

CMAM Report

Reviewing CMAM practice and outcomes in 12 countries and lessons learnt in the design and implementation of an online information system for the monitoring and reporting of CMAM

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Background

- 2008 - HPN Network Paper highlighted the inconsistencies, inadequacies and bias associated with reporting of SFPs
 - lack of tools to support all reporting needs
 - Mixed definitions/methods of recording data
- The 'Minimum Reporting Package' (MRP) was developed in response to this paper, to improve programme management decisions, accountability and assist learning in the effectiveness of this programme approach.
 - developed over a number of years through a consultative process
 - In 2009, standardised indicators and reporting categories were defined by a steering committee of twelve international agencies and were later piloted in four countries.
 - Access based software developed and rolled out
 - In 2011/12, OTP and SC reporting categories were added - access based software created.
 - This CMAM monitoring tool, used by 7 NGOs in 15 countries.
- A number of challenges were identified in the first phase:
 - Indicators
 - Despite guidance on standardised indicators, still not fully adopted
 - Issues in quality of data identified – over reporting of performance
 - Software
 - lack of user friendly software, Bugs, Difficulties in file management, the focus on NGO implementation, lack of field access, lack of capacity for coordination, potential for parallel systems

Programme details

- In moving forwards from the ECHO funded phase and to address some of the challenges, we have worked under a HIF funded grant since April 2014 with two objectives:
 1. To review and refine the software towards a uniquely innovative web-based version of the tool with offline capability to increase usability and uptake of the reporting package among implementing partners
 2. Conduct a review of CMAM Field Data to compare different contexts and approaches to identify how best to maximise performance.
- Programme intended to be a time to take stock, analyse, learn lessons and develop

Programme details (2)

Software development

- Software developed through iterative and consultative process (pilot and partner UAT)
- A comprehensive online package with offline capability (HTML5)
- Can be used on desktop computers, laptops, tablets, smart phones
- The software is open access and replicable
- The software supports:
 - Secure monthly data collection from individual feeding sites,
 - 5 adaptable user access levels in system
 - The use of standardised indicators and reporting categories (comparable data and unbiased reporting)
 - Gender and age disaggregated reporting
 - Analysis of additional components – Feeding site or Grant level reporting, Stock tracker, AWG/LOS calculator, MUAC screening and BSFP
 - Built in analysis capacity
 - Creation of summary tables and graphs by feeding site, geographical location, grants or contexts
 - Graphs (with raw data attached in case the system does not produce graphs to your specifications)
 - Data can be selectively exported to Excel and in turn statistical software
 - Real-time check for data entry mistakes

Programme details (3)

Other programme activities

- SFP/CMAM data review
 - Data for the review was provided by 5 agencies implementing CMAM nutrition programs (TSFP, OTP or SC) and monitoring them with MRP indicators or software.
 - Each of the organisations was asked to provide data monthly from individual centres in the programs, from January 2011 to December 2013.
 - All data was sent to a central repository where it was checked for missing values and other irregularities using the features of the MRP software which included a compliance report, and a data validation report.
- Qualitative analysis and audit

Key findings/experiences

Software development

- Software development takes time, skill, money and patience
 - Project has incurred additional cost delays
 - HR essential – these projects often not adequately resourced
- This kind of project is not typical of grant structures we follow as NGOs
 - Very patient donors – understand innovation process
- Wider learning is essential as use of ICT increases in our programmes
 - Often a change in skill sets and mistakes cost...
- Potential for parallel systems – MOH, Unicef, other NGOs
 - There is no one solution ...
- Limited flexibility in indicators to be collected
- Sensitivities in data storage
- Reputation/misconceptions surrounding old MRP

Key findings/experiences (2)

- Other findings
 - Data quality remains a problem. Systems, reports and programmes are only as good as the data entered
 - The process of adopting standardised indicators requires commitment at national level and can be a long process. This should be separated from software
 - Descriptive analysis is showing interesting results
 - Discharge criteria often misunderstood (supported by audit findings) – not as standardised as admission criteria
 - CMAM widely implemented with good results however some data remains questionable and bias in some areas
 - The bias associated with this data can mean the difference between reaching standards and not

Conclusions & recommendations

- The CMAM Report software could provide a comprehensive package for standardised monitoring of CMAM treatment in both emergency and development contexts allowing:
 - humanitarian agencies, donors and governments to better monitor and compare performance of programmes
 - comparison of different CMAM approaches
 - Real time presentation of programme data.
 - Easy comparison of different programmes and different organisations
 - Easy access to information on programme background and characteristics
 - Simple identification of sites in need of supervisory support.

Conclusions & recommendations (2)

- CMAM Report and the guidelines on standardised indicators could act as a template reporting system to strengthen national reporting systems
 - introduce the software only where appropriate.
 - Ensure CMAM Report is a flexible tool which may take different forms depending on the context whilst still generating comparable and unbiased reporting.
 - The template would allow governments to take ownership of their national reporting system (system debranded).
 - Use of indicators by CMAM services would enable joint review & analysis of data. In addition it will provide a stronger platform for discussions on integrating MRP indicators into national systems.
- The CMAM Report software and guidelines on standardised indicators could act as a means to address issues related to data quality
 - The indicators & software provide a standard, unbiased & transparent means to report data, and an opportunity to introduce procedures to systematically review data quality.
 - The quality appraisal tool developed by SCUK could be used routinely to help assess the quality of the data and facilitate site support and supervision.

Next steps

- Launch of the software towards the end of this year following
- Assess next phase:
 - Evaluation
 - Next software update
 - Improving adaptability of the system
 - How to link with other systems/platforms
 - Links with mhealth
- Advocacy for standardised indicators or adaptability of national guidelines
 - data quality – donors should hold us to account
 - Sensitising donors
- Review whether Save the Children should continue to house the software or whether this should be supported by a consortium of agencies or UN agency.