

## ENHANCING COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT FOR EFFECTIVE HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY

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In a health system, the delivery of health services to patients involves several different individuals who need to share data and information as quickly as possible. Therefore, the availability of communication platforms and technologies for managing data and information sharing and decision making across various levels and cadres is essential for any system to function efficiently and achieve its objectives.

In 2014, eHealth Africa received funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop and launch “Kano Connect”, a mHealth platform, to support the Routine Immunization (RI) program in Kano State. eHealth Africa trained over 1400 community health workers in Kano state to send Routine Immunization Supportive Supervision reports using electronic forms and to use the dashboard for decision making. Using the features of the platform, health workers can access the contact details of any staff and communicate for free within a closed user group, allowing for prompt reporting, effective management and supervision of health services delivery by health workers in Kano state.

Shamsudeen Mohammed was a deputy cold chain officer (CCO) at Gabasawa local government area (LGA) of Kano State. His major task was to support the collation of vaccine stock data from all the health facilities in the LGA and to maintain up-to-date records of vaccines available at the LGA cold store. He was also responsible for ensuring that vaccines and dry goods were made available to the health facilities in across all the wards in his LGA.

In 2016, when eHealth Africa handed over the project to the Kano State Primary Health Care Management Board (KSPHCMB), he was selected along with four other staff as part of the Kano Connect Operations Unit (KCOU), which would be responsible for managing the platform post-transition.

*“Before I was introduced to the Kano Connect platform, I had always done my work using paper-based*

*forms. I had to learn how to use the android phones I was given to enter and submit my data. After the project was handed over, I was nominated to be a part of the Kano Connect Operations Unit. I was worried because I had very minimal knowledge about using a computer and the tasks seemed very complex—like work that only computer engineers could do”*

Shamsudeen

eHealth Africa trained and mentored Shamsudeen and other pioneer members of the KCOU to manage the day-to-day operations of the platform including tasks such as dashboard management, collation of summary reports from dashboards, conducting electronic surveys, contact directory update, and data management through form hub, for a period of six months.

After his training, Shamsudeen was able to manage the day to day operations of the platform by ensuring Routine Immunization Supportive Supervision reports are sent on time by across the three administrative levels (State, Zone, and LGA).

Since he has access to the back- end of the dashboard, Shamsudeen is able to see reports before any other user. If he observes that supervision is not done at the right health facility, he obtains the contact details of the appropriate health worker and escalates the issue to the State Supportive Coordinator (SCC). This ensures that timeliness of RISS report.

Shamsudeen describes the experience so far as empowering and is thankful for the skills he has gained.

*“I have gained so much knowledge and experience on this project. When I execute tasks now, sometimes, I marvel at how far I have come. I am now able to execute with ease, the same tasks that I once saw as complex.”*

Following the success of the platform with RI and testimonies like Shamsudeen’s, eHealth Africa is currently working with Kano State Primary Health Care Management Board ( KSPHCMB) to expand Kano Connect to include other programs such as Nutrition and Maternal and Child Health, and to create similar platforms for health systems in other states in Nigeria.

