CHW PPE effort in Liberia - lessons learned about trying to get visibility and data use during a crisis

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Agenda

1. Arming Community Health Workers for Battle
2. Supply Chain Logistics Tools for PPE Procurement
3. Lessons Learned
ARMING COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS FOR BATTLE
The role of Community Health Workers (CHWs) is critical in mitigating the spread and impact of COVID-19:

- At the last mile, they are often the first point of contact that communities have to health care
- They are particularly well-placed to build on the foundations of trust they have already established
- They can communicate and implement new and rapidly evolving community-level response measures
- They can contribute to community sensitization for COVID-19 vaccine campaigns

But to do this, they must be protected
Problem

Worldwide shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) have led to increased COVID-19 infections amongst health workers.

Why are CHWs at risk?

CHWs are more likely to bear the brunt of the shortage because they are often deprioritized to receive supplies as the allocation of scarce resources go to facility-based health workers and hospitals.
SUPPLY CHAIN LOGISTICS TOOLS FOR PPE PROCUREMENT
PPE Logistics Situation in Liberia

• There were efforts during the 2014 Ebola crisis to track PPE, but none of them were adopted into the national system once the crisis ended
  ☒ Most PPEs are not a part of the National Logistics Management Information System (LMIS)

  ☒ No processes or standards in place to collect PPE information

• Most of the PPE stock balances that did exist in the country were left over from the Ebola response
  ☐ Concern of quality due to expiry and poor storage conditions
How can we get PPE to any frontline worker who needs it in Liberia?

Forecasting Tool

Inventory Dashboard

Create data-driven procurement processes
Forecasting Tool

Developing a quantification process and tool for PPEs for CHWs was essential information needed by the Ministry of Health’s Supply Chain Management Unit (SCMU). This tool informs their PPE procurement decisions by filling in gaps in data such as needed quantities of products and timing of shipments to ensure optimal and uninterrupted supply of PPE.
Forecasting Tool

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<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
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<td>Sense of urgency can prove challenging and lead to difficulty in alignment across stakeholders.</td>
<td>Crisis requires a no-regrets approach to planning and decision-making. While imperfect, the process gives valuable directional information to begin procurement.</td>
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<td>Forecasting alone is not sufficient to getting the needed PPE to health workers.</td>
<td>An emergency quantification process must be linked to an emergency inventory and procurement system.</td>
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Inventory Dashboard

Quantification & forecasting data needs to be supplemented with data about what PPE stock is already available across the country. The SCMU needed visibility into PPE stock availability, stock costs, and the source of the stock at the national and county level. An inventory dashboard was developed to provide PPE data visibility and encourage data use for procurement decisions.
### Inventory Dashboard

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<td>Lack of global standardization/constant changes to what PPE products were needed for pandemic response.</td>
<td>Created an agreed upon, standardized product catalog that is flexible enough to be updated as the pandemic progresses.</td>
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<td>Inability to add PPE to current data processes due to inflexibility of National eLMIS.</td>
<td>Selected a new tool based on agreed upon cost, training, and adaptability criteria.</td>
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<td>Dual tracking needs—1) PPE already in-country and 2) influx of donations</td>
<td>Developed data collection processes with the SCMU to capture both of the data needs</td>
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<td>Uptake of new data processes at county level is slow.</td>
<td>Training conducted and supervision processes are being put in place.</td>
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LESSONS LEARNED
Key Lessons Learned

- Good enough is good enough.
- Ministries of Health are command central.
- Data is the key to making informed decisions, but implementing new processes takes time.
- Respond to the present while designing for the future.