



Development and Rollout of National Maternal Anemia Materials: Experience from Mozambique

Anemia among women of reproductive age, pregnant and lactating women in Mozambique

Anemia is a public health concern for Mozambican women. Recent data from the DHS shows that over half of pregnant women (51%), lactating women (53%), and adolescent girls aged 15-19 years (55%) are anemic. In the Multisectorial Action Plan for Reducing Chronic Malnutrition 2011-2014, the government of Mozambique has set targets for anemia for 2020 – 15% among women of childbearing age and pregnant women, and 10% among adolescent girls.

Current anemia reduction efforts and challenges

The Ministry of Health (MOH) recommends the following package for prevention of anemia:

- 1 Iron Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation

Population	Recommended IFA Dose	Delivery mode
Adolescent girls	4 supplements/week	Schools & health services
Pregnant women	180 supplements during pregnancy	Antenatal care
Lactating women	90 supplements during first 6 months	Postnatal care

- 2 Deworming
- 3 Malaria control

While universal IFA supplementation during pregnancy is recommended, national level data reveals that while the vast majority of women in Mozambique report *receiving* 90+ IFA supplements during their last pregnancy, only 26% of women reported *consuming* 90+ IFA supplements. Barriers to IFA intake include a lack of knowledge on the purpose of IFA supplementation, its benefits and management of side effects.

Filling the gaps in national anemia Behavior Change Communication (BCC) materials

Through facility readiness assessments, the Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP) identified gaps in anemia prevention and control, including limited counseling on anemia or IFA supplementation during antenatal care and lack of provider support materials to assist in counseling. MCSP presented this information to the Head of the Department of Nutrition at the MOH and together, they developed a suite of anemia counseling materials: [flipchart](#), [poster](#), and [IFA side effect management algorithm](#).

<p>Flipchart</p> <p>For group education sessions at the health facility and community levels, including anemia characteristics, diagnosis, causes, and prevention</p>	<p>Poster</p> <p>For one-on-one counseling during antenatal and postnatal services, prioritizing key messages from the flipchart.</p>	<p>IFA Side Effect Algorithm</p> <p>For one-on-one counseling to guide identification and management of side effects.</p>

Process for anemia material development and rollout

Anemia material development and roll out took place from January - September 2018, and included the following steps:

Development of preliminary materials

- 1) Developed Terms of Reference for the creation of materials, identifying the why, what, how, who, and when, and building consensus with the MOH Nutrition & Health Promotion Departments.
- 2) Developed a creative brief for a flipchart, outlined topics, drafted key messages, and worked with an illustrator to develop preliminary illustrations.
- 3) Presented all developed materials to the MOH SBCC Technical Working Group, which was led by the Nutrition Department, with participation from the Health Promotion Department and other key partners.
- 4) Developed a second draft of key messages incorporating feedback from the Technical Working Group. Shared draft with MCSP nutrition officers in the field, allowing incorporation of their experience into the materials' key messages.

Development of first draft of counseling package

- 5) Developed first draft of the package of counseling materials (flipchart, poster and algorithm) along with pre-test guides and tools, shared materials with Technical Working Group and incorporated their feedback.
- 6) Pre-tested materials with MOH in health facilities and communities in three provinces.
- 7) Incorporated the results of the pre-test into the materials and presented final drafts to the Technical Working Group.

Presentation of final counseling package for approval

- 8) Submitted final version of the materials for approval by the National Director of Public Health.
- 9) The MOH Department of Nutrition presented the materials at the National Directorate of Public Health SMT meeting and approval was granted within one month.

Lessons Learned

- Identifying the best platform (the MOH SBCC Technical Working Group) to bring together the MOH and key technical partners for their input on material development provided a convenient avenue through which to establish their ownership and buy-in throughout the process.
- Developing a Terms of Reference and presenting creative briefs to the MOH and key partners beginning in the initial stages was important to build consensus among partners and define the audience, purpose, objectives, content, tone, and function of the materials.
- Quick approval process (one month) was due to participation of MOH and partners from the beginning of material development.

Next steps

- 1) Supported MOH in printing and distributing the counseling materials to over 100 MCSP-supported health facilities in two provinces in Mozambique.
- 2) Roll out of package at national level by MOH and partners:
 - a. Develop a training package for national rollout of the materials
 - b. Develop a printing and distribution plan for national rollout
 - c. Support provincial Training of Trainers, mentoring, and on-the-job training on use of the counseling materials at health facilities
- 3) Ensure integration of anemia counseling in adolescent and maternal health quality improvement and quality assurance tools.