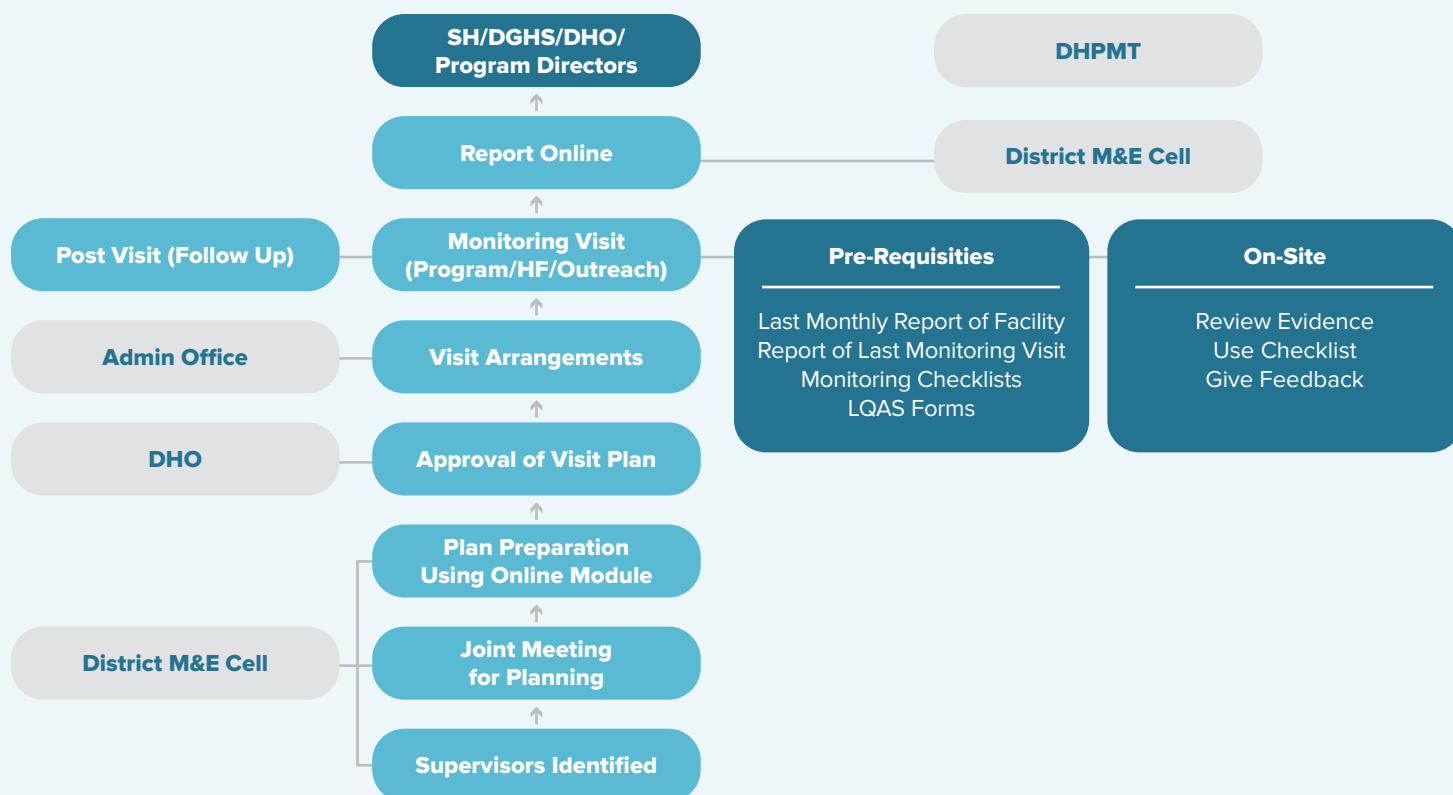
APPROACH

The Department of Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa asked the USAID-supported Integrated Health Systems Strengthening and Service Delivery (IHSS-SD) Activity to design, develop, and operationalize an online monitoring and supervisory (M&S) system in three Activity-supported districts. The online M&S system is an important digital tool for improving the quality of health services and data. Health managers and supervisors use the M&S system to help their staff achieve professional goals in line with provincial, district, and facility objectives, standards, and expectations. The system helps ensure that supervisors conduct M&S visits in a respectful and non-authoritarian way, with a focus on improving health worker knowledge and skills. Supervisors using the system can ensure that health workers have the support and resources to record and report their work and to measure and improve the quality of care. Because the system includes regular data reporting quality checks, it enables health managers and workers to identify and discuss data management challenges and provides important opportunities for learning.

