

Mission Report – Nigeria

Logistics Technical Assistance

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Mission dates: 4 to 20 April 2010
Location : Abuja, Nigeria
Date of report: 14 August 2010
Subject of report: Logistics ToT to State Support Teams

1. Objectives of the mission

Although there were no written ToRs for this mission, the consultant's tasks, mission objectives and expected results were verbally agreed upon between AMP, the consultant and the NMCP/Nigeria partners: the consultant was to provide support in the development of all training logistics materials and agenda, as well as in the delivery of a 6-day training workshop for the members of the State Support Teams.

2. General overview of planned distribution

The TA provided was not directed to a specific campaign, but rather to the SSTs as a mechanism to support the planning and implementation of campaigns at state level. Nigeria undertook in 2009 the rolling out of universal coverage LLIN campaigns planned for every state of the country, hoping to complete the distribution of over 60 million nets in 36 states by end of 2010 to meet the Abuja targets. The SSTs as key support mechanism are essential to the success of this ambitious plan.

3. Campaign planning / implementation situation on arrival

The consultant was familiar with Nigeria's NMCP and partners context and their general approach to conducting campaigns, having provided logistics TA in three previous occasions (5 weeks in 2008 and 3 months in 2009 for the World Bank, and 2 weeks in early 2010 for AMP).

During the last AMP mission (Feb 2010) the consultant had the opportunity to participate in a 5-day retreat aimed at providing feedback on 7 campaigns implemented by states in 2009. The

objectives of the retreat were twofold: (1) provide lessons learned in the planning process with a focus on how the SSTs had performed, and (2) revise, adjust and up-date the “Implementation Guidelines” and “Toolkit” developed in 2009, and to which the consultant had contributed the Logistics Workstream section during his second WB assignment.

4. Meetings attended (NMCP, partners) and key people met during mission

Most of key NMCP, SunMap, WHO, WB, IFRC and partner NGOs representatives were present at one point or another during the planning and actual delivery of the workshop.

5. Mission roll out and main accomplishments

The first week of the mission was dedicated to the preparation of the workshop. It involved many meetings with NMCP and SunMaP staff as well as SST Team Leaders and Workstream Advisors. Implementation Guidelines as well as materials specific to each workstream were reviewed and adjusted according to lessons learned and recommendations from the February retreat; pre- and final tests, training modules and group work sessions were discussed and developed for both the “general” (4-day) and the workstream-specific (2-day) trainings; and finally, agendas were set-up accordingly (annexes 1 to 4).

The second week of the mission saw the implementation of the planned ToT. The first 4 days, aimed at providing general and comprehensive cross-workstream training, were directed to all participants. It started with a pre-test to establish a baseline, and was followed by introduction to the malaria situation in Nigeria, to the concept of the SSTs, to the Implementation Guidelines, etc. Also, some workstream-specific materials were presented followed by group-work, in order to ensure that all participants would acquire a sufficient level of understanding and proficiency in all workstreams. This to ensure that all SST members would be able to provide basic support in any aspect of campaign planning, in addition to the issues related to their own workstream.

For the last 2 days of the workshop, the general group split into 3 workstream-specific groups (demand creation, technical and logistics) in order to receive training focused exclusively on these areas. The consultant was leading the logistics workshop.

6. Key challenges and recommendations

Given that the SST members are meant to be trainers themselves to a large extent, the consultant considered that a significant portion of the workshop should be dedicated to “teach back”. Therefore, the agenda (annex-1) included at least 50% of time for the participants to themselves explain and teach back what they had been presented with. This included a training module directed at STATE briefing and training (annex-2), a module directed at LGA training (annex-3) as well as a number of planning tools and templates aimed at facilitating and standardising campaign planning.

The major challenges met during the course of the workshop were: (1) the relatively poor level of basic and general knowledge of the overall material, even among some of the “old” SST members (as reflected by the results of the pre-test), and (2) the fact that some of the participants had already some field experience as SST members (during the late 2009 campaigns) while others were new to the teams, and far behind in terms of knowledge and understanding of even key issues. Consequently, at the end of the workshop, most participants had significantly improved, but there were still worrisome differences between them. This was primarily reflected in the capacity to effectively “teach back” as it was observed that some participants were performing quite poorly.

Recommendations

- a. Next ToT should probably consider adding one day to the workstream-specific workshop (ie; 3 days instead of 2) in order to allow for additional teach back sessions.
- b. As a follow-up to the logistics ToT, the consultant can only insist again and again on the utmost importance of having all team members (and specifically the weakest ones) practice the delivery of the materials in teach back sessions. It will be the responsibility of the Logistics Workstream Advisor to make time during the following weeks to organise work sessions where each member will need to teach back until they become true and efficient trainers.
- c. The above recommendations were made verbally on several occasions to the participants, Team Leaders, Workstream Advisors as well as to NMCP and SunMaP during final de-briefing in Abuja.

7. Conclusion

The SSTs must be highly competent and homogeneous teams, with no place for weaker and/or un-motivated members. The Team Leaders and Logistics Workstream Advisors must follow the recommendation above and ensure that when the teams will be deployed, all members will be capable of performing equally well.

List of Acronyms

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|--------|-------------------------------------|
| NMCP | National Malaria Control Program |
| SST | State Support Teams |
| SunMaP | Support to National Malaria Program |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |
| WB | World Bank |

List of Annexes

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| Annex-1 | Logistics Workstream ToT Agenda |
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Annex-2 Logistics ToT Presentation
Annex-3 STATE Training Module
Annex-4 LGA training Module