The USAID-supported Integrated Health Systems Strengthening and Service Delivery (IHSS-SD) Activity is strengthening the institutional, technical, and leadership capacities of three provincial departments of health: Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



Figure 1. M&S System Standard Operating Procedures



Monitoring and supervisory tools

The IHSS-SD Activity team worked closely with all of the KP provincial health teams (representing vertical programs such as malaria, tuberculosis, and others) to standardize the monitoring and supervisory tools, checklists, and user guidelines. These tools have been incorporated into the online M&S system and are used by district health officers, Directorate General Health Services (DGHS) managers, and secretariat level managers as they conduct their monitoring and supervisory responsibilities. The IHSS-SD Activity team supported training for provincial and district health managers to use the system and its tools.

Standard operating procedures

To ensure a consistent approach to monitoring and supervisory activities across the province, the IHSS-SD team worked closely with provincial colleagues to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for conducting monitoring and supervisory visits. The SOPs, which are integrated into the online M&S system, also clarify supervisory roles and responsibilities at different levels of the provincial health system, which helps supervisors and program and health facility managers understand how to effectively monitor and supervise their staff to ensure high quality health service delivery.

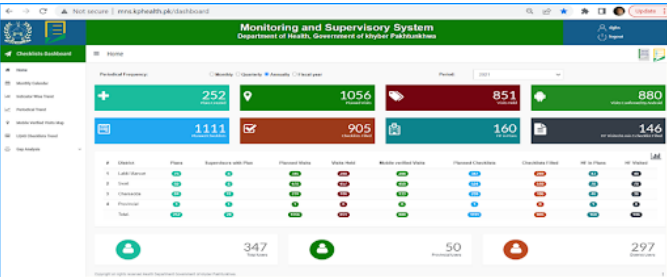
M&S system rollout

The IHSS-SD Activity team worked with district leadership to roll out the M&S system in the three Activity-supported districts (Charsadda, Lakki Marwat, and Swat). After the M&S system was operational for two years, the Secretary, Department of Health in KP chaired a review of the system in one of the districts. The review showed that the M&S system was effective and efficient, which led the Secretary Health of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to direct the system to be scaled-up to all districts in the province. The IHSS-SD team supported the scale-up of the M&S system across KP and supported training for district health teams to use the online M&S system.

RESULTS

The online M&S system has improved the timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of data in districts using the system. The system automatically monitors for data quality by randomly selecting 12 indicators, e.g., medicine stocks, and recalculating for accuracy. When the system identifies data quality issues or other problems, health managers are able to resolve them relatively quickly. The system also introduced more transparency around supervisory visits, because supervisors record and validate the visits in real time using a mobile phone app.

Figure 2. M&S System Dashboard



The percentage of planned supervisory visits that were conducted increased from 62 percent in January 2021 to 96 percent in December 2021. This indicates that not only are more M&S visits being planned, but more are also being conducted and verified (Figure 3). Health facility data validation efforts have been improved and health

providers now receive feedback in a timely manner, allowing them to make adjustments and improvements in how they deliver care to clients.

The DGHS KP awarded certificates of appreciation to district coordinators who achieved 100 percent of their planned targets, which helps keep district managers motivated to use the system. The online M&S system has been scaled to all the districts in KP and is sustainable.

WAY FORWARD

The Department of Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continue to encourage providers and managers at all levels of the provincial health system to should continue to use the data, now available to them through the online M&S system, to make key budgeting, programming, and service delivery decisions.

Figure 3. After the M&S System was Introduced, Planned Supervisory Visits Increased from 62 to 92% in Twelve Months